

Senate Inquiry on Newstart and related payments

Things to Think About When Telling Your Story

Below are some questions to think about before you tell your story about life on Newstart and other support programs:

- 1. How long have you been (or how long were you) on Newstart or another Allowance? What was your situation before getting Newstart?**
- 2. How much do you receive per week? How much do you have left after you pay your housing costs? Do you receive Rent Assistance?**
- 3. Do you struggle with the cost of utilities?**
- 4. Do you skip meals? How often? Are there particular foods – like meat, or fresh fruit and vegetables – that you cannot afford?**
- 5. Do you struggle with health costs? When was the last time you were able to see a dentist?**
- 6. Do you struggle with public transport costs? Do you ever have to stay home because you cannot afford a bus fare? Do you find it hard to maintain a car?**
- 7. What are some things that you go without or have to do differently? Do you avoid using heating or cooling? Do you buy second-hand clothes? Do you find it difficult to buy gifts for loved ones for birthdays/other special occasions?**
- 8. Do you ever feel isolated or lonely because of a lack of funds? What effect does living on a low income have on your mental health?**
- 9. Have you ever visited a charity or service provider to ask for financial/practical assistance?**
- 10. Does the current rate of Newstart make it harder to look for paid work? OR, if you are studying, does the current rate make it difficult for you to study or train?**
- 11. What have been your experiences looking for paid work?**
- 12. What would a raise to Newstart, Youth Allowance, and other Allowances mean for you? How would it affect your life? How much of an increase would you like to see?**