



**Government  
of South Australia**

**Minister for Human Services**

Level 12 South  
1 King William Street  
Adelaide SA 5000  
GPO Box 2832  
Adelaide SA 5001  
DX 115  
Tel 08 8463 6560  
Fax 08 8463 4480

**Our ref:** MCOR/0013  
**Your ref:** 6974710

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

Sent by email: [tristan.rust@parliament.sa.gov.au](mailto: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 25 June 2018 seeking access to:

*Copies of any and all documents (including but not limited to physical and electronic material) regarding DHS Signed Briefing by Minister Lensink 18MDIS/0312.*

Unfortunately, the Minister's Office was unable to make a determination on your application 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.

Four documents have been located that fall within the scope of your application, and I have determined to release three documents in full and one document in part. Section 20(4) of the Act provides that if it is practicable to give access to a copy of a document with exempt matter deleted, and it appears that the applicant would wish to be given such a copy, the agency must give access to a copy of the document to this limited extent.

The three documents being released to you in part contain information relating to the personal affairs of third parties, including mobile phone numbers and information that would identify the members of the public involved in this matter. I consider that the release of this information would be an unreasonable disclosure of personal

information and I have therefore determined it to be exempt pursuant to clause 6(1) of Schedule 1 of the Act.

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

If you are dissatisfied with my determination, you can seek an internal review by writing to the Minister for Human Services as the Principal Officer of the agency. Your request should be sent within 30 days of your receipt of this letter.

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 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](mailto:amanda.hockings2@sa.gov.au). If you disagree with publication, you will need to advise the Office Manager within two weeks of the date of this determination.

Yours sincerely



**Amanda Hockings**  
ACCREDITED FOI OFFICER

3 1 9 12018

### SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS – MCOR/0013

Freedom of information application from Nat Cook MP seeking access to copies of any and all documents (including but not limited to physical and electronic material) regarding DHS Signed Briefing by Minister Lensink 18MDIS/0312.

| No | Author  | Addressee                          | Date          | Description of document   | Determination    | Reason                                   |
|----|---|------------------------------------|---------------|---|------------------|--|
| 1. | Matthew Massy-Westrop,<br>General<br>Manager,<br>Disability and<br>Domiciliary Care<br>Services | Minister for<br>Human<br>Services  | 30 April 2018 | Briefing – Request for urgent replacement of a wheelchair   | Released in part | Exempt clause 6(1) –<br>personal affairs |
| 2. | Disability and<br>Domiciliary Care<br>Services  |                                    |               | Attachment to document 1 – Delayed approvals for NDIS participants requiring equipment and home modifications | Released in full |  |
| 3. | Minister for<br>Human Services  | Dan van<br>Holst<br>Pelekaan<br>MP | 15 May 2018   | Letter – Signed response re urgent replacement of a wheelchair  |                  |  |
| 4. | Dan van Holst<br>Pelekaan MP  | Minister for<br>Human<br>Services  | 28 March 2018 | Letter – Replacement of a wheelchair  | Released in part | Exempt clause 6(1) –<br>personal affairs |




**TO MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES**

**RE: Request for Urgent Replacement of a Wheelchair for [REDACTED]**

**Decision/action required by:**...../...../.....  
**Reason:**.....

| Recommendation  | Response  |
|---|---|
| 1. Note the process underway involving DHS and the NDIA to replace the wheelchair | Approved / Not Approved / <u>Noted</u>                            |
| 2. Approve the response to Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP                          | <u>Approved</u> / Not Approved / Noted<br><i>with a new para.</i> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> | <br><b>Hon Michelle Lensink MLC</b><br>13/5/2018 |
|---|--|

**KEY POINTS**

- Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP has written to you, on behalf of a constituent's mother [REDACTED] seeking the urgent replacement of her son [REDACTED] wheelchair.
- [REDACTED] has been a participant in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) since June 2016, and all funding decisions now rest with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).
- A customised manual wheelchair has been prescribed by a clinician from Novita Children's Services (Novita) for [REDACTED] and a quote provided by the Department's Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES) to the NDIA on 1 February 2018.
- The NDIA has yet to approve the supply of this item and it should be noted that there have been significant delays, in approving similar needs, at the NDIA.

**DISCUSSION**

[REDACTED] is a 12 year old boy who transitioned from Disability SA to the NDIS on 24 June 2016. Disability SA is not responsible for any funding decisions made by the NDIA in relation to this child's services under the NDIS. There are three outstanding quotes for equipment items that DES has provided the NDIA and these need approval from the NDIA before these can be supplied to [REDACTED].

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On 1 February 2018, a clinician from Novita sent the prescription for a new wheelchair and customised seating to DES. For several months prior to the prescription arriving at DES, the Novita clinician had assessed [redacted] needs and liaised with the NDIA. On the same day the prescription arrived at DES, a quote to supply the wheelchair (totalling \$15, 823 + freight costs) was sent by DES officers to the NDIA for approval.

DES officers have liaised with the NDIA regarding the status on the wheelchair and other needs. On 26 April 2018, the NDIA advised that they have escalated the approval internally and will advise [redacted] and DES when they have approved the supply of the new wheelchair, and that they have loaded the appropriate funds in [redacted]. On this advice, DES officers will raise a purchase order for the wheelchair. Once the wheelchair arrives (normally within 6 weeks), Novita will then fabricate the custom seating required before trialling the seating system with [redacted]. The whole supply process, for a complex wheelchair with seating, will normally take 8-12 weeks. In the meanwhile, DES will continue to support this child with repairs to his current wheelchair and any other equipment items that are supplied to support him and the family.

Attachment 1 provides further details about the significant delays for many NDIS participants to access equipment and home modification services.

Attachment 2 provides a draft response to Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP.

**BUDGET**

Are there financial implications No

Is there a budget impact No

Is there an FTE impact No

**MEDIA/SENSITIVE:** Yes

There continues to be a focus in the media on delays for participants to transition to the NDIS and to access the necessary supports in their plans.

|                               |   |                   |         |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|---------|
| <b>Division</b>               | <b>Disability and Domiciliary Care Services</b> |                   |         |
| <b>General Manager</b>        | Matthew Massy-Westropp                          | ...../...../..... |         |
|                               |   | <i>signature</i>  |         |
| <b>Executive Director</b>     | Lynn Young                                      | ...../...../..... | 30/4/18 |
|                               |   | <i>signature</i>  |         |
| <b>Deputy Chief Executive</b> | Lois Boswell                                    | ...../...../..... | 30/4/18 |
|                               |   | <i>signature</i>  |         |

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**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Delayed Approvals for NDIS Participants Requiring Equipment and Home Modifications
2. Draft response to Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | Matthew Massy-Westropp<br>[REDACTED] / <a href="mailto:matthew.massy-westropp@sa.gov.au">matthew.massy-westropp@sa.gov.au</a> |
|-------------------------|---|

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## Attachment 1

### Delayed Approvals for NDIS Participants Requiring Equipment and Home Modifications

During the transition to the NDIS in SA, the Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES) continues to provide a full range of equipment and home modification services to participants, with these services funded by the NDIS. The NDIA has indicated that they will seek to extend these working arrangements through June 2019.

Nationally, there have been significant delays for many NDIS participants attempting to access equipment and home modifications. These delays are primarily due to the complex business processes, required by the NDIS, for participants to have equipment and home modification supports approved in their plans. This is compounded by the current NDIS Provider Portal not fully supporting these business processes.

As at 31 March 2018, there were 505 quotes for equipment awaiting approval by the NDIA with 74% of these waiting longer than 90 days. In addition, there were 63 modifications to existing equipment awaiting approval and 97 home modification orders that were awaiting approval to proceed. The number of DES quotes, waiting for approval by the NDIA, have increased again from the end of February 2018, after dropping marginally over several months prior to that.

In February 2018, the NDIA advised all providers that it is undertaking remediation work to address a national back log of existing approvals for equipment and home modifications. The NDIA also intends to pilot new, simpler pathways for participants needing to access these supports. Meanwhile, DES officers continue to work closely with the NDIA to ensure service provision can continue for participants, using interim work around business processes.



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18MDIS/0312

Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP  
Parliament House  
GPO Box 572  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

COPY

Dear Mr Dan van Holst Pellekaan

Thank you for your letter about the urgent need, raised by [REDACTED] to replace her son [REDACTED] wheelchair.

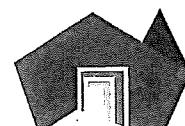
While the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the responsibility of the Federal Government, my office is able to make enquiries on behalf of South Australian participants. Requests for reviews of NDIS decisions should be made to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) in the first instance as I am unable to direct them.

You can find more information about reviews on the agency's website at: <https://ndis.gov.au/participants/reasonable-and-necessary-supports/decision-review>.

My Department has confirmed that [REDACTED] transitioned to the NDIS in June 2016. Since that time, all decisions to approve funding for equipment and other supports in [REDACTED] NDIS plan have rested with the NDIA.

A clinician from Novita Children's Services has been working with [REDACTED] for some months to identify his specific needs for a very customised wheelchair. The quote to supply the new wheelchair, via DHS' Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES), was provided to the NDIA on 1 February 2018. Officers from DES continue to liaise with the NDIA to progress this approval and, on 26 April 2018, were advised that the NDIA have escalated the request for approval internally. The NDIA will advise [REDACTED] and DES once the approval has been given to supply the wheelchair.

Supply of highly customised items, such as this wheelchair, inevitably take 8-12 weeks from the time that an item is approved by the NDIA. These particular wheelchairs are manufactured overseas and once the wheelchair base arrives in South Australia, Novita will work closely, with [REDACTED] and his family, to manufacture the custom seating solution that he needs.





I have also been advised that there have been significant delays nationally for some participants to access equipment and home modification services under the NDIS. These delays are primarily due to the complex business processes required for participants to have equipment and home modification supports approved in their plans. This is compounded by the current NDIS Provider Portal not fully supporting these business processes.

In February 2018, the NDIA advised all providers that it is undertaking remediation work to address a national back log of existing approvals for equipment and home modifications. The NDIA also intends to pilot new, simpler pathways for participants needing to access these supports. Meanwhile, DES officers continue to work closely with the NDIA to ensure service provision can continue for participants, using interim work around business processes.

Please encourage [REDACTED] to keep contacting the NDIA on 1800 800 110 to progress her son's needs. Should she have any particular questions about the supply process itself then she may contact Ms Agnieszka Kuna at DES on 8193 1232.

Yours sincerely



**Hon Michelle Lensink MLC**  
MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

15.1.18 12018



**Dan**  
**VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN MP**  
MEMBER FOR STUART

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*Please respond to Port Augusta*

28 March 2018



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Hon Michelle Lensink MLC  
Minister for Human Services  
PO Box 70, Rundle Mall  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

*Michelle*

Dear Minister

I write on behalf of [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] regarding the replacement of a wheelchair for her son [REDACTED], a Disability SA client who has complex needs and limited mobility.

[REDACTED] current wheelchair is in need of urgent replacement from both a maintenance perspective and more importantly, he has outgrown it. This is a predictable and necessary purchase which should not be left until the wheelchair is worn out and/or outgrown.

Given the long lead time for this purchase due to the lack of available stock in Australia, please facilitate the appropriate funding immediately available to [REDACTED] to enable her to make this purchase.

Yours sincerely

Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP  
**MEMBER FOR STUART**

Ref: PA/Minister/2018