On 18 November 2010, the Australian Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Senior Officials Committee (AEEYSOC) agreed to trial a model for identifying students with disability who receive adjustments to participate in education.

**Purpose**

The development of a national model for identifying students with disability who are provided with additional support will provide comparable information about the diversity of the population of students with disability, the level of adjustments they are provided with and the outcomes they achieve.

This data will provide parents and the community with meaningful information about students with disability and the level of adjustments provided to assist them reach their potential.

A nationally consistent approach for identifying students with disability will also inform future planning and policy development to better help schools to meet the needs of students with disability.

**What are the objectives of the trial?**

The objectives of the trial are to:

- Test the implementation of the national model to ensure that data on students with disability and the level of additional educational support provided to them can be collected in a nationally consistent way
- Verify that each participating school and education authority is able to interpret and apply the national model consistently
- Assess the impact of the data collection arrangements on Australian schools and the education authorities
- Provide recommendations for national implementation of the model, given the findings of the trial.

**What is the national model?**

The model consists of a process of identifying the:

- Number of students with disability
- Type of disability from four categories - physical, cognitive, sensory, and social/emotional
- Extent of the measures or actions taken by a school or provider to assist these students to access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability.
- Further information on the National Model can be found on the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) website – www.deewr.gov.au/swdtrial

**How will the trial work?**

The trial will include a nationally representative sample of 150 schools across Australia between May – July 2011.

The trial will be overseen by a Steering Committee, which includes representatives from state and territory education authorities, Catholic and Independent school sectors, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and DEEWR.

DEEWR selected PwC to undertake the trial and ensure the data collection process is implemented in the most effective and efficient way and with minimal impact on schools.

**What does this mean for you?**

For this trial we ask that:

- **Principals** – confirm participation of the school in the trial, nominate an appropriate contact point for PwC and parents; and approve your schools data submission
- **School contact points** – complete the data collection tool with support from PwC. In some schools this will be the special needs coordinator. In other schools a senior staff member who understand the needs and adjustments for students with disability at their school
- **Parents** – be informed of the trial and provide participation consent where necessary.
How will schools be supported in this process?

Staff nominated by each participating school will receive a face-to-face consultation from the PwC team to explain the model, the data being collected and how to use the web database. Each school will be contacted in advance to arrange a suitable time for this visit.

A dedicated helpline run by PwC staff will also be available everyday to answer queries. There is also a dedicated email address for web based communication.

What data will be collected?

As part of the trial the following de-identified student information will be collected:

- Number of students with disability receiving adjustments to participate in education
- Demographic information including student age, gender and year group
- Type of primary disability categorised by:
  - physical
  - cognitive
  - sensory
  - social/emotional
- Level of adjustments made.

All information collected during the trial will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

For a student to be included in this exercise they should be identified as having a disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 that has been confirmed by a professional, with an appropriate qualification in medical or behavioural sciences from a recognised tertiary institution. We will also ask schools to confirm that each student has had a consultation in assessing the impact of the disability.

Following the data collection process, an impact assessment will be conducted to understand the administrative burden and cost of collecting this data from schools and education authorities.

How will the data be collected?

Data will be collected using a secure web database specifically designed for this trial. Each school will be given secure access to a website and all users will have a unique login and password. Schools will only be able to see the data in respect of their own school.

The web database will:
- Be accompanied by a detailed user handbook for guidance material
- Have ‘user friendly’ features that will assist in populating the database. These features will include:
  - an easy to read screen and user friendly menus to assist navigating the tool
  - an easy to print function to allow printing of formatted information for your records
  - status reporting and ability to save information in draft for review.

Data will not be reported at student, school or community level. Data will be aggregated to the regional level and/or across the sector types to ensure the privacy of each student.

How will the data be used?

Data collected during the trial will be used to assess the appropriateness of the model and the impact of the data collection process. This will inform Ministers to make decisions regarding the possible implementation of a national model.

Further information on the trial

This trial is being run in partnership with state and territory education authorities and DEEWR. It is being managed by PwC.

The helpline is available to answer queries on 1800 792 793 (1800 PwC SwD) or 02 8266 1990 or via email at swdtrial@au.pwc.com.