



Australian Government



NDIS Review Town Hall

Hobart on 14 March 2024

The Department of Social Services and members from the NDIS Review Panel held a discussion about the NDIS Review in Hobart on 14 March 2024.

The session was held in person at the Hobart Town Hall Centre and was also livestreamed virtually.

Speakers included NDIS Review Co-chair, Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM, along with panel members Professor Kirsten Deane OAM and Mr Dougie Herd. Ebe Ganon was MC for the event.

Panel discussion

Any NDIS changes need to be designed with people with disability, their families and with their organisations, to make sure they work for everyone.

A connected system of supports inside and outside the NDIS

The panel spoke about how the NDIS Review heard from over 10,000 people about how to improve the NDIS. The panel discussed their plans for improving the NDIS and the main areas where change is recommended.

The NDIS Review wants to create a more connected system of supports inside and outside the NDIS. They recommend new types of supports called foundational supports:

- General foundational supports that will help people find supports, information and advice.
- Targeted foundational supports that will help people with more personalised services, like home services, support services in the community and supports for children and families.

The NDIS Review has recommended changes in the NDIS planning process to make it less confusing and harmful to people with disability:

- When people with disability access the NDIS, the focus will be on the impact of an individual's disability on their daily life rather than on a diagnosis. A simpler application form is proposed and, if assistance is needed, a navigator will be available to help complete it.
- Once in the NDIS, a fairer method for collecting personal information to set the NDIS budget is proposed. This includes an assessment focused on support needs.
- When people enter the NDIS, they will have more choice about how they spend budgets and will be provided with assistance to develop a budget plan that works for them.

People outside and inside the NDIS will be able to get help from a person called a 'navigator'. Navigators will help people access mainstream services (like hospitals and schools), foundational supports and services funded by the NDIS. There will be different kinds of navigators with special knowledge in areas like housing and psychosocial disability.

The NDIS Review wants to improve supports for different groups of people with disability, including specific supports for children and families, people with psychosocial disability, and people with home and living needs.

The NDIS Review heard from people that NDIS services are not always readily available or accessible. The NDIS Review recommended a new system of registration where all providers will be registered. The new registration process will range from simple and straightforward to more complex registration for services in closed settings.

Questions answered by the panel

People were able to ask questions and give feedback using an online interactive tool. People asked hundreds of questions during the panel discussion. Questions were grouped into themes and will be addressed through the FAQ section on the webpage. Questions focused on:

- How will the transition from support coordinators to navigators impact self-managed participants?
- How will the Home & Living changes be implemented to ensure that the living arrangements of people with disabilities are not one-size-fits-all?
- What measures are being taken to ensure that the complaint process deals with complaints in a timely, neutral, and fair manner?



Closing remarks by the Hon. Bill Shorten MP, Minister for the NDIS

Minister Bill Shorten was joined by Quin Thomson and Dr Katherine Ellison to reflect on the NDIS Review final report and the panel's discussion. Quin Thomson is an advocate for neurodivergent individuals. Dr Katherine Ellison is a psychologist, who is also member of Australia's Disability Strategy and Tasmania's Premiers Disability Advisory Council.

Quin Thomson explained the need for improved NDIS support for adult autistic participants, while Dr. Katherine Ellison highlighted the gap in services for those with psychosocial disabilities between the NDIS and mainstream mental health services.

Minister Shorten emphasised the Australian Government's commitment to maintaining and improving the NDIS, recognising its transformative impact despite inconsistencies and administrative challenges.

The Minister also spoke about the efforts that are underway to address issues such as lengthy appeal processes and delayed hospital discharges, with a focus on building trust and streamlining services. Proposals include greater foundational supports, improving planning processes, and ensuring transparency and consistency in NDIS services to empower individuals and minimise anxiety.

After the session's close, Minister Shorten and Professor Bruce Bonyhady had the opportunity to engage with the attendees to discuss the event and any questions or concerns they had about the NDIS Review.

