



**Government
of South Australia**

Minister for Human Services

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Our ref: 18MCOR/0080
Your ref: 7128342

Ms Nat Cook
Member for Hurtle Vale
PO Box 158
WOODCROFT SA 5162

Sent by email: Tristan.rust@parliament.sa.gov.au

Dear Ms Cook,

Freedom of information application

I refer to your application under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (the Act), received by the Office of the Minister for Human Services on 12 October 2018 seeking access to:

Copies of any and all documents (including but not limited to physical and electronic material) regarding Ministerial agenda item "Homelink" from 15 May 2018.

Unfortunately, a determination was unable to be made within the 30 days, therefore it is considered to be a 'deemed refusal' under section 19(2)(b) of the Act. However, our office has continued to process your application outside of this timeframe. Section 19(2)(a) of the Act provides that an agency can release documents outside of the thirty-day timeframe, and this is still taken to be a determination under the Act.

One document has been identified as falling within the scope of your application and I have determined to release this document in full.

Please find enclosed a copy of the document, and a document schedule containing a brief description of the document.

In accordance with the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, details of your FOI application, and the documents to which you are given access, may/will be published on the agency's disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found at <http://dpc.sa.gov.au/what-we-do/services-for-government/premier-and-cabinet-circulars>.

If you have any questions in relation to this matter, please contact Amanda Hockings, Office Manager, on telephone 8463 3388 or by email at amanda.hockings2@sa.gov.au. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your FOI application, you have the right to complain to the Ombudsman SA. Please contact the Ombudsman directly on (08) 8226 8699.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Hockings
ACCREDITED FOI OFFICER

19 / 2 / 2019

SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS – MCOR/0080

Freedom of information application from the Ms Nat Cook seeking access to *Copies of any and all documents (including but not limited to physical and electronic material) regarding Ministerial agenda item "Homelink" from 15 May 2018.*

No	Author	Addressee	Date	Description of document	Determination	Reason
1.	Department of Human Services	Minister for Human Services		Agenda Item – NDIS – Uniting Communities Homelink Program	Released in full	



MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES MEETING					
AGENDA ITEM					
TITLE OF PAPER:	NDIS – UNITING COMMUNITIES HOMELINK PROGRAM				
MEETING DATE	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">NOTING</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>DISCUSSION</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	NOTING	<input type="checkbox"/>	DISCUSSION	<input type="checkbox"/>
NOTING	<input type="checkbox"/>				
DISCUSSION	<input type="checkbox"/>				
KEY POINTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Uniting Communities Homelink program supports 71 individuals including 27 individuals who have transitioned to the NDIS and benefit from carer payments under specific Continuity of Support (CoS) arrangements until 30 June 2018 (i.e. pending confirmation whether the NDIS will fund this program). 2. It is anticipated that the NDIA will formalise a carer program or equivalent by 1 July 2018; however, the format of any such program and the level of funding are not yet known. 				

Minister's Comments:

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BACKGROUND

As at 10 May 2018, Uniting Communities will receive National Disability Agreement (NDA) funding of \$5,265,376 for 2017-18. A proportion of the funding enables Uniting Communities to deliver a range of programs to support people with disability, one of which is their Homelink program.

Homelink funds carers to provide home-based care for adults with intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder who are unable to live with, or wish to live independently from, their birth family. Care is provided on a respite care, shared-care or full-time basis.

The majority of placements supported by Homelink are for clients who have been with carers for many years, often having transitioned from foster care as children and placed under the Guardianship of the Minister.

In these arrangements, carers receive a carer allowance to enable the level of care to be provided in a home environment.

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DISCUSSION

The Uniting Communities Homelink program is closed to new applicants as it is presently considered out of scope for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) policy is not to fund supports provided to a person living in the same home as the carer. Without the option of this arrangement, carers have indicated they may need to relinquish care.

The NDIA will continue to consider the circumstances of all participants when developing their participant plans. When a living arrangement with a host family becomes long term, the NDIA will treat the Homelink carer in the same way as it would a parent.

Advice from the NDIA is that the NDIS Act in section 34(1) provides the main criteria for what reasonable and necessary supports are funded under the NDIS. In deciding whether to fund supports, account is taken of what it is reasonable to expect families and carers to provide. Supports are available from the NDIS for all families as a result of a family member's disability, as well as supports that enable sustainable caring by family members whether they are foster carers or not.

As of The Department of Human Services (DHS), under Continuation of Support (CoS) provisions as outlined in the Bilateral Agreement for Transition, will continue to make payments to existing Homelink carers until 30 June 2018.

The Uniting Communities Homelink program consists of three funding components totalling approximately \$4,028 million in NDA funding for 2017/18 and includes \$1.5 million in CoS for the year to date. This program supports 44 individuals yet to transition to the NDIS and 27 transitioned clients who benefit from carer payments under specific CoS arrangements (i.e. pending confirmation whether the NDIS will fund this program).

DHS has worked with the NDIA and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS) to analyse outcomes for young people in existing placements as they transition to the NDIS. These outcomes will be compared against young people who are exiting guardianship of the Minister and would have chosen a carer program. The aim of this work was to produce evidence of the benefits of carer programs over other alternatives available to young people, thereby providing a basis for the NDIA to reconsider their position.

The NDIA have reconsidered their position and it is anticipated that the NDIA will formalise a carer program or equivalent by 1 July 2018; however, the format of any such program and the level of funding are not yet known.

DHS will continue to make all carer payments under CoS until 30 June 2018. The Cos funding was scheduled to cease on 30 June 2018 unless additional resources are provided.

At this stage, additional funding has been allocated for 2018-19 to support state funded Homelink clients who have not transitioned to the NDIS. Pending the NDIA's decision on Homelink and the timing of any additional funding in plans for people who have transitioned to the NDIS, arrangements for continuity of support funding may need to be extended into 2018-19.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (if relevant)

- Nil

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION (if relevant)

- Nil

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Division	NDIS Reform		
Executive Director	Nick Ashley/...../.....	<i>signature</i>
Director, Office of the Chief Executive	Nancy Rogers/...../.....	<i>signature</i>
Deputy Chief Executive	Lois Boswell/...../.....	<i>signature</i>
Chief Executive	Tony Harrison/...../.....	<i>signature</i>

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Contact Officer:	Nick Ashley Executive Director NDIS reform 8415 4272/nick.ashley@sa.gov.au
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