



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Disability
Services
Commission

Disability Services Commission

Disability Support Funding Bulletin

Issue 3

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Introduction

The Disability Support Funding Bulletin is published annually to provide an explanation of how growth funding for disability services is allocated in Western Australia.

In 2013–14 the Disability Services Commission (Commission) received an additional **\$32.5** million from the State and Commonwealth Governments to expand disability services in response to growing demand.

Currently the Commission has 24,017 people who receive supports and services of one kind or another and approximately 130 organisations are contracted to provide services on behalf of government. The number of organisations has increased from 116 in 2013–14 to meet the increased demand for services and in line with the growth in funding.

This bulletin explains how additional funding is received by the Commission to pay for services and supports, where the money is spent and how many people benefit. This includes people with disability, families and carers.

Changes in the disability services system and the allocation of funding for services

During the past five years there have been fundamental changes in the way that funding is allocated for disability services in WA. Two key changes are:

- a move away from the funding of programs with specific program parameters (such as Accommodation Support and Alternatives to Employment) and a move towards holistic individualised funding packages that meet a person's individual needs and goals
- a move away from a highly centralised approach to prioritising people for support in favour of de-centralised mechanisms for allocating funding for services based on the needs identified in individual plans.

These changes are consistent with national reforms in disability services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

As a consequence of these changes, the relative importance of the Combined Application Process (CAP) has been reducing each year. In a few years the CAP system will cease to operate when the alternative systems for allocating support funding to individuals are expanded. It should be noted that the CAP system is no longer available in the Western Australian NDIS trial sites.

Five years ago, most of the growth funding provided to the Commission by government was allocated to individuals in critical and urgent need on the basis of program parameters. The three key programs were Accommodation Support, Intensive Family Support and Alternatives to Employment.

During the past five years decisive steps have been taken to introduce alternative, more decentralised mechanisms for allocating funding to people with disability requiring support. These include Community Living, Family Living, individualised funding for school leavers and Local Area Resource funding. Now, 50 per cent of growth funding is allocated outside of CAP.

The majority of people with disability access funding via these decentralised mechanisms which allow for more timely and targeted responses to address their support requirements.

New individualised funding allocated in 2013–14

In 2013–14, 2,313 requests for supports and services received allocations of funding from the Commission (noting that some people received multiple services and are already receiving some form of support from the Commission or a Disability Support Organisation). This included:

- 1,249 people who received Local Area Resource funding through their Local Area Coordinator and 432 people who received My Way Resource funding.
- 267 people who received new funding for School Leavers Support.
- 125 families who received funding for new Family Living Initiative plans.
- 74 people who received funding for Accommodation Support. Of these, eight people received funding for increased supports due to their needs changing and becoming more complex over time.
- 74 people received Intensive Family Support funding, of whom eight people received the funding for additional supports due to their needs becoming more complex and changing over time.
- 54 people who received funding for Alternatives to Employment. Of these, two people received funding for increased supports due to their needs changing and becoming more complex over time.
- 47 people who received funding for new Community Living Initiative plans.

Over the next few years, individuals will be allocated funding on the basis of the ‘reasonable and necessary’ supports they require, as outlined in individualised plans.

Allocation of growth funding in 2013–14

Funding for people with disability to access supports and services has been growing at an average of 13 per cent each year for the past five years. In 2013–14 the Commission received an additional \$32.5 million from the State and Commonwealth Governments to expand services.

The Commission directs all available growth funding to purchase services and supports for people with disability and continues to have the lowest administrative costs in disability services when compared with all other jurisdictions.

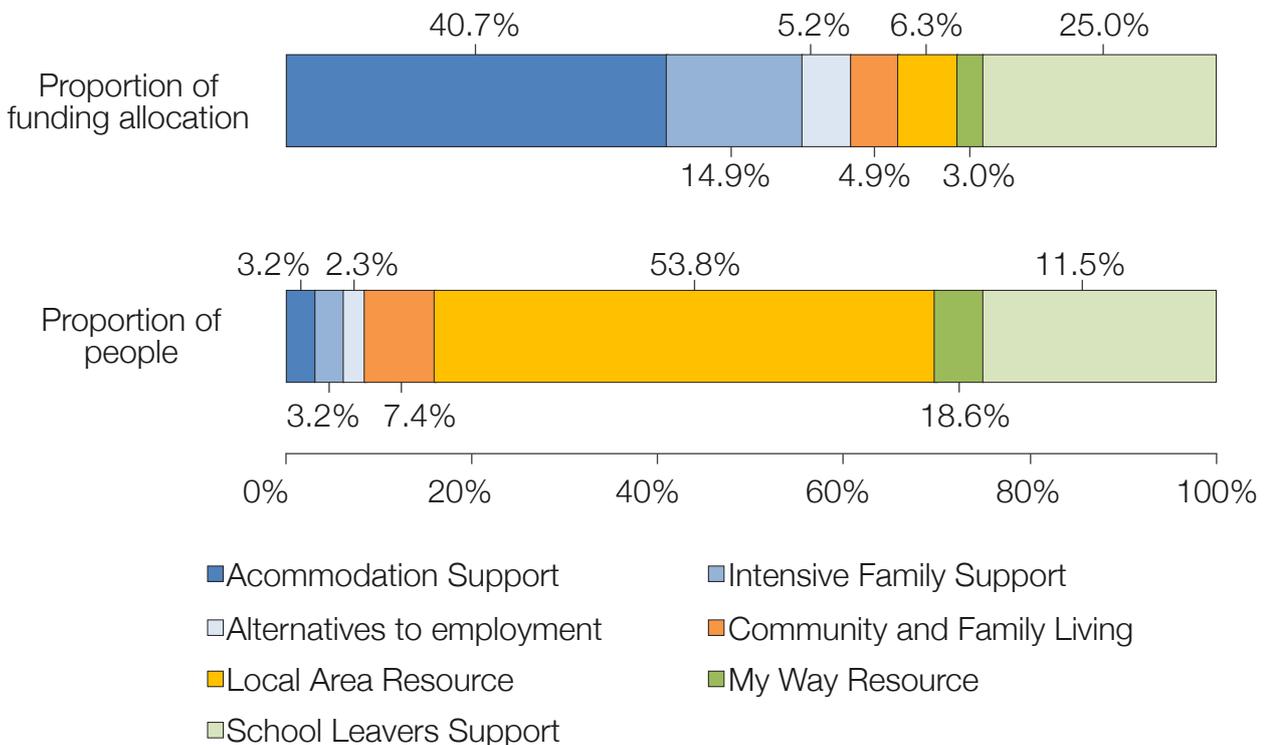
Table 1 on the next page shows the allocation of **\$26.8** million of the growth funding. The remainder of the growth funding provided by government (approximately \$5 million) was used to increase service capacity in areas such as respite services, aids and equipment, disability professional services and continence management. Most of these funds were allocated via block funding or place based funding arrangements with disability sector organisations.

Table 1: Funding allocated in 2013–14 for ongoing support for individuals

Individualised funding through the Combined Application Process		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation Support • Alternatives to Employment • Intensive Family Support 	>	<p>\$16.3 million</p> <p>193 people</p>
Individualised Funding Processes through decentralised processes		
Community and Family Living Initiatives	\$1.3 million	172 people
Funding for school leavers	\$6.7 million	267 people
Local Area resource	\$1.7 million	1,249 people
My Way resource	\$ 0.8 million	432 people
TOTAL	\$26.8 million	2,313 people

Figure 1 provides a comparison of individualised services and the number of people who received support from these in contrast with the funds allocated to each service as a way of highlighting the proportional cost of individualised services.

Figure 1: Proportion of funding allocated to individualised services and the proportion of people who accessed funding in 2013–14

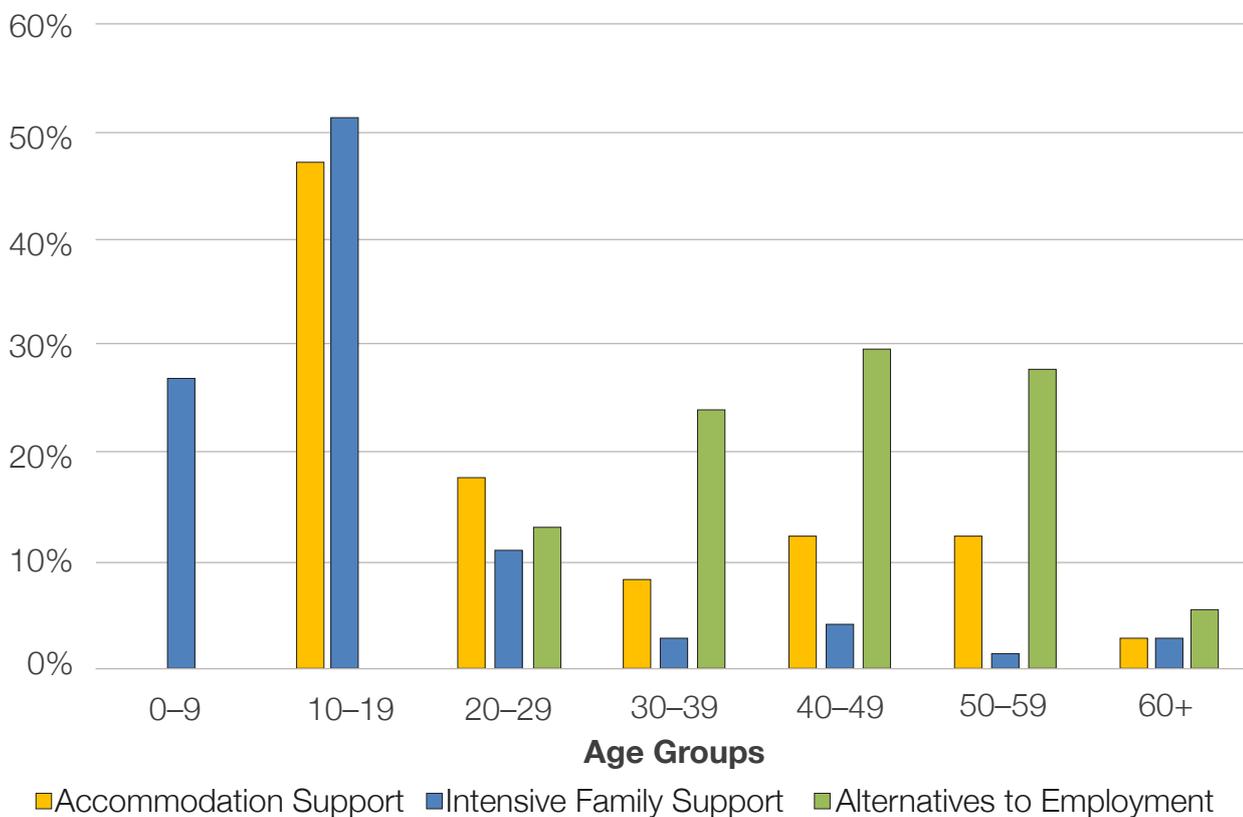


Age and service type for people funded

Figure 2 provides information about the age distribution of people who were successfully funded for Accommodation Support, Alternatives to Employment and Intensive Family Support. The following observations can be made:

- Almost 43 per cent of people funded for Accommodation Support were aged between 15 and 19 years-of-age.
- Of those people funded for Alternatives to Employment in 2013–14, approximately 41 per cent were aged between 45 and 54 years.
- Most people (59.5 per cent) funded for Intensive Family Support in 2013–14 were of school age, which is between 0 and 14 years.

Figure 2: Age distribution of people applying for support funding showing expressed support preference by age through three service areas in 2013–14



Trends from 2009–10 to 2013–14

Between 2009–10 and 2013–14 the Commission allocated approximately \$133.5 million across three areas of support - Accommodation Support, Intensive Family Support, and Alternatives to Employment. As a result 1,506 new funded supports are being provided into the future. In addition 279 people with existing supports received an increase in their level of support as their needs have changed or become more complex over time.

Unmet demand for supports and services

Despite the allocation of growth funding during 2013–14 and in 2014–15, there continues to be a significant gap between the demand for services and the availability of funding. This demand-supply gap is a national phenomenon and has been one of the major drivers for national reform in disability services during the past three years.

In years gone by, the number of people who were unsuccessful in being prioritised for funding via the centralised CAP system was used as an indicator of unmet demand for services and funding. With the progressive introduction of alternative resource allocation mechanisms, the raw numbers from the CAP system are no longer relevant indicators.

While in 2013–14 approximately 700 people were unsuccessful in their application for funding via CAP, the vast majority of these applicants receive services or support via other government funded programs or services.

The Commission is also aware that a proportion of the people who lodge applications for support funding via the CAP system are not in critical or urgent need of support, but continue to lodge CAP applications as an early indicator to the Commission that they may require access to funding at some point in the future.

Looking Forward: Growth funding in 2014–15

While this edition of the Disability Support Funding Bulletin is a presentation of funding allocated for services during 2013–14, budget information is also available for the current year (2014–15).

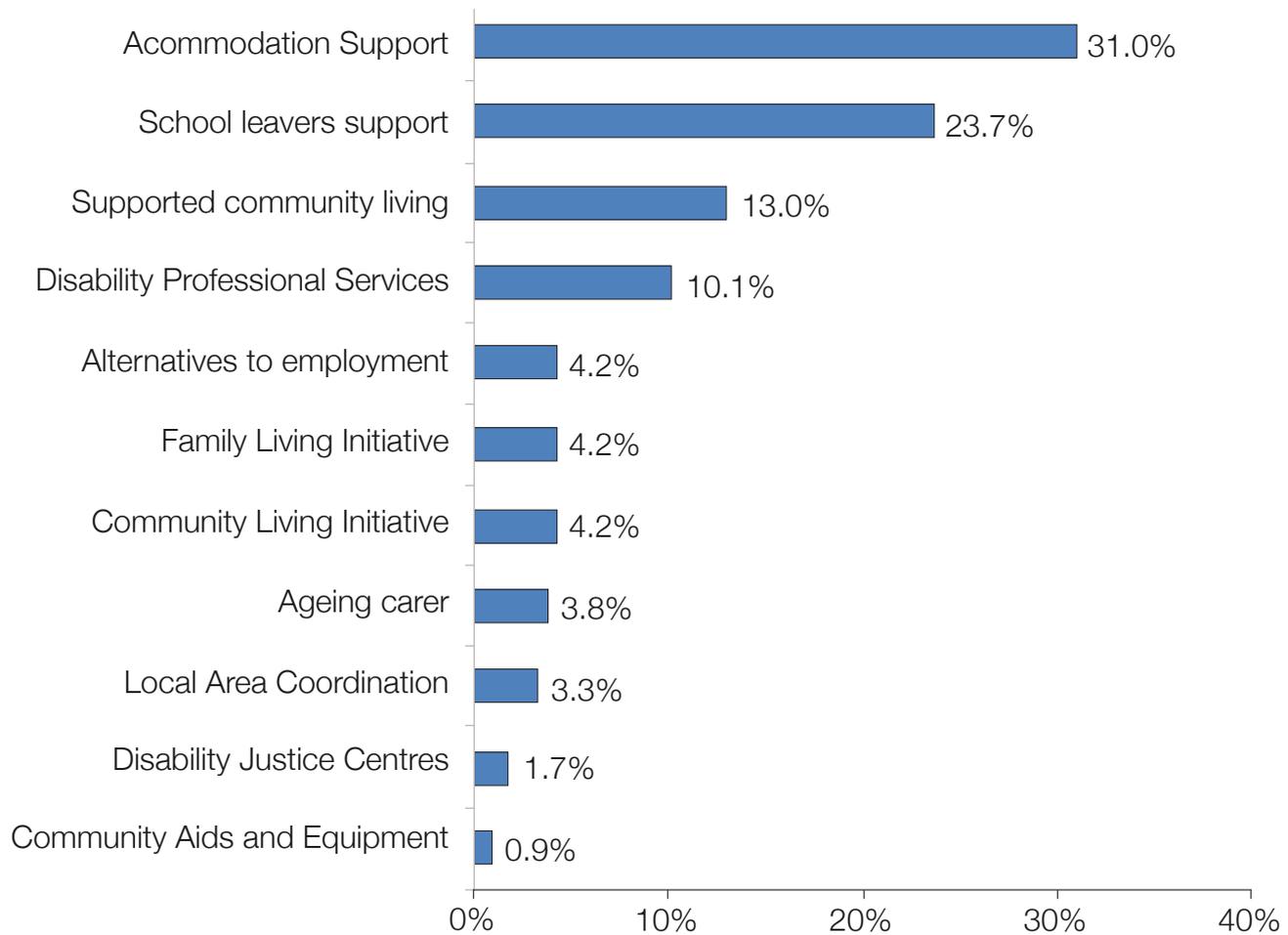
The Disability Services Commission has received \$30 million in State and Commonwealth growth funding for 2014–15. This funding will be available to individuals to purchase supports and services during the 2014–15 year.

Similar to 2013–14, almost all of the funding will be allocated for individualised services and a small component will be used to increase service capacity via block funding in areas such as respite services, aids and equipment, disability professional services and continence management.

Some existing clients who are experiencing changed circumstances and new clients will benefit from the growth funds in accordance with support requirements identified in their individual plan.

Figure 3 provides information on the expected distribution of the funding for individualised services in 2014–15. Note: the final distribution may be slightly different.

Figure 3: Proposed growth funding allocation by services in 2014–15



It is important to note that the funding arrangements outlined in this bulletin apply to all areas of Western Australia other than the NDIS trial site locations. Different funding arrangements are being used for the NDIS trial site area in the Perth Hills and the WA NDIS My Way trial site areas in the Lower South West and Cockburn–Kwinana.

Further information

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