



Western Australian Submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 2015 Review

Update and Supplementary Issues October 2015

This submission responds to the Commonwealth Grants Commission's (CGC's) discussion paper CGC 2014-03-S. It should be read in conjunction with Western Australia's submission in response to the CGC's 2015 Review draft report.

School Education and Post-Secondary Education

We support the proposals in relation to econometric analysis of school costs and treatment of post-secondary education user charges.

With regard to schools service delivery scale (SDS), our September submission to the 2015 Methodology Review recommends that the definition for SDS affected areas should be extended to include all areas with populations less than 5,000 people.

Low Socio-Economic Status Disability for Other General Welfare Services

We support the CGC staff proposal to use the proportion of one-parent families with dependents in State populations as the indicator of general disadvantage.

As noted in the discussion paper, this is a broader measure than the other up-to-date alternatives.

Revised Weights for the Justice Assessment

Socio-Demographic Status Discounting

The discussion paper proposes retaining the 25% discount for the police socio-demographic status weights.

However, the paper itself recognises that the new State-provided data are better quality, being both more timely and comprehensive. They also relate to offender numbers rather than just custody rates.

Therefore, we believe that, at a minimum, the discount should be reduced.

Socio-Economic Status Weights

In Table 5 (page 11) of the discussion paper, relating to police, we note that the proposed weights for Indigenous persons average to 0.84, whereas the weights for non-Indigenous persons average to one.

The CGC will need to scale the weights for Indigenous persons to an average of one, so as to not alter the overall weight for Indigenous persons relative to non-Indigenous persons.

This is also an issue for courts and prisons.