

MENTAL HEALTH, DISABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

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Portable Long Service Leave Consultation  
Office of Industrial Relations – IR Policy  
Via email: [SACSPLSL@oir.qld.gov.au](mailto:SACSPLSL@oir.qld.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the extension of time to provide a brief response to the proposal to introduce legislation around portable long service leave. Below are some thoughts on this.

**Consideration of the Proposal to introduce a Portable Long Service Leave scheme for the community services industry in Queensland**

The Office of Industrial Relations is considering three options in relation to this issue:

- Option ONE: The social and community services industry continued without Government intervention (status quo).
- Option TWO: Legislate a mandatory PLSL scheme in the Queensland social and community services industry with a new sector specific governing body to administer the scheme.
- Option THREE: Similar to option two, legislate a mandatory PLSL scheme for the Queensland social and community services sector with the existing statutory authority QLeave, to administer the scheme.

**Open Minds offers the following feedback:**

Proposed funding for the PLSL scheme is based on a levy, estimated to be around 1.5% of salaries. This would cause significant financial distress in the not for profit sector where margins are already tight. Unlike the Construction sector, this is a low paying, low revenue sector. Under NDIS, these

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margins become even smaller and it is possible that introduction of this scheme would contribute to organisations being unsustainable and therefore no longer being able to support their clients or employ any staff.

One of the justifications for this proposal is the short term nature of funding in the sector. As NDIS is introduced, this concern diminishes significantly, as there is no set time frame for funding to cease for a service, as there was under block funding. It is possible that introduction of this scheme would increase turnover in organisations and reduce loyalty and commitment of employees, as there are fewer incentives to stay with one particular employer.

The commentary around employers having difficulty attracting and retaining employees in the sector may be true, but the low salaries that employers need to offer in order to remain within the funding provided for under NDIS is a greater challenge than the absence of long service leave. Many staff leave the sector due to the low wages. It is disputable if the potential to access long service leave, many years in the future, would be sufficient to compensate for low earnings for that period of time.

People work in the sector due to passion and commitment. It is true that there is a high level of resilience required to be in this field, and as a result, if additional costs were to be imposed on a business, this money would be better spent on initiatives to support staff through recognition and resilience support in the “now” rather than many years in the future.

Finally, the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health have submitted a very comprehensive response, which we have been provided a copy of. Open Minds reiterates and agrees with their stance on the Portable Long Service Leave proposal.

We hope that further consultation will be made available prior to any development of legislation on this matter.

Yours sincerely



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