

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY-BASED MICRO GRANTS FOR DISABILITY AIDS AND EQUIPMENT: RESULTS FROM A NEEDS ANALYSIS

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What was the study about?

This study was undertaken to examine the trends of Not For Profit (NFP) micro-grant requests of up to \$10,000 AUD, intended for young adults with complex disabilities.

What did the study find?

The analysis of NFP micro-grant applications found that the living situation of young adults with complex disabilities was the determining factor for larger grant requests. People living with families as opposed to living independently required more home modification, equipment needs and respite support. The study also identified a higher amount of younger applicants requesting “last resort” respite care.

Why is this interesting or important?

NFP micro-grants make an important contribution to the service and care given to young adults experiencing complex disabilities. Micro-grants of up to 10,000 dollars can be used to provide equipment and services that the current system does not provide. Understanding the trends of micro-grants applications can be used to better target the needs of young adults with complex disabilities in the community and refine the grant process. This study highlights some of the unmet needs in the community.

How was the study done?

Micro-grant applications over a period of 5 years from a total of 136 service organisations from three states, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. In total 371 unique applications for aid and equipment were reviewed.

What does this mean for practice?

The micro-grant study shows that under the current system some public needs are not being met. The introduction of Australia’s National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a chance to better target the needs of service users and carers. More assistance is needed for service users, particularly carers and young adults with disabilities to enable them to live more independent and productive lives. NFP schemes have an important role in providing some services, yet NFP micro-grants should not be considered a viable long-term solution to funding shortcomings.

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