



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Disability Employment Reform

Presenter: Jacinda Still

Position: Branch Manager, Disability Employment
Implementation

Acknowledgement of Country



The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and their connections to land, water, culture and community.

We pay our respects to the elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Probity Statement

The Department of Social Services is committed to conducting a fair, honest, and transparent process for the design and implementation of the new specialist disability employment program and related services.

For today's event, this means that:

- this presentation will be made publicly available on the DSS Engage website*
- any views expressed, or information provided, by attendees to this event will be considered, along with the views expressed and information provided by other stakeholders.*

Overview

Key Topics

1. Changes to program design
2. Overview of current program
3. Market strategy
4. Centre of Excellence
5. Status and timeframes
6. Some questions

**The new disability
employment program
commences 1 July 2025**



Program design

From 1 July 2025 a new specialist disability employment program will help more people with disability, injury and/or a health condition to prepare for, find and maintain sustainable employment.

The simplified program design will:

- Create stronger person-centred relationships between providers, participants and employers
- Increase eligibility for the program and remove the participation time limit
- Support employers to build capability to employ people with disability and identify and tailor job opportunities.

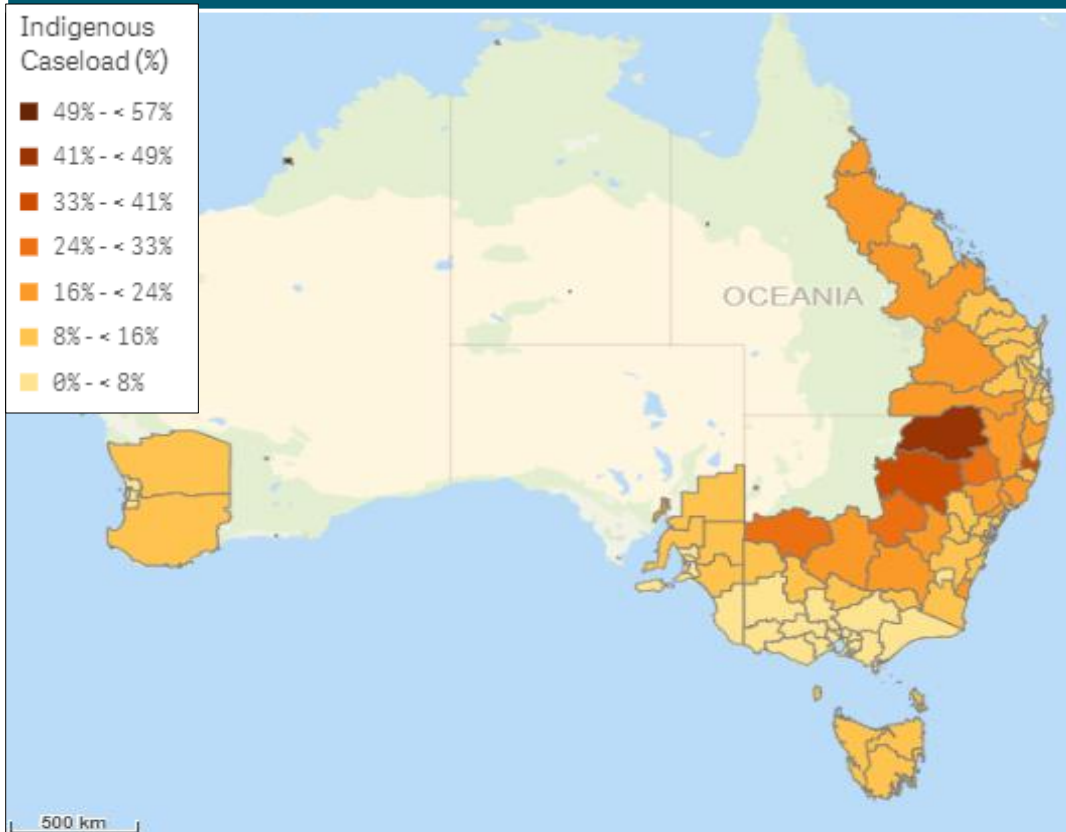
First Nations peoples

- Represent 3.8 per cent of the total Australian population (AIHW, 2021)
- Are 8.1 per cent of the total DES cohort (20,573 as at 30 Nov 2023).
- Are 1.9 times more likely to have a disability (SDAC 2018-19).
- Have a 12 per cent unemployment rate in 2021 compared to 5.12 per cent for all Australians (ABS 2021).
- Achieve lower DES Employment outcomes than the total cohort:

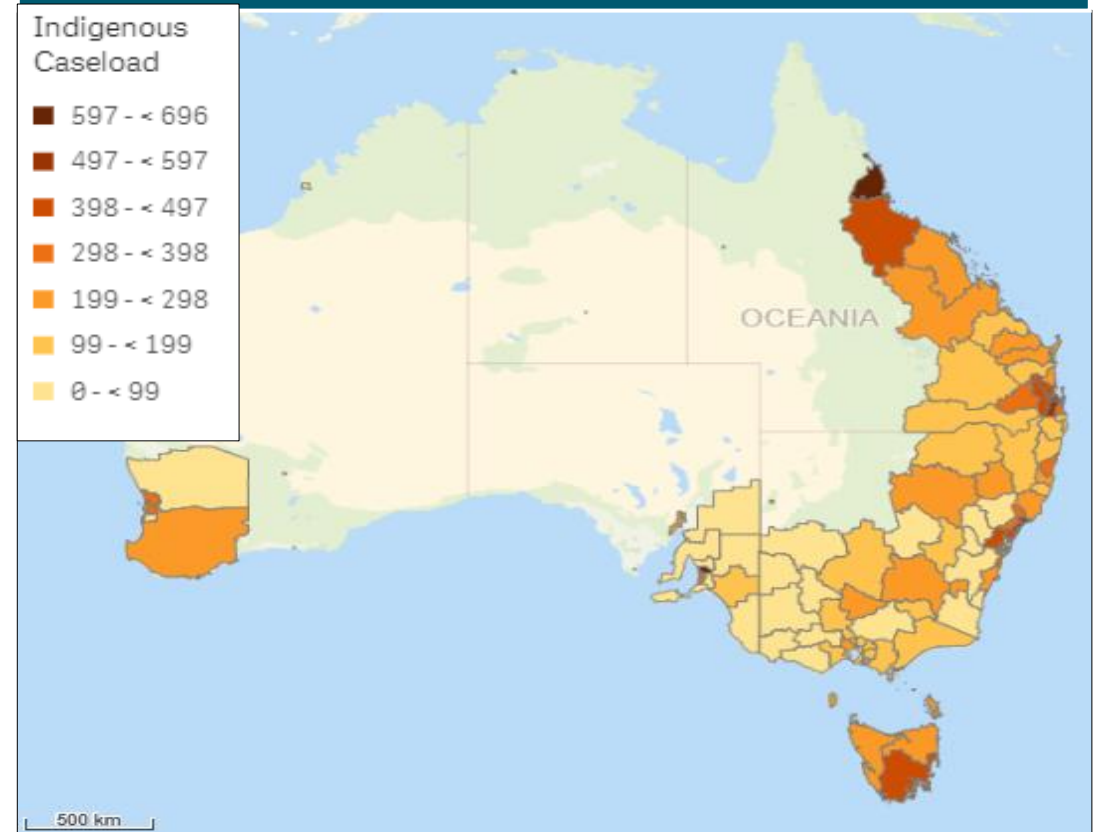
	13 weeks	26 weeks	52 weeks
First Nation peoples in DES	35%	28%	18%
Total DES program participants	39%	34%	22%

First Nations participants in each ESA

Proportion of indigenous participants in an Employment Service Area (as percentage of caseload)

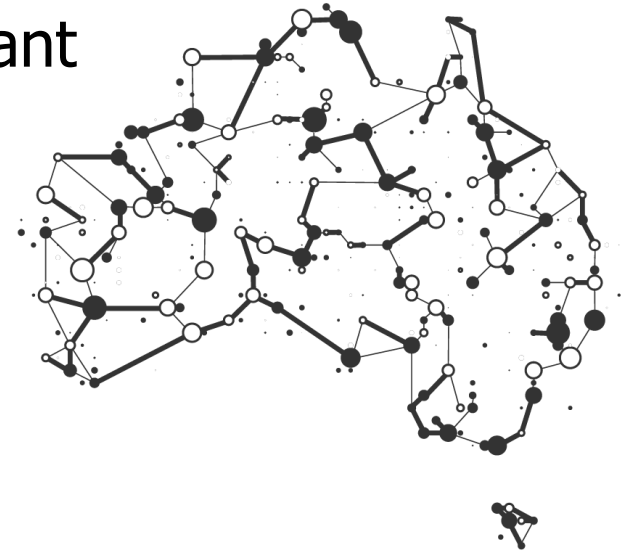


Number of indigenous participants in an Employment Service Area (as actual caseload)



Market strategy

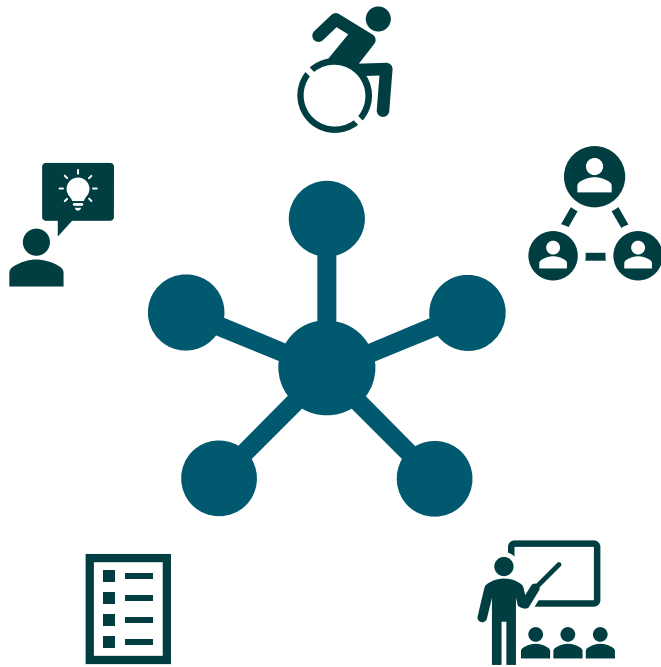
- The new program aims to strengthen the quality and diversity of providers.
- Specialist providers with deep expertise in a participant cohort will be encouraged.
- Balance market controls that support the viability of smaller and more specialist providers to enter or re-enter the market.
- Increase diversity and participant choice and control.
- Employment Service Areas (ESAs) remain the same.



Disability Employment Centre of Excellence

The Centre of Excellence will:

- Increase awareness and share best practice examples that work, including customised employment, job coaching and career planning
- Build provider skills and knowledge to understand employer needs and to help employers hire and support employees with disability
- Provide training and resources to providers and employers to increase their overall capability
- Support all providers who help deliver employment outcomes for people with a disability including remote employment services.



Current Status and timeframes

Date	Key Element
7 August to 30 August 2024	Exposure Draft for Request for Tender was provided for comment and consultation
Currently open for consultation (closes 6 Sep)	Ongoing Support Information Paper Payment Model Information Paper
	Market Structure Information paper
September/ October	Final Request for Tender to be published
1 July 2025	The new program commences



Feedback and more information



New information will be made available through the
Department of Social Services
(dss.gov.au/new-specialist-disability-employment-program)
and DSS Engage
<engage.dss.gov.au>



Email: DESConsultations@dss.gov.au