

# MEDIA ALERT

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## McGowan jobs policy tested by disability decision

Tuesday, 12 December 2017

The Community Public Sector Union and Civil Service Association, the union for public sector staff working in Disability Services at the Department of Communities, holds grave concerns and is deeply saddened by the loss of local services to the federal government.

“To cede control to Federal Government will mean a significant departure from Premier Mark McGowan’s plan for WA jobs” said CPSU/CSA Branch Secretary, Toni Walkington.

“We have campaigned to save WA disability services jobs and not allow the successful local coordination model to be broken down.”

Ms Walkington said “face to face, local services meant all the difference to West Australians.”

The union is concerned the decision has been motivated by a short term interest in making budget savings which will not yield long term savings or results for West Australian people with disabilities.

“The WA NDIS model in place has been fine-tuned over 20 years of policy development and has had people with disability at its heart. The current decentralised model of delivery provides an accountable service for people with disabilities” said Ms Walkington.

“In trading away local services, the McGowan Government has ignored the evidence – particularly comparisons of the two models.

“We have been clear with the Government that there are significant risks and conflicts of interest in the federal system and the experience in the Eastern States has borne that out with reports of abuse, neglect and service reduction a common media feature.”

The State Government commissioned a report by Stanton’s International which found that the WA NDIS trial was equal or better for outcomes to end users.

The Stantons’ report found that that the WA NDIS model had nine out of 12 of the key criteria for an effective delivery of services, as compared to zero out of 12 for the NDIA model.

“This decision will also have serious implications for WA jobs as the state local coordination model of delivery is dismantled. We have attempted to work through the operational reality of the State’s preference for the federal scheme to no avail. The consultation for the process has been shambolic and wrapped in secrecy.

“Local Coordinators have an exhaustive knowledge of the different services available in each community.

“Local Coordinators act as advocates for the client and family, with no conflict of interest and a motivation to deliver the best services for their clients and the community. These WA jobs are now gone.”

## RESPONSE FROM CPSU/CSA DELEGATES WORKING IN WA DISABILITY SERVICES

CPSU/CSA disability services union delegates affected have met today in response to the news. Delegates said the workforce was 'shocked and disheartened.'

We deeply feel that this is not the best decision for people with disabilities in Western Australia. For those living with no immediate family, the local coordination model has allowed us to create meaningful relationships with the person with a disability and their community.

The announcement today suggests our opportunity to build those relationships must now end.

We ask West Australians living with disability to please be patient with your local coordinators, we know as much as you do at this time.

We have valued the opportunity to assist people with disability with a human connection, empathy and a personal touch.

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### **Available for comment**

Toni Walkington, CPSU/CSA Branch Secretary  
Please call Andrei Buters to arrange

### **More information:**

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