Media Statement

28 May 2018

SDA POLICY REVIEW A WELCOME OPPORTUNITY

We welcome today’s announcement by the Australian Government of a review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme’s Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) Pricing and Payment framework.

The Summer Foundation is a strong supporter of the SDA model. It is a radical change from the previous system of institutional housing, which has been dominated by group homes that are associated with abuse, neglect and poor outcomes for residents.

The SDA model gives people with disability control over their housing funding, creates a user-driven market and enables people with disability to decide where they live and who they live with. Implementation issues aside, we believe that the SDA model can deliver better housing outcomes for people with very high and complex disability support needs.

SDA is a critical part of the solution for over 6000 younger people around Australia currently living in nursing homes, to finally give them access to appropriate and high quality housing options, in an exciting new housing market.

The SDA policy is already delivering results for people with disability. The Summer Foundation’s SDA Demand and Supply Survey found over 1,000 new SDA housing places under construction for people with disability. SDA is a successful model of public private partnerships. Around $5 billion of new investment is needed in SDA. Banks and superannuation funds are coming to the table to finance this important social infrastructure.

For SDA policy to achieve its potential, it must be guided by the core principles of choice and control for people with disability. People with disability must be able to choose where they live and who they live with, and the housing market must be facilitated to respond to this demand.

The Summer Foundation has been extremely concerned about recent information published by the National Disability Insurance Agency, signalling that SDA funding decisions may force people with SDA funding into shared accommodation and support.

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The review of the SDA framework provides an important opportunity to raise this concern, and to also highlight the serious implementation issues that have been emerging. Key concerns include unreasonable delays in SDA funding decisions, failures to approve SDA funding and financial penalties being imposed on housing providers when NDIS participants live with family members. These issues have had a negative impact on the SDA market and forced many people to continue to live in nursing homes and other inappropriate housing.

The Summer Foundation has been working over the past two years to help NDIS participants think about housing options and encourage investors, developers and builders to consider investment in the SDA market.

The review announced today provides an important opportunity to reflect on the first 2 years of the SDA policy framework and suggest improvements. The Summer Foundation looks forward to contributing to the review.

[ENDS]

Quotes attributable to:

Luke Bo’sher, CEO, Summer Foundation

SDA Framework Review Terms of Reference:

<https://engage.dss.gov.au/ndis-specialist-disability-accommodation-pricing-and-payments-framework-review/ndis-specialist-disability-accommodation-pricing-and-payments-framework-review-terms-of-reference/>

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