

# 2 Introduction

## 2.1 CSDA MDS collections

This publication reports on services provided or funded in 1997 by the Commonwealth Government and the State and Territory Governments under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA) of 1991. It provides data about service providers and about people receiving a service from a service provider on a 'snapshot' day, that is, on a single day, in 1997.

The CSDA Minimum Data Set (MDS) collections are conducted under the auspices of the Disability Services Subcommittee (DSSC) of the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators. The original purpose of the CSDA MDS was to facilitate the exchange of information between jurisdictions, by the design and use of standard core data items and agreed definitions. This 1997 collection is the first fully national collection<sup>1</sup>.

Information about the development and testing process for these collections, including data from the pilot tests and the 1995 and 1996 collections, can be found in earlier AIHW publications, listed in Appendix 1.

## 2.2 How the collection was conducted

The AIHW develops, in cooperation with all jurisdictions, standard versions of a Service Form, a Consumer Form and a Data Guide each year.

The data items collected on the 1997 Consumer Form included some information about:

- personal details of age, sex, ethnic origin;
- disability type, both primary and other significant disabilities;
- method of communication;
- support or assistance needed;
- income source; and
- living arrangement/accommodation type.

The data items collected on the 1997 Service Form included some information about:

- service type provided (covering 31 specific service types, within service type groupings such as accommodation support, community support, community access, respite, employment);
- hours worked by staff and volunteers;
- annual funding under the CSDA;

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1. In 1995, data on services funded by the Western Australian Government were not included. In 1996, data on services funded by the Australian Capital Territory and on some services funded by the Commonwealth Government were not included. These variations are significant for the purposes of comparability with this 1997 collection.

- times of operation (hours per day, days per week, weeks per year); and
- number of recipients receiving a service from the provider.

In general, a Service Form is completed for each service type at each outlet and a Consumer Form is completed for each person receiving that service type at the outlet on a 'snapshot' day.

The 'snapshot' day(s) were:

New South Wales	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Victoria	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Queensland	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Western Australia	Wednesday 25 June 1997 (see Section 2.3)
South Australia	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Tasmania	Wednesday 3 September 1997
Australian Capital Territory	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Northern Territory	Wednesday 20 August 1997
Commonwealth	Wednesday 24 September 1997

The conduct of the 1997 collection did not differ substantially from that of 1996. Further details are available in Black et al. (1998).

## 2.3 Scope and limitations of the collection

### Scope

The collection covers disability support services receiving some funding under the CSDA and the recipients of those services. Some disability support services may not receive CSDA funding—particularly in the areas of rehabilitation, hearing services, aids and appliances—or may be funded solely through the Home and Community Care Program or other funding relevant to nursing homes, hostels and hospitals. Some may receive no government funding. CSDA-funded services generally consist of:

- those services for people with a disability that were funded or provided by the 'disability program area' of each State and Territory before the first CSDA in 1991, and which were considered to be of a type to be included in the base;
- those services for people with a disability that were transferred between the Commonwealth, States and Territories at the start of the first CSDA in 1991; and
- services provided or funded under the CSDA since the signing of the first CSDA in 1991.

However, there is variation between jurisdictions in the services included under the CSDA. Therapy services are not included separately in the 1996 collection by all jurisdictions, although some therapy services may be included as a component within other service types. Not every State or Territory includes psychiatric services or early childhood intervention services.

- In New South Wales, psychiatric disability services are provided by the New South Wales Department of Health, after CSDA transfer from the Commonwealth, and other disability services were transferred directly to the Department of Community Services.

- In Queensland, psychiatric disability services funded and provided by the Mental Health Branch of Queensland Health are included in the CSDA MDS collections, but services funded under the 'Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund' are not.
- In the Northern Territory, mental health services and early childhood intervention services are included.
- In the Australian Capital Territory, only some mental health services are included in the CSDA MDS collections.
- In Victoria, early childhood intervention services were included under the CSDA and hence are included in this collection. Psychiatric disability services are also included.

## Service recipient counts

The use of a 'snapshot' day permits service recipients to be counted at a point in time. To the extent that the 'snapshot' day was not an average day, this count may differ from a real average. This is likely to be more significant for data applying to some service types, such as recreation and respite services. Estimates of the number of service recipients on a typical 1996–97 operating day and estimates of the total number of consumers provided with a service during 1996–97 were provided by services on the Service Form. These estimates provide some guidance as to the representativeness of the 'snapshot' day count.

Data on open labour market employment services were not collected for a single 'snapshot' day. They were collected for the financial quarter closest to the 'snapshot' day using the National Information Management System (NIMS) for Commonwealth-funded CSDA open employment services. Data items not available from the NIMS database were obtained as part of the 1997 Commonwealth Disability Services Census.

Western Australian data were collected for a full-year period to 30 June 1997. Consumer data were estimated for a 'snapshot' day by the addition of a question about whether the consumer received a service on the 'snapshot' day, with only those consumers indicated as having received a service included. It was then possible to count consumers using CSDA services funded by Western Australia on a relatable basis to those collected by other States and Territories.<sup>2</sup>

**The data about service recipients in this collection are, effectively, counts of services provided, on one day, by providers who receive at least some CSDA funding. They are not counts of consumers since a consumer may have received a service from more than one provider on the day and hence may be counted more than once.**

**It is not advisable to add data from service type groupings together and to describe them as a total number of consumers.**

Further details about the effects of this double-counting problem are available in Black et al. (1998).

Consumer Forms were not collected for some service types—advocacy, information, print disability/alternative formats of communication, service evaluation and training, peak bodies, and research and development. For many services of these types there may be no direct contact with individual people with a disability, or contact with consumers is

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2. Western Australian service recipients receiving more than one service type on the snapshot day were counted in each service type received, to relate the data to that from other jurisdictions. This results in data that are different to that published in the Annual Report of the Western Australian Disability Services Commission.

transient, for example giving a telephone referral, and hence data collection in the format used here could have been problematic.

## **Service counts**

Data are intended to be collected at 'outlet level'; however, this has not been fully achieved in all jurisdictions. A 'service' as counted here may in fact be a single outlet, or may be two or more outlets of the same service type funded from a single service provider from which only grouped outlet data are available.

A single service provider organisation may be providing several 'services' as counted here. A Service Form was completed for each of the service types provided. An organisation funded to provide CSDA disability support services of several different CSDA service types as defined here, was counted several times.

## **Response rates**

The response rate for return of Service Forms was 97%. Response rates for most data items from returned Service Forms and Consumer Forms were generally good for this collection, with the most noted exception being data on Indigenous origin (however, the response for this data item has improved since 1996). Response rates are considered further in Section 6.1.