



Australian Government



NDIS Review Town Hall

Launceston 15 March 2024

The Department of Social Services and members from the NDS Review Panel held a discussion about the NDIS Review in Launceston on 15 March 2024.

The session was held in person at the Launceston Conference 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 the panel was asked the most common questions by MC, Ebe Ganon. Questions focused on:

- Will the disability support needs assessment will be undertaken in the first planning meeting?
- Will planning meetings take place at different points in time or just when there has been a change in circumstances?
- How will the separation of supported independent living services and accommodation be implemented, and when are the changes expected?



- What are the different kinds of navigators and what qualifications or skills are required?

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

Minister Bill Shorten was joined by Judith Huett, a self-advocate within the disability sector, to reflect on the panel's discussion and the NDIS Review recommendations. Judith asked about the accountability of all government levels and mainstream entities, the consequences of their irresponsibility, and how the success of the services provided to people with disability will be measured.

Minister Shorten emphasised the potential of the NDIS and its role in fostering a more inclusive Australia. The Minister also reinstated the commitment and collective effort between the Australian Government, states and territories, who share accountability for the implementation of these NDIS reform and involving people with disability throughout this process.

The Minister highlighted the potential areas of improvement and the challenges associated with the NDIS, and highlighted the importance of participant experience as the benchmark for success. The Minister also addressed a plan to report grievances and ensure resolutions are reached in a timely and equitable manner.

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

