

DISABILITY REFORM MINISTERIAL COUNCIL (DRMC)

Virtual – 6 December 2024

COMMUNIQUÉ

Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers met virtually on 6 December 2024 to continue work on important matters arising from their November meeting.

Ministers welcomed the new Queensland Disability Minister, the Hon Amanda Camm MP, and the new Australian Capital Territory Disability Minister, Ms Suzanne Orr MLC.

The Hon Minister Amanda Rishworth MP and the Hon Minister Kate Washington MP were unable to attend.

Today, Australian and State and Territory Disability Ministers continued discussions in response to the Independent Review into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Review). The final report was presented to Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers, at the Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC) on Friday 3 November 2023 and publicly released on 7 December 2023.

Ministers reconfirmed the importance of releasing a joint DRMC response following the initial response to the NDIS Review agreed at National Cabinet on 6 December 2023. The response is in the final stages of completion and will be released following agreement by all governments.

Ministers reconfirmed their thanks to the many people with disability, their families and carers who shared their expertise and valuable insight with the NDIS Review Panel. We also acknowledge the work of the NDIS Review Panel Chairs, Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM, and panel members Ms Judy Brewer AO, Professor Kirsten Deane OAM, Mr Dougie Herd, Mr Kevin Cocks AM and Dr Stephen King.

Ministers also discussed the progress made in developing the first new NDIS rules enabled by the *NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No 1) Act 2024*. Ministers agreed that all new or amended NDIS rules must be tested through further consultation and engagement with the disability community to shape the reform journey.

The Ministers discussed the joint approval process, and expressed broad support, for the NDIS Rule relating to subsection 44(5) of the NDIS Act, which relates to plan management to ensure spending is in accordance with a participant's plan. A copy of this rule has been previously published on the Department of Social Services website at www.dss.gov.au/national-disability-insurance-scheme-review-and-reforms/changes-ndis-act.

There was also discussion by Ministers of the need to consider appropriate arrangements to support implementation of responses to the NDIS Review once agreed. Further work will be undertaken for agreement by Disability Ministers to establish a Reform Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of reforms arising from the NDIS Review and report to DRMC.

DISABILITY REFORM MINISTERIAL COUNCIL (DRMC)

Virtual – 6 December 2024

COMMUNIQUÉ

Ministers acknowledged the significant contributions and leadership of the Hon. Bill Shorten since 2022 in his role as Chair of DRMC. Ministers reflected on the strength of the working relationship between the Commonwealth and states and territories and emphasised the importance of continued co-governance of the NDIS.

The next meeting of the Disability Reform Ministerial Council will be held early in February, with the date to be confirmed.