



Australian Government



NDIS Review Town Hall

Perth 19 February 2024

The Department of Social Services held a discussion about the NDIS Review in Perth on 19 February 2024.

This session was held in person at the Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre and was livestreamed virtually.

Speakers included Review Co-chair, Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM, and panel members Professor Kirsten Deane OAM, Dr Stephen King and Dougie Herd. Disability rights advocate, Elly Demarchelier, 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, Elly Demarchelier. Questions focused on:

- How will the Australian Government work together to make changes with people with disability?
- How will the registration process address the quality and safety of services?
- How will registrations impact self-management of NDIS funding for people with disability?
- What changes will be made to help people with disability aged 65 and over?



- How will these reforms make sure there is separation between housing and supports?
- What ideas will help ensure that changes are made in a timely manner?

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

Minister Bill Shorten was joined by two people with disability, Nihal Iscel and Michelle Silver to reflect on the NDIS Review final report and panel discussion. Nihal Iscel is the Chair of the People with Disabilities WA Board. Michelle Silver is the Chair of the Developmental Disability WA Advisory Council.

Nihal asked about shared supports for people with high needs, access to navigators for First Nations and multicultural communities, and funding for systemic advocacy. Michelle asked about how the Australian Government will ensure that people understand the NDIS and changes to the system of supports, in addition to supporting people with disability who don't have family supports.

Minister Shorten talked about how the Australian Government government will work with states and territories to engage with stakeholders, including people with disability, before implementing the NDIS reforms. The Australian Government has set up a Taskforce to talk about registration with people with disability.

The Minister also said that the Australian Government is committed to getting it right for First Nations, and that the first step to do this is by talking to people in the community. The Minister recognised the need for systemic advocacy funding and the importance of involving people with disability and their families in changing the NDIS.

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

