



Government of Western Australia  
Disability Services Commission



Our ref: 70000020v3  
Enquiries: Dr Ron Chalmers  
Telephone: 9426 9250

Ms Mandy Mason  
Chief Executive Officer  
LEARN  
217 Canning Highway  
East Fremantle WA 6158

Dear Ms Mason

During your recent meeting with the Minister for Disability Services it was agreed that the Disability Services Commission would provide you with information regarding the prequalification process used to assess the suitability of prospective service provider organisations.

To follow is an overview of the prequalification process that has been used by the Commission for over 15 years to grow and develop the not-for-profit disability services sector.

- Prequalification is the process used by the Commission to ensure that prospective service provider organisations can demonstrate that they are suitable to be contracted by government for the provision of services to the Western Australian community.
- The Commission uses a public and transparent process when calling for expressions of interest from service provider organisations seeking prequalification. This is done annually or on a two year cycle dependent upon the requirement for new service capacity in the sector.
- Prequalification is important to ensure that quality assurance can be met in relation to the delivery of services to people with disability and ensure that the use of public funds is effective, relevant, open and transparent.
- To achieve prequalified status, disability sector organisations must provide services that are evidence based, family centred, provide a comprehensive service, and meet the Disability Service Standards and a range of other qualitative criteria.
- During the pre-qualification process, prospective organisations are assessed for their current financial status and ongoing sustainability, their governance arrangements and membership of their Boards, the service guidelines under which the organisation provides its service and the quality assurance provisions that are in place.

- An assessment is made on these factors and the potential risk that the organisation may pose for people with disability and to government funds.

It is likely that the Disability Services Commission will conduct another prequalification process during the 2012/13 financial year. The precise timing of this process will be dependent upon the Commission's assessment of the need for additional service provider capacity.

I would encourage LEARN to engage in this prequalification process at the appropriate time.

During the meeting with the Minister questions were raised about the capacity of Government, via the Disability Services Commission, to allocate funds to LEARN to address accumulated debt. Unfortunately, it is not possible for funds to be made available for this purpose.

If you have any further questions in relation to these matters please contact me directly on 9426 9250.

Yours sincerely



Dr Ron Chalmers  
Director General  
Disability Services Commission

17 April 2012

29 September 2011

Ms V Michaille  
Private Secretary  
The Honorable Helen Morton  
Via email: [valerie.michaille@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:valerie.michaille@dpc.wa.gov.au)

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Dear Ms Michaille

**REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT**

Thank you so much for your time by phone on Friday.

I recently met with The Honorable Peter Collier regarding our organisation, The LEARN Foundation for Autism Ltd.

I explained that although we are a not-for-profit organization established for providing world class best practice early intervention to young children with autism, we do not qualify for any state funding. In particular, our organization has expertise that in my view is not currently available anywhere in Australia for dealing with serious self-injurious behavior and aggression.

It was of great interest to our organization when the State Government announced \$600 million of funding for not-for-profits operating in the disability sector.

I have spent some time speaking with The Disability Services Commission, in particular with Ms Nola Kenny. My understanding is that state funding from DSC is dependent on a pre-qualification process which will not open up again until next year or the year after – this has not been decided as yet.

As a result, my request for a meeting is to discuss whether there is any way for LEARN to qualify for application for the new round of funding ahead of the 2012/2013 pre-qualification process.

I have attached some brief background information about autism and LEARN but am happy to provide any further information the Minister may require.

Yours faithfully,



Mandy Mason  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Cc: The Honorable Peter Collier

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrew Mason [mailto:andrewmason@optimar.com]

Sent: Wednesday, 16 May 2012 7:59 PM

To: Mandy Mason

Subject: Colin Barnett

Basically I contacted Nina Curtis in Colin Barnett's office who fobbed me off onto the ministers office. Steve Eadie from the ministers office contacted me and I described the whole story and they fobbed me off onto DSC. I described the whole story to DSC, and they got me to contact Fachsia in Canberra who said they couldn't do anything, so DSC said that if Canberra couldn't do anything neither could they, then I went back to the ministers office and they said that if DSC couldn't do anything then neither could the minister. Standard public service shuffle.

Several weeks later I recontacted Colin Barnett's office and arranged a meeting with Colin in his electorate office in Cottesloe and met with him on 1 October 2010. I believe I spoke with him for about 45 minutes as I went well over the time I had been allotted. I described ABA, the costs involved, the evidence backing, the results, and the lack of evidence based practice by the autism association. I stressed emphatically the difficult financial position LEARN was in and our need for emergency funding. He was very sympathetic but urged me to go through the channels with DSC. Problem was that DSC was not planning on opening tenders for services for about 2 years so we basically hit a brick wall with them, just like you have done recently.

The people I spoke to at the various offices were:

Minister's office - Steve Eadie

DSC Peter Batini, Ron Chalmers (don't know whether I spoke to one of these or both) Fahscia - David Marshall