



Income Management Ceduna Region Consultations Report (March 2014)

What is this report about?

The purpose of this report is to tell you what people said at the income management consultations held in the Ceduna region in February 2014. Some people who attended the meetings were keen to be provided information about what everyone had said in the consultations. This report provides a short summary of the conversations that took place in over 50 meetings.

When did the consultations take place?

From 3–27 February 2014, representatives from the Department of Social Services, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Department of Human Services met with community members and organisations in the Ceduna region to talk about income management and to find out whether people thought income management would be helpful for people living in the Ceduna region.

Why did the consultations happen?

The Government had previously commissioned Ninti One Ltd to undertake a study in August 2013 in Ceduna and the neighbouring communities of Oak Valley, Scotdesco, Koonibba and Yalata to ask people what they thought about income management.

As part of the study, Ninti One Ltd interviewed community members, service providers and key stakeholders, including the West Coast Alcohol and Substance Misuse Action Group. The findings from the study showed community support for income management in the region. The community also said they would like more information on income management.

What did the Government representatives talk about?

At the meetings in February 2014, the Government representatives talked about what income management is and how it works; and how income management aims to help people who receive income support payments to pay for basic essentials such as food, accommodation, electricity, clothing, medical care and school items. The representatives also talked about the different ways that people go onto income management:

- Voluntary Income Management – People who choose to go onto income management.
- Child Protection Income Management – Child Protection authorities can help people to go onto income management to protect the wellbeing of children. In South Australia this happens with the consent of the person.
- Vulnerable Income Management – People who need help with money and looking after themselves, or who are homeless or might soon be homeless, or young people

needing help because they have left home or are just out of prison.

- Long Term Welfare Payment Recipients / Disengaged Youth (NT only) – People who have been out of work for some time.
- Supporting People at Risk (NT only) – People needing help with drug and alcohol issues.
- Cape York – People referred by the Family Responsibilities Commission who need help to get support from other services, keep their children safe and send them to school.

What did people say at the consultations?

At the meetings, many people supported the voluntary measure of income management. People said that voluntary income management would empower individuals, giving them control of their money and ensuring they have enough for the fortnight. People said that the voluntary measure would also help in protecting people's money from humbugging.

Community members said that there are some people who have problems with alcohol and drug abuse and that some children were not receiving enough food. People thought that income management and in particular the BasicsCard may help to cut substance abuse and could mean that people buy more food for their children.

Some non-government organisations, local schools and police were very supportive of the introduction of income management because they thought it may stabilise the community. Staff at local schools thought that attendance may improve if students were better fed; and would also assist community members who may be vulnerable to financial exploitation.

There was also support from women in various communities who said that income management would help them to budget

better and to have money to last for the entire fortnight.

At some of the meetings, women, rather than men, were keen to have the BasicsCard.

Some people in remote communities supported income management as they thought it might help some parents who often leave their children in community with no food and go into town to spend their income support payments on alcohol.

Various community members suggested that income management should also be implemented in Tjuntjuntjara in Western Australia because people regularly travel to and from Tjuntjuntjara, through the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands and the Ceduna region, for cultural and community events.

Some members from remote communities and at the public meetings suggested that income management was targeted towards Indigenous people only. They expressed concern that introducing income management in the Ceduna region would be like the Northern Territory Emergency Response (sometimes known as the Intervention).

People also said that the Government had already made their decision about implementing income management in the Ceduna region and that the consultations were not genuine; they had concerns that the Government would put compulsory measures of income management into place; and that people may use the BasicsCard fraudulently. People also said that they would be embarrassed using the BasicsCard.

People also stated that the Ceduna region needed more support services in place.