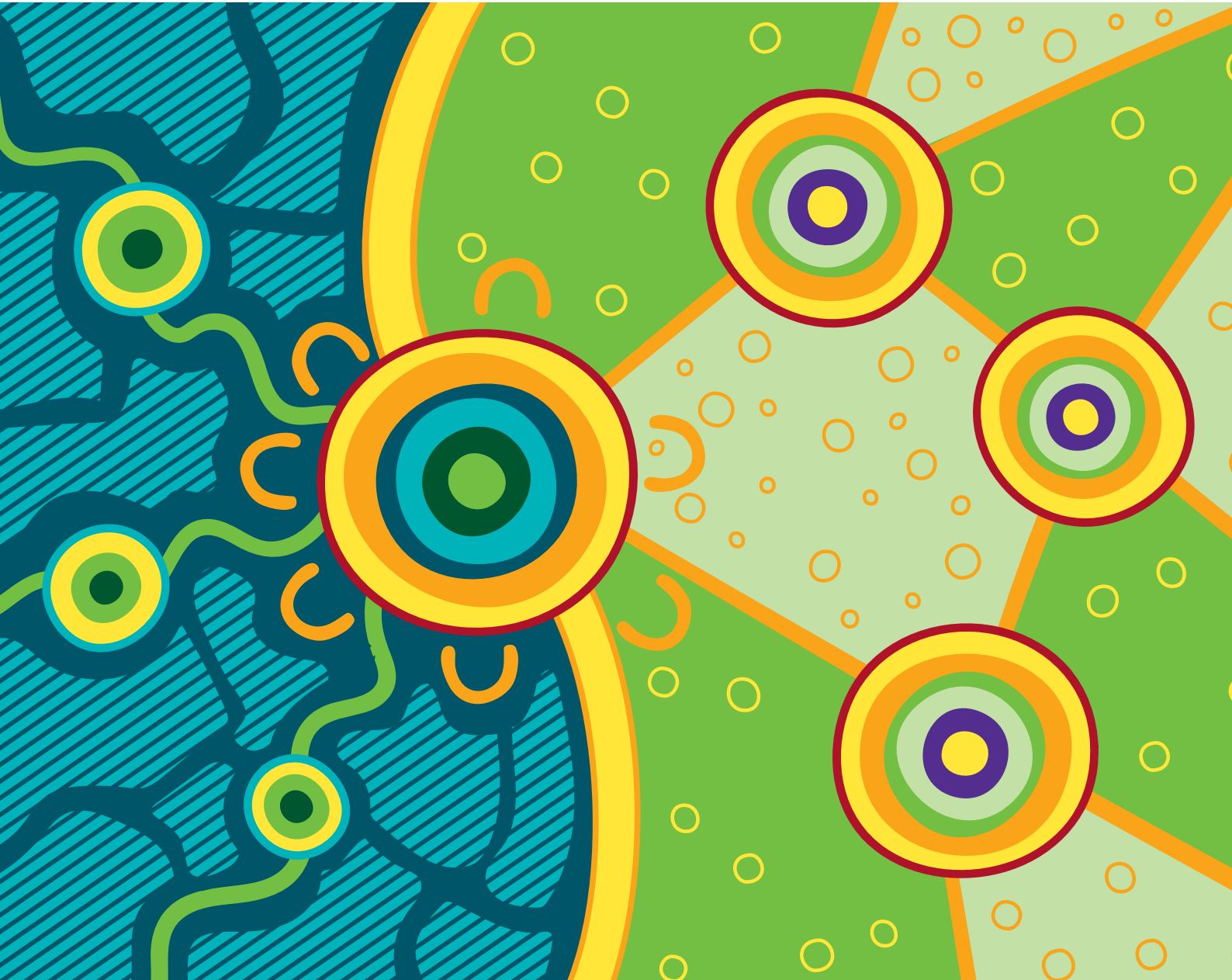




Australian Government

Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability





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Foreword

The development of the *Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability* (the Plan) recognises the importance of supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to achieve successful and fulfilling lives within the Australian community.

The Plan outlines actions the Australian Government is and can take to provide sustainable mainstream¹ and disability services, delivered within a cultural framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers.

The Plan sits under the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* (the Strategy) second implementation plan: *Driving Action 2015–2018*. The Strategy seeks to ensure that people with disability have full access to broader community services and facilities.

The Plan offers an unprecedented opportunity for Australian Government agencies to commit to actions that will improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Furthermore, this plan assists in addressing the Government's targets for employment, education and health under *Closing the Gap* measures. There are also important linkages with the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023*.

This Plan represents a starting point that will help ensure positive and sustainable results in the future to be achieved by continued collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Plan is linked to the National Disability Insurance Agency's (NDIA) *Rural and Remote Strategy 2016–2019* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy* to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability will benefit from the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Actions under the NDIA plans will enhance innovative cultural approaches to service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability whilst leveraging employment opportunities in remote communities.

To improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers, we must build on existing services to ensure that the Australian Government is providing culturally responsive and sustainable disability support systems.

To address the disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Australian Government is committed to working on tangible outcomes and providing opportunities for people with disability and for Indigenous Australians.

Collaboration and partnerships between Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will be the key to the success of this plan.

Minister for Social Services
The Honourable Christian Porter MP

**Assistant Minister for Social Services
and Disability Services**
The Honourable Jane Prentice MP

Minister for Indigenous Affairs
Senator the Honourable Nigel Scullion

1. In both disability and Indigenous sectors, the term 'mainstream' is used similarly, however from a different perspective. To avoid confusion for the purposes of this paper, the term 'mainstream' is used in the context of non-disability specific services and support.

Lake Mungo Footprints

Disability may be seen as a complex issue for traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It could be assumed that full participation in traditional customs and practices, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, is difficult.

Lake Mungo in NSW, one of the oldest archaeological sites in Australia, contains footprints of a number of people who would appear to have been participating in a hunt. Most incredible, was a single line of right footprints pushed heavily into the clay, without corresponding left footprints. These foot-prints are known to belong to a one-legged man, who appears to be participating in the hunt alongside the family/community/tribal members.

These footprints demonstrate that disability did not inhibit participation in traditional customs and practices of Aboriginal people living at Lake Mungo 20,000 years ago.

The Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability acknowledges cultural participation as important and provides solutions that facilitate a culturally responsive and sustainable disability support and service systems.





Executive summary

The Australian Government is committed to building an environment that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to achieve improved life outcomes and overall social, emotional, cultural and economic wellbeing.

The development of a dedicated Australian Government plan to improve outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability seeks to build the capacity of service systems, including disability services and Indigenous programs, to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in a culturally safe and appropriate way. The Plan also aims to support workers and carers in their continuing efforts in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Plan acknowledges that disability is everyone's responsibility:

- Australian Government
- state/territory government
- local government
- business and industry sectors
- not-for-profit and community organisations
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.

The Plan is the first of its kind and will be built on over time. The Plan will build on significant work currently being undertaken by the Australian Government to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Consultations on the Plan have been undertaken over the last three years across government agencies together with community stakeholders, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their representative organisations, researchers and community organisations.

The Plan highlights five key areas that stakeholders view as priorities for future consideration by the Australian Government, highlighting work that is already underway in these areas, along with potential strategies to address each of the areas:

- 1.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have access to appropriately designed shelter and live in accessible, well designed communities that are fully inclusive of all their residents.
- 2.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have the right to:
 - be free from racism and discrimination
 - have their rights promoted
 - a disability inclusive justice system.
- 3.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability achieve their full potential through participation in an inclusive, high quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities for lifelong learning.
- 4.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers have opportunities to gain economic security through employment and business ownership, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.
- 5.** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives, enabled by all health services capabilities to meet the needs of people with disability.



To ensure that the Plan leads to substantive and meaningful change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, any actions or strategies under the Plan must be:

- Measurable** The priorities and actions outlined in the Plan must be measurable to track progress and outcomes.
- Replicable** While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities are diverse, there needs to be some consistency in approach and general principles for success that can be applied across different communities.
- Sustainable** The Plan represents a starting point in the development of a new approach for improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. The Plan seeks to outline reform and action that will be sustainable over the long-term.
- Flexible** The Plan recognises that different people and different communities have different needs. While adhering to principles of sustainability and best practice in the delivery of services, implementation needs to be responsive to the unique requirements of individuals and communities.
- Cultural** The Plan recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability will have similar physical and structural requirements as non-Indigenous people, but that service delivery needs to be undertaken in a cultural context to achieve success.

The Australian Government is committed to working in a spirit of collaboration with states and territories, local government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and communities and organisations to deliver real outcomes and foster greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers.



Introduction

Vision: The Australian Government’s vision is an environment that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to achieve improved life outcomes and overall social, emotional and cultural wellbeing.

The *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020*² (the Strategy) outlines a ten year national policy framework for improving the lives of Australians with disability, their families and carers. The Strategy’s first implementation plan, *Laying the Groundwork 2011–2014*, set the foundation for influencing all areas of policy development and service delivery.

The Strategy’s second implementation plan, *Driving Action 2015–2018*, seeks to build on the achievements of *Laying the Groundwork 2011–2014*. *Driving Action 2015–2018* provides a framework for new policy action and for progressing ongoing commitments to improve outcomes for people with disability. Importantly, it identifies four additional areas of national cooperation:

1. National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) transition to full scheme
2. improving employment outcomes for people with disability
3. improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability
4. communication activities to promote the intent of the strategy throughout the community.

The development of the *Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability* (the Plan), confirms the Australian Government’s

commitment to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to access culturally appropriate and sustainable supports and services.

The Plan identifies potential solutions that communities, in partnership with the Australian Government, can drive for better access to culturally responsive and sustainable support and service systems. In addition to broader and sustainable reforms under the Strategy, the Plan is intended to build on current efforts being undertaken in Indigenous and disability policy reforms including actions aimed at closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage and through the NDIS.

Importantly, the Plan aligns with the United Nations ‘twin track approach’³ for achieving equal opportunities for people with disability:

1. Integrating disability sensitive measures into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs.
2. Providing disability specific initiatives to support the empowerment of persons with disability.

Engagement mechanisms—including an annual roundtable—will provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers to inform the monitoring, implementation and review of the Plan.

2. www.dss.gov.au/nds.

3. United Nations Development Group, 2011, *Guidance Note: Including the rights of persons with disabilities in United Nations programming at country level*.



United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

First Implementation Plan
Laying the Groundwork 2011-2014

Second Implementation Plan
Driving Action 2015-2018

Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability

Australian Government Action Plan

State and Territory Disability Plans

Local Government Plans (not mandatory in all jurisdictions)



Why start a specific Australian Government plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability?

Through the Strategy, the Australian Government is committed to driving improved outcomes for all people with disability, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. While there is a strong desire to reform policies, programs and supports affecting all people with disability, it is important to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who also live with disability do not miss out on opportunities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are under represented in the uptake of disability services, yet survey data (including relative prevalence) indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 1.8 times more likely to have a disability than other Australians.⁴ Despite the prevalence of disability in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, historically there has been limited policy focus on the experience of disability within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability experience multiple layers of disadvantage on the basis of heritage and disability. The effects of discrimination and institutionalisation, as well as a range of socio economic factors, contribute to poor life outcomes—including low levels of educational attainment and reduced rates of employment. For example, the employment rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is 33.2 per cent, compared to the employment rate of 48.7 per cent of non Indigenous people with

disability.⁶ This compares with an employment rate of 78.8 per cent of all people without disability.⁷ Additionally, there can be greater exposure to health risk factors such as chronic disease, reduced life expectancy and high levels of child mortality.

Importantly, the Plan recognises the cultural barriers involved in acknowledging the presence of disability. It highlights some of the difficulties faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their family members and carers such as: the lack of disability services provided in remote localities; limited awareness of disability services within communities; levels of access and equity issues within service provision; and issues of cultural safety when dealing with staff unfamiliar with cultural customs and practices. Additionally, the Plan recognises individualised models of care and support may not reflect appropriate whole-of-family/ community models that can be more effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their family members and carers.⁸

The Australian Government recognises that more needs to be done to reduce barriers to participation and improve access to all services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers. The Plan recognises that effective policies need to have a collaborative approach that is underpinned by understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultural practices and views of disability.

4. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with a Disability, 2015, analysis based on Surveys of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009, 2012 and 2015*. Catalogue no.4430.0.

5. ABS, 2015.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2015. *Australia's welfare 2015. Australia's welfare series no. 12. Cat.no.AUS189. Canberra: AIHW.*

8. *Indigenous Australians and the National Disability Insurance Scheme 2012: p20.*

Key principles

To achieve improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, the Australian Government acknowledges the following key principles for policy reform:

Centrality of country, culture and community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their representatives have emphasised that country, culture and community should be central to policy and program development that affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Human rights

Consideration of the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disability is central to the Plan. This includes the rights recognised in the United Nations human rights treaties to which Australia is a party, particularly the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.⁹ Other principles are also reflected in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.¹⁰

Inclusive mainstream services are as important as disability services

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme* (NDIS) represents a historic opportunity to improve disability services that cater to individual support needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. However, there is a pressing need to improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to other systems, such as the education system, health services, employment and workforce supports. To meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers, mainstream systems need to develop services that are family centred, strengths based and culturally appropriate.

Universal consideration of disability

The impact of disability should be addressed as a matter of course within policy deliberations and governance for all policies affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability

The views and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is central to the design, delivery and evaluation of policies, programs and supports which affect them. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with lived experience of disability, elders and representative organisations must be involved in policy development processes. The United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* addresses the right to self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and commits governments to engage with people with disability, their families, carers and their representative organisations. The development and implementation of disability and mainstream policy must involve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers.

Improving the evidence base on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability

The current evidence base to inform policy development and capacity to measure outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is limited. Improvements in data collection—both qualitative and quantitative—are needed with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. In addition, increased community-driven research is required to ensure the interests of those with lived experience of disability are captured.

9. www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml.

10. www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples-1.



Cultural context to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability

Disability as a concept is an introduced term to some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In some traditional languages there is no word for disability, although there may be terms for physical impairment; for example, blindness, or hearing loss. Often Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability do not recognise, or want to disclose, that they have a disability due to the stigma attached.

The stigma of disability may have detrimental consequences to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Labelling individuals as having a disability may cause shame, or may threaten their place in the community.¹¹ Like people within the broader community, people with disability can experience multiple layers of disadvantage and discrimination across a range of circumstances simultaneously, for example; on the basis of gender, race, age, sexuality, level of education, ethnicity, cultural or religious background, social position and experience.

Participating in cultural life is integral for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as it provides traditional links to family and strengthens spiritual connections to land and sea. Peer support and counselling, along with role models, has an important role to play in raising awareness of disability in communities through the sharing of stories and experiences.

Providing care and access to community participation is a critical element of a culturally appropriate model of care and support. Participation in cultural activities contributes to a person's self-esteem, identity, overall wellbeing, and role within the community.

Caring within a cultural context

As caring is a holistic part of cultural life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, carers often do not view themselves as carers and therefore may not access the services and supports that are available to them.

Caring for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person with disability is often the responsibility of immediate family members, and is at times, complicated by the presence of multiple comorbid illnesses or disability. Furthermore, the ability to provide care may be impacted when multiple people with disability are in the family group. High prevalence of chronic disease and poverty makes it more likely that families will experience difficulty with caring responsibilities, particularly when carers themselves may experience their own chronic health conditions.¹² Policy makers and service providers should be cognisant of this in developing culturally appropriate care models.

11. *Indigenous Australians and the National Disability Insurance Scheme 2012*:p20.

12. *Ibid.*



Comment from First Peoples' Disability Network Australia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to live a healthy, safe and empowered life. Securing the rights and futures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability involves acknowledging the positive impact that community and strong connection to culture has on a person's wellbeing.

It is important to respect the culture and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to recognise that life for many revolves around culture and community. This recognition leads to greater understanding of the trauma that is inflicted when someone is dislocated from his or her culture. Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and not for them, is a vital foundation for building support systems that are culturally safe and sustainable.



Context for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability policy in Australia

Over the last decade a number of key policy initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been developed. These include the development of Closing the Gap targets, the *Indigenous Advancement Strategy*¹³ and a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health initiatives – including the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023*¹⁴ (NATSHP) and the *Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023*.¹⁵

The following section provides information about key policy reform initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of people with disability including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and human rights treaties to which Australia is a party and/or signatory.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

On 17 July 2008, Australia became one of the first nations to ratify the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*¹⁶ (the Convention). The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disability, and promote respect for their inherent dignity. The rights in the Convention relate to all aspects of social and political life, including access to employment, education, health care, information, justice, public transport and the built environment.

Australia acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which came into force on 20 September 2009. Becoming a party to the Optional Protocol demonstrates Australia's ongoing willingness to be accountable to the international community in its implementation of the Convention.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*¹⁷ (the Declaration) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 September 2007. The Australian Government announced its support for the Declaration in April 2009.

The Declaration is a non-binding instrument which sets out a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, wellbeing and rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide. The Declaration addresses both individual and collective rights; cultural rights and identity; rights to education; health; employment; language; and other matters. It addresses discrimination against Indigenous peoples and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them. It also emphasises their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own priorities in economic, social and cultural development. The Declaration explicitly encourages harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and Indigenous peoples.

13. <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/indigenous-advancement-strategy>

14. www.health.gov.au/natsihp

15. www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/indigenous-implementation-plan

16. www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml

17. www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

The National Disability Strategy

The *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020*¹⁸ (the Strategy) was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in February 2011. The Strategy provides a ten year national policy framework for all levels of government to improve the lives of people with disability. The Strategy seeks to drive a more inclusive approach to the design of policies, programs and infrastructure so that people with disability can participate in all areas of Australian life.

On 2 September 2016, the COAG Disability Reform Council (the Council) reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to the Strategy to ensure all mainstream services and supports are inclusive and accessible for Australians with disability. Ongoing implementation of the Strategy is important both to the success of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme* (NDIS) and to achieve improved outcomes for the many people with disability who will not be NDIS participants. Council members agreed to reinvigorate all governments' efforts to drive progress under the Strategy, including through the second implementation plan.

The Strategy sets out policy directions to achieve the following desired outcomes in six broad policy areas:

- Inclusive and accessible communities
- Rights protection, justice and legislation
- Economic security
- Personal and community support
- Learning and skills
- Health and wellbeing.

The Strategy recognises that not all people with disability are alike. People with disability have specific needs, priorities and perspectives based on their personal circumstances, including the type and level of support required, education, gender, age, sexuality, and ethnic or cultural background. Some people may experience multiple layers of disadvantage and discrimination across a range of circumstances simultaneously. Gender, race and age can significantly impact the experience of disability.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme*¹⁹ (NDIS) supports people with a permanent and significant disability that substantially affects their ability to take part in everyday activities. The NDIS gives people choice and control over how, when and where their supports are delivered. It will provide certainty that people with a permanent disability will receive the support they need over their lifetime. It also focuses on early intervention where getting early supports can reduce the impact of disability on people.

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act*²⁰ (2013) (the Act) sets out the objects and principles of the NDIS, including ensuring that people with disability are supported to exercise choice and control over the care and support they receive, and giving effect in part to Australia's commitment and adherence to the Convention.

The Act sets out the process for a person becoming a participant in the scheme, how participants develop a personal, goal based plan with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), and how reasonable and necessary supports will be assured to participants. Participants will be able to decide for themselves how to manage their care and support and access assistance from an NDIS representative if they would like to.

18. www.dss.gov.au

19. <https://www.ndis.gov.au>

20. <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/governance/legislation>



The NDIA is an independent statutory agency whose role is to implement the NDIS. The NDIA works with participants to identify supports they need to live their life. Supports may help participants achieve goals in many aspects of their life, including independence, involvement in the community, education, employment, health and wellbeing, and capacity building. The NDIA's community awareness efforts will focus on working to build awareness, developing capacity and helping create improved opportunities for people with disability to access and participate in community activities.

Each quarter, NDIA prepares a report on its operations for the Council in accordance with section 174 of the Act. The quarterly reports provide the Council with information about participation and the funding or provision of supports by the NDIA in each jurisdiction. Governments have agreed that the quarterly reports will include the number of participants who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and are accessing the NDIS. Following consideration by the COAG Disability Reform Council, the quarterly reports are made available on the [NDIS website](#).

COAG has agreed that the NDIS should recognise best practice, including across current actions in the states and territories. The NDIS will build on best practice through reforms that ensure equity of access for people in regional and remote Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.²¹

NDIA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and NDIA Rural and Remote Strategy

The *NDIA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy* (the Engagement Strategy) outlines the NDIA's approach and commitment to supporting local communities to build and

implement local solutions. The NDIA will continue to support the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in a culturally respectful manner which builds trust.

The Engagement Strategy acknowledges the NDIA has an opportunity to understand, support and in some cases develop, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers, and support them to become service providers for NDIS participants.

Improved understanding of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with lived experience of disability will improve outcomes for communities across Australia, in metropolitan, rural and remote areas.

The Engagement Strategy is complimented by the *NDIA Rural and Remote Strategy 2016–2019*, which details a clear way forward to address the challenges of delivering the NDIS in rural and remote areas. The Rural and Remote Strategy details activities tailored to respond to different community contexts, including the need for varying service delivery approaches and Provider of Last Resort arrangements when required.

Building new service providers and growing the workforce is one of the most significant challenges captured in the Rural and Remote Strategy. Specific actions may be required to ensure the delivery of culturally appropriate, relevant supports for participants, particularly in remote areas.

Both NDIA Strategies were developed through extensive external consultation with Commonwealth, state and territory governments, as well as the NDIA's Rural, Remote, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group and sub-committees. The NDIA Strategies also incorporate experience from the NDIS trials, while recognising there is still much to learn and refine.

21. COAG intergovernmental Agreement on NDIS Launch, Annex A, Principle 1.i:p26



What are the policy challenges?

A holistic approach to planning is essential to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. The Plan acknowledges that addressing the complex needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability will take time.

In developing this plan, the Australian Government and disability stakeholders highlighted several overarching challenges that need to be considered during policy development and implementation:

- racism and disability discrimination
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research
- implementation of local solutions to meet local needs
- coordination in engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Racism and disability discrimination

Racism and disability discrimination are significant barriers to achieving improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023 (NATSIHP)* identifies the need for systemic racism and discrimination to be better understood, addressed and prevented. NATSIHP prioritises addressing racism and discrimination in the health sector.

Racism and disability discrimination impede the delivery of necessary supports and services required by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. The resultant poor access to supports and services can be further hampered by the lack of integrated planning, socio-economic disadvantage and geographical location.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research needs to be actively encouraged and developed across the social policy spectrum. There are significant gaps in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-driven academic research and writing.²²

The importance of community-driven research cannot be underestimated, as it identifies the specific needs of communities as well as tailored strategies to address those needs. Encouraging community-driven research will contribute to building the evidence base, and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families, carers and communities to have a voice.

There are limited numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including those with disability, undertaking research. Important stepping stones to building the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research sector are providing flexible learning approaches, peer support or targeted programs that meet the individual needs to gain skills in this very important area. Research undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders about issues that affect them has additional value that is realised through reduced concerns about misinterpretation.

22. *Inside: Special edition Aboriginal people with disability – editorial, Dr John Gilroy.*



Several projects have been funded through the [National Disability Research and Development Agenda](#) that will contribute to building the evidence base for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability:

- Enablers for Aboriginal Peoples with Disability in Central Australia to Live and Stay on Country, University of Sydney, Dr John Gilroy.
- Community-driven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research program “Living Our Ways”, Mr Scott Avery, First Peoples’ Disability Network Australia.
- Digital enterprise: Enhancing social and communication skills, and improving education and employment outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people with disability in rural, remote and metropolitan areas of Australia, Central Queensland University, Professor Denise Wood.
- Unfitness to Plead and Indefinite Detention of Persons with Cognitive Impairments: Addressing the legal barriers and creating appropriate alternative supports in the community, University of Melbourne Law School, Dr Anna Arstein Kerslake.

These research projects are due to be completed by the end of 2017. Further information about each of the projects is in Appendix B.

Local solutions to meet local needs

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are diverse with differing geographical, environmental, cultural, historical and spiritual needs. A one size fits all approach will not result in successful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their communities. For this reason, flexible community-driven, place-based approaches to the development of policies, programs and supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability are required.

Local solutions to meet local needs can be achieved through the development of innovative programs, designed in collaboration with local communities, to meet the differing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. The development of local solutions could include maximising economic opportunities in the local community, through building the capacity of the local workforce, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers, to provide the supports and services needed by the local community.

Coordination in engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in the development of policies, programs and supports is essential to improving outcomes. Engagement is often undertaken in specific topic areas rather than through a coordinated approach which can lead to a feeling of over consultation. Effective engagement and relationship building takes time and may include early engagement with a community, engagement with community leaders, cultivation of champions and working collaboratively with mainstream and specialist services who operate and are trusted in the community, to share information and plan for the delivery of initiatives such as the NDIS.

Better coordination, leveraging and linking across Commonwealth agencies, states and territories or local governments and partnering with community organisations is required to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are effectively and efficiently engaged in the development of the policies, programs and supports that affect them.

East Arnhem Co Design Project

The Northern Territory (NT) Government and the Commonwealth Government formed a Steering Group in 2016 to understand the opportunities for maximising Indigenous participation in the roll out of the NDIS in remote communities, particularly in relation to economic participation. The Steering Group requested the NDIS be implemented in the NT using a flexible, community-by-community approach.

Following the cessation of the Steering Group, it was proposed the NDIA take a co-design approach in East Arnhem. This was endorsed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) and the cross-government Working Group. The approach is known as 'East Arnhem Co-Design Project'.

Through this Project the NDIA will work in partnership with the East Arnhem community, the NT Government, and the PM&C, to co-design a service model with participants, community and providers which meets the aims of the Scheme and maximises opportunities for employment and economic participation.

The NDIA's approach to delivering services in remote and very remote communities is underpinned by a co-design process with key Aboriginal controlled organisations (such as Land Councils), Traditional Elders, service providers, participants, families and carers.

The NDIA is delivering the East Arnhem Co-Design Project in partnership with the NT Government, PM&C and the communities of East Arnhem. The partnership approach enables the Scheme to be rolled out in remote locations acknowledging the deep cultural connections, and building relationships with community based on respect to maximise opportunities.

Areas of focus

Stakeholders have identified five key areas as priorities for future consideration by the Australian Government as well as potential strategies to address each of the areas. The following addresses each key area, its importance within the cultural context, examples of key work currently being undertaken and potential solutions for consideration and further investigation.

In putting forward the areas of focus, stakeholders recognised that improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is not solely the responsibility of the Australian Government. Community members, researchers, corporate and philanthropic organisations, state and territory governments and local government associations also have an important role to play.

Stakeholders also recognised there is a range of programs currently being implemented by the Australian Government aimed at improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, including those in remote and very remote regions. Some of these are highlighted in this section. A comprehensive list of Australian Government actions can be found in Appendix C.

Area 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have access to appropriately designed shelter and live in accessible, well designed communities that are fully inclusive of all their residents.

Why is this important?

Lack of appropriate shelter is seen as a major issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, which can result in high levels of homelessness. While the current provision of housing services, such as tenancy management, generally provides for disability the choice of housing does not always include:



- disability access or the ability to make disability modifications
- the spiritual and cultural needs of individuals and their communities
- physical access to property, for example, lack of footpaths.

A combination of insufficient access to housing and public facilities across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can result in barriers for individuals with disability to actively engage in their communities.

Long waiting periods for disability home modifications, particularly in rural and remote areas, and the use of inappropriate materials in cyclone-prone areas are also seen as major challenges in meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Current Australian Government actions

The Australian Government, through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, works closely with jurisdictions through the Remote Housing Strategy to achieve outcomes. This includes working together to ensure relevant federal and state/territory legislation is complied with in the construction and repair of housing, and that effective outcome performance measures, that are locally relevant, are identified and used to measure success.

As an example, the National Indigenous Housing Guide assists organisations to design, construct and maintain housing tailored to local considerations and supports a safe and healthy living environment, including advice on how to consider the needs of people with disability in the design and construction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing.

A key principle of the NDIS is that all people with disability have the same fundamental rights as all members of Australian society to participate in the

social and economic life of the community and to make their own choices and decisions.

The NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity (ILC) building activities include capacity building across communities, organisations, and mainstream service delivery, to influence attitudes and practices in a way that can lead to greater inclusion and engagement of people with disability as well as delivery of support that suits the needs of people with disability, their families and carers.

It is intended that ILC activities in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities reflect local community priorities. It is also intended that ILC investments create culturally sensitive community networks and contact points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Possible solutions for future investigation

Disability stakeholders have identified the following as potential strategies to address access to appropriate shelter among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and the capacity of their communities to be accessible and inclusive.

When considering housing options, greater emphasis should be placed on issues such as connection to country, kinship, cultural and spiritual needs to ensure that individuals can participate fully in community life.

Consideration of a flexible, innovative design approach to providing shelter for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability could address this future area of focus. Approaches could include:

- Building accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to use when they visit communities. Accommodation could include access to cooking, bathing and laundry facilities and be designed in collaboration with communities to expand easily



to meet community needs, for example, visitors participating in cultural business.

- Building the capacity of communities to meet the needs of people with disability.
- Development of resources on principles around building inclusive and accessible communities.
- Training local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build or modify homes. This would also contribute to the local economy and employment rate.

Area 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have the right to:

- be free from racism and discrimination
- have their rights promoted
- a disability–inclusive justice system.

Why is this important?

Promoting rights

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have the right to receive the services and supports that they require regardless of their circumstances.

Within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities there can be a lack of awareness and understanding about basic rights and how to navigate the complaint systems. For example, a significant number of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander people have difficulty in obtaining a birth certificate for identification purposes, particularly when their birth is not registered or the certificate is lost.²³ Yet the right to birth registration is expressed in a number of international human rights instruments, including the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Practical issues such as a lack of proof of identity impede access to support services and this can be an additional barrier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability who already experience multiple disadvantages.

Disability–inclusive justice system

Despite awareness of the issue, disability remains largely an untold factor in incarceration rates in Australia. The impact of current legal and policy frameworks in justice systems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, including sentencing determinations that result in indefinite detention, is yet to be determined and is a matter for further investigation and reform in each of the jurisdictions,²⁴ noting that the criminal justice system is largely the province of state and territory governments.

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person with disability can be especially vulnerable if they interact with the criminal justice system as a victim or witness of a crime, or as a person suspected of a crime.²⁵ Research shows that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with cognitive disability and mental illness are more likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system.

23. Gerber, Paula and Castan, Melissa, *The Right to Universal Birth Registration (May 3, 2015)*. Chapter 1 in Melissa Castan & Paula Gerber (eds) *Proof of Birth (2015) Future Leaders*, Melbourne, Australia.

24. Baldry, E., McCausland, R., Dowse, L. and McEntyre, E. 2015 *A predictable and preventable path: Aboriginal people with mental and cognitive disabilities in the criminal justice system*. UNSW, Sydney.

25. *Australian Human Rights Commission: The Rights of People with Disabilities: Areas of Need for Increased Protection: Chapter 5: Criminal Justice System*.



While prisoners have higher rates of disability than the rest of the population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners experience higher levels of cognitive disability and mental illness.²⁶ These issues have been the subject of attention and review at the Commonwealth, state and territory levels in recent years (for example, a voluntary commitment at Australia's most recent Universal Periodic Review,²⁷ a recent Senate Inquiry,²⁸ and law reform reviews in multiple jurisdictions²⁹).

Current Australian Government actions

Promoting rights

It is important that people with disability have the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives. For some people this participation is supported by advocacy services.

Individual and systemic disability advocacy is funded through the [National Disability Advocacy Program \(NDAP\)](#) and through the [Disabled People's Organisations Australia](#), including funding for the First Peoples Disability Network and the Indigenous Disability Advocacy Service.

The reform of NDAP aims to improve the current disability advocacy supports available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The NDIA is ensuring culturally inclusive physical environments that make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders feel welcomed and connected and that plans, material and resources are visually appealing in a culturally inclusive way. To achieve these environments, work is underway to:

- Ensure that the NDIS access and planning

processes (for example, around providing identity and making access requests) are sensitive to the circumstances of people with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

- Develop a national and regional cultural competency training program for in-house and outsourced staff, which starts at induction, on how to do business in the 'proper way'.

Disability-inclusive justice system

People with disability who have complex needs, multiple disability and multiple forms of disadvantage face even greater obstacles within the justice system.

In November 2015, the [Law, Crime and Community Safety Council \(LCCSC\)](#) established a cross-jurisdictional working group to collate existing data across jurisdictions and develop resources for national use on the treatment of people with mental and/or cognitive disability unfit to plead or found not guilty by reason of mental impairment. At the LCCSC meeting on 19 May 2017 Attorneys-General:

- (a) Considered the draft National Statement of Principles Relating to Persons Unfit to Plead or Found Not Guilty by Reason of Cognitive or Mental Health Impairment, which will be made available on the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department website for each jurisdiction to determine how to best use and implement this resource, noting that they are non-binding and a best practice guide for jurisdictions.

26. AIHW 2015 report *The health of Australia's prisoner*.

27. Australian Human Rights Commission 2015. *Australia's Second Universal Periodic Review: Submission by the Australian Human Rights Commission under the Universal Periodic Review Process*.

28. Commonwealth of Australia 2016 *Indefinite detention of people with cognitive and psychiatric impairment in Australia*, 29 November 2016

29. *Addressing Indigenous Imprisonment: National Symposium Discussion Paper November 2015*, Law Council of Australia.

- (b) Agreed to take the draft statement of national principles to their respective Cabinets prior to the next LCCSC meeting, with a view to arriving at nationally consistent best practice principles.
- (c) Agreed to consider the national principles, together with any proposed amendments arising from consideration by their Cabinet processes, at the next meeting of the LCCSC.

In December 2016, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) released the *Prison to Work Report*, which recognises the alarming rates of Indigenous incarceration and recidivism. The Report is the result of extensive consultation with ex-prisoners, their families and communities, prison officials, employers, service providers, academics, as well as government officials. Through nine findings, the Report identifies 55 actions that the Commonwealth, state and territory governments could undertake to improve prisoners' pathways to work. These findings offer opportunities to address the barriers to employment that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face as they transition from incarceration to employment.

The report highlights a number of actions designed to improve outcomes for people with disability, including opportunities to improve the assessment of a prisoner's needs so as to better identify and assess disability, cognitive impairment, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and acquired brain injury. The Government is working closely with states and territories to develop action plans in response to the findings of the Report, which were reported to COAG in June 2017.

Possible solutions for future investigation

Disability stakeholders have identified the following potential strategies to address discrimination and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and to reduce the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in the criminal justice system.

Increasing human rights literacy and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability could support a foundation for increasing awareness and use of disability advocacy and available supports. Elements could include promoting awareness and understanding of individual and consumers' rights as well as knowing and understanding the complaints system. A better understanding of the range of human rights and how they apply to all people, regardless of circumstance, may enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to exercise those rights. A potential project to address this area could include building human rights knowledge and capacity within communities through training volunteer spokespeople and/or advocates, with the latter supported towards professional development if desired.

States and territories should consider using specialist assessments as part of court processes to gauge whether a person charged with an offence has a disability, cognitive impairment, mental health issue or acquired brain injury that should be taken into consideration as part of the judicial process. In these cases person-centred approaches should be implemented with the core priority of ensuring the safety of the person, their family and the community.

There is a pressing need for programs that can serve as alternatives to imprisonment or as a part of a community corrections sentence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. This could include a personalised care plan with close supervision or a secure facility which offers specialised programs and care. Governments should consider supporting the development of specialist programs in consultation with experts and communities as an alternative method of sentencing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Research should be undertaken to ensure specialist programs improve assessments and use effective interventions for prisoners with disability within the corrections system and during the transition out of prison.



Area 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability achieve their full potential through participation in an inclusive high quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities for lifelong learning.

Why is this important?

Disability among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people is often not recognised, which can lead to learning difficulties at school, creating greater disadvantage that affects learning pathways, including young people transitioning through phases of education and into employment. Such disadvantage can have lasting social, emotional and economic effects across an individual's life.

Fear of discrimination or stigma may prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their families from seeking help from support services that provide guidance around education and employment assistance.

Educational needs may be considered in isolation from other factors such as cultural needs and the importance of social participation and interaction. There is a view that a lack of coordination between health, education and disability planning can result in incorrect approaches to individual support needs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability within the education system.

Current Australian Government actions

The Australian Government is currently undertaking a number of actions to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to receive a high quality education and life-long learning opportunities responsive to their needs.

An early childhood early intervention approach has been developed as part of the NDIS. The approach has been designed by leading Australian early childhood intervention practitioners and researchers and is designed to enable locally based services to implement simple strategies to minimise the impact of a disability on a child's future development.

In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, this will involve working closely with respected and known individuals and services, particularly local preschools and kindergartens, to encourage families to engage with the available services and supports.

[Positive Partnerships](#) was established in 2008 to help teachers and school staff, and parents and carers, to support school students with autism. While there is limited data on autism in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, field research has indicated that a high number of children from a broad range of these communities display characteristics consistent with a diagnosis of autism.

A National Aboriginal Reference Group developed community consultations, action plans and whole-school community programs. [The Positive Partnerships website](#) now has a comprehensive range of specific resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The current phase of Positive Partnerships (to June 2019) is being delivered by Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect). An Indigenous Participation Plan is a critical element of the current project plan.

This phase also involves collaboration with the Autism Cooperation Research Centre at the University of Queensland, with a focus on extending outreach to students with autism in communities disadvantaged by language and distance, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



The NDIA is undertaking work to help craft supports that will maximise the ability of school leavers with disability to transition to work. The national roll out of the School Leavers Employment Supports packages within individual NDIS plans, along with collection of data and feedback, contribute to best practice around supports for this cohort.

The [National Disability Coordination Officer \(NDCO\) program](#) assists people with disability (aged 15-64), including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, to transition from school to tertiary education and subsequent employment. NDCOs work with stakeholders at the local level to reduce systemic barriers, facilitate smooth transitions and build links and coordinate services between the employment sectors. The program has been evaluated and the Government is considering the findings.

Possible solutions for further investigation

Disability stakeholders have identified a number of opportunities and potential strategies to improve education participation and outcomes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. These include:

- Greater access to specialist services and comprehensive case management for vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability, aged 0–5 and their families.
 - Embedding basic health screening in schools through the support of allied health services and improved access to assistive technologies.
 - Further development of local solutions to address absenteeism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability.
 - A holistic approach to learning could be achieved through strengthening coordination of health, education and disability planning, and support for communities and families. This may include supporting families to develop a comprehensive plan to take to their children's teachers. Such planning will support teachers to implement a
- tailored behavioural approach that will contribute to ensuring the needs of individual students are met. This approach will also provide information, raise awareness and educate families on disability more broadly.
- Development of resources that raise awareness in teachers about early identification of students with disability and provide teacher training in implementing appropriate referral pathways.
 - Better coordination between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support staff and disability officers in vocational and higher education to ensure comprehensive pathway planning.
 - Greater collaboration within universities between disability units, Indigenous Education Units (IEUs) and Indigenous communities. Partnerships could include Indigenous health care providers as well as university units or departments. Joint case management would also foster a more informed and holistic approach to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability.
 - University staff in disability units should be given access to cultural awareness training. Staff members need to have a deeper understanding than currently exists to effectively respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability.
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people be given a key role in decision making processes in relation to disability support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This could be achieved through employing more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in disability units and/or greater consultation by disability units with IEUs and local Indigenous communities.
 - The provision of support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability is provided both face-to-face and through other media—such as online and teleconferencing, to ensure that the needs of all students are met, no matter what their mode of study.



- Provision of pathway planning to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability. This could include supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability to have choices in their education and meaningful learning experiences. This process could be assisted by providing flexible learning approaches, peer support and targeted programs that meet individual needs and requirements.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in the development of this plan have expressed that an understanding of the cultural and spiritual needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, as well as the impacts of intergenerational trauma, is a vital component to an inclusive learning environment, including access to assistive technology and social interaction with peers; for example, through sporting activities.

Area 4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers have opportunities to gain economic security through employment and business ownership, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.

Why is it important?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability experience reduced rates of employment. There are a number of factors that contribute to this, including:

- Supported employment for people with disability, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, may not be sustainable for some people and it may be difficult to facilitate or support transition to ongoing employment.
- There are limited opportunities for employment—including a lack of demand from employers for

employees with disability—as not all employers recognise the value and potential of people with disability, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

- There is a poor local economy and a lack of opportunities for social investment in many settings, especially in some regional and remote regions.
- The underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in urban and regional areas in specialist disability employment services.

Current Australian Government actions

Improving economic and social wellbeing through increased employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is a key area of importance for the Australian Government.

The *Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy* will support agencies to achieve improved Indigenous recruitment and retention to enable them to meet the Australian Government's Indigenous employment target for all Commonwealth agencies of three per cent by 2018. The Strategy focuses on four key action areas:

- Expanding the range of Indigenous employment opportunities.
- Developing the capability of Indigenous employees.
- Increasing representation of Indigenous employees in senior roles.
- Improving the awareness of Indigenous culture in the workplace.

On 1 July 2015 the Government introduced a new employment services system that promotes stronger workforce participation by all Australians of working age and will help more job seekers move from government income support to paid employment.



The new [jobactive](#) program provides several elements to support the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, job seekers with disability and other groups of job seekers into employment. For example, for the first time, employment service providers have specific targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. The targets reflect the expectation that providers should achieve parity in employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers. That is the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes should at least reflect the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers on a provider's caseload.

[Disability Employment Services \(DES\)](#) assists job seekers with disability, injury or health conditions to prepare for, find, and keep a job. The DES program supports Indigenous job seekers to help them find and maintain employment in the open labour market through a range of initiatives. For example, ensuring all DES providers develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy which outlines how they intend to provide training and employment opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Job seekers residing in remote locations are provided services under the [Community Development Programme \(CDP\)](#). CDP providers have a permanent presence in each of the sixty remote regions allowing them to assist job seekers with tailored services based on their individual circumstances, requirements and strengths.

Under the CDP, providers must support job seekers with disability to address relevant vocational barriers and non-vocational barriers to build their capacity to work, gain employment and participate in activities.

In addition, the [Indigenous Advancement Strategy Jobs, Land and Economy Programme](#) assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults to find employment, run their own business, and provide for themselves and their family. Projects funded under the program have targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and those seeking employment in the disability sector.

Possible solutions for future investigation

Disability stakeholders have identified a number of opportunities and potential strategies to address low levels of employment among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and to improve the economic wellbeing of individuals and the broader community. These include:

- Building the capacity of all employment providers to provide targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and ensuring appropriate pathways into programs.
- Supporting DES providers through more strategic engagement with employers, focused on the employment of people with disability in the open labour market, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.
- Strengthening the ability of [jobactive](#) and CDP providers to achieve improved employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers with disability.
- Supporting successful school to work transitions for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability by providing tailored assistance through the [Transition to Work program](#) and the [Youth Jobs PaTH initiative](#).
- Increasing economic opportunities by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers with disability to access small business and entrepreneur assistance and services, such as the [New Enterprise Incentive Scheme](#) and [Indigenous Enterprise Fund](#).
- The Government is also currently developing an [Indigenous Business Sector Strategy](#) to grow the number of Indigenous businesses in Australia and ensure that these businesses are diverse and sustainable. As part of the Strategy, support will be provided to help Indigenous businesses find and secure opportunities to deliver Government goods and services, including disability services.

- Establishing employment targets and changing attitudes of employers to recognise the value and capabilities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability can offer an employer. This could be achieved through linkages with the Business Council of Australia, Supply Nation, and by building on the work of the Attitude Foundation and the Australian Public Service Commission.
- Increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability through innovative approaches to training, noting that some courses have minimum attendance requirements and, therefore, are often not available in rural and remote areas. The use of technology such as Skype and mentoring programs can assist with access to these opportunities.
- Increasing the capacity of the health, disability and aged care sector workforces to better meet the support needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. In addition, identifying more employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in these sectors.
- The development of community-driven solutions to maximise opportunities for investment in business enterprises owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Strategies on supported employer engagement and social enterprise development should be considered. This would ensure that sustainable employment opportunities are available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their communities, particularly in remote localities.

The following case study of a social enterprise in Walgett, New South Wales (NSW) showcases an innovative community-led solution that fosters sustainable employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

Café 64 Walgett³⁰

Summary

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, employment is one of the most prominent areas where people with disability face discrimination. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, employment discrimination is particularly acute. It can be multi-faceted as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability may face discrimination based on their disability and their Aboriginality or cultural background.


There are a number of systematic barriers facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability that make it difficult and at times impossible, in some communities to gain and retain employment. Encountering systemic barriers in employment is a common experience for all people with disability.

Findings

Café 64 is a locally operated café in the small town of Walgett in north western NSW. The Café is staffed mostly by Aboriginal people with disability. It is a successful enterprise that is popular in the community for the quality of its service. It is an example of what is possible in terms of innovative enterprises that can foster economic inclusion. There are regional towns across Australia that could easily follow a similar approach to Café 64. With little initial investment, these new enterprises could easily become focal points of some regional towns.

The Café is run by a combination of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff with a range of disability. Staff members are supported by a management structure that provides ongoing wrap-around support. The Café is highly regarded in the town.

30. Griffis, D (2012), *Improving Employment Outcomes from the perspective of Aboriginal people with Disability*.



Area 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability attain the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives, enabled by all health and disability services having the capability to meet their needs.

Why is it important?

Holistic health care and coordination between health and disability services are paramount for those with disabilities. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, those with a disability and those without, access Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health services as they deliver holistic, comprehensive and culturally appropriate health care, and have an understanding of the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. While these services meet general health needs through comprehensive primary health care, there is still a need for health workers to receive appropriate training on disability issues. Workers aware of disability needs are able to facilitate appropriate referral pathways for clients to receive any required additional disability services and supports.

Access to disability services is limited by cultural considerations as well as by geographical location, environmental factors, capacity and level of need. Cultural safety can be at risk where the only service within geographic reach is designed for the general population without achieving cultural competency for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander care.

In rural and remote areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability may not want to travel 'off country' to receive services, as they fear that they will be unable to return. In addition, once 'off country' family support systems are often not available even though services might be accessible. This can lead to lower levels of access to health and disability services and poorer health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability in rural and remote areas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people might not receive adequate attention to their health literacy needs. For example, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may not be aware of the consequences of risky health behaviours and the impacts of these behaviours on future wellbeing. Many disabilities arising from alcohol misuse and violence are preventable.

Current Australian Government actions

Fund holders for the Australian Government's outreach health programs, such as the [Rural Health Outreach Fund](#) and [Visiting Optometrists Scheme](#), take into account the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, including those with disability, during the needs assessment and planning process for delivery of health services in rural and remote areas.

In 2015–16, the Department of Health provided three year funding agreements to Aboriginal community controlled health services and other organisations to deliver comprehensive primary health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. Some services provide primary health care, referrals and assisted transport for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.



In addition to clinical health services provided through mainstream programs such as the Medicare Benefits Schedule and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, the Australian Government has a range of Indigenous-specific health programs which meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. **Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS)** provide comprehensive primary health care and individual case management services for patients with a disability. **Primary Health Networks** commission local care coordination services for high needs patients with chronic conditions through the Integrated Team Care program, along with locally tailored mental health and drug use prevention and care services. The Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program provides visiting specialist physician services to 400 rural and remote locations across Australia.

Possible solutions for further investigation

Disability stakeholders have identified opportunities and potential strategies to improve the health and wellbeing among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability as follows:

Attention to health needs

Health services should deliver services according to the individual health needs a person with a disability might have, in the same way as for those without a disability. Health professionals should have their attention drawn to the risk that illness symptoms can be overlooked or misread when someone with disability is under their clinical care. Clinical services could take a greater role in the management of disability, including rehabilitation and psycho-social supports.

Cultural competency

While many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations—such as **Aboriginal community-controlled health services** or other culturally safe services—other health services are also used. Health and disability services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients should meet a satisfactory standard of cultural competency. Cultural training should be offered to disability and allied health workers who provide services in either community-controlled or services for the general population.

Improved health and disability coordination

It is important that the attended health services have an understanding of disability as well as the services and supports required by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Better coordination in the development of health and disability plans will support a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. Opportunities for early intervention should not be



missed. An increased focus on early intervention services would support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to achieve the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives. Additional training on disability issues could be offered to Aboriginal Health Workers.

Primary Health Networks could potentially take a greater role for coordination of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Primary Health Networks are commissioners of services. Commissioning involves undertaking population health needs assessment, planning activities to address needs, and contracting frontline health services for those activities. These processes should take account of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability using primary health care.

Indigenous workforce opportunities

With the implementation of the **NDIS**, there will be an increase in demand for disability workers, particularly allied health professionals and allied health assistants. It will be important to work with training organisations to maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the delivery of services, and ensure that all workers have an understanding of disability and the particular issues and challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Skills based training could be provided to local people to undertake the repairs to aids and equipment, for example wheelchairs. This would not only have benefits for individuals with disability, but would also support employment growth for the community.

Health literacy

Greater emphasis needs to be placed on preventive health through health promotion and education strategies developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Continued effort by mainstream health programs and community controlled health services in raising awareness and educating clients about prevention strategies is required.

Addressing the social and cultural determinants of health and disability would contribute to improved social, emotional and cultural wellbeing for the whole community. Efforts through other strategies, such as for education, housing and employment, have significance for reducing the prevalence and detriment of disability. In 2016-17 the **Department of Health** will lead a cross-portfolio working group to engage a broad range of stakeholders, including state and territory governments, communities and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector, to address the social and cultural determinants of health and develop indicators to measure priority health outcomes that will be reflected in a new Implementation Plan.

Next steps

In addressing the five areas raised by stakeholders the Australian Government recognises that disability cannot be considered in isolation of other factors including: health; education; employment; cultural and spiritual needs, and the impacts that these have on each other.

It also recognises the challenges and complexities between the responsibility of the Commonwealth, states and territories in addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all services.

The Australian Government, with its state/territory counterparts, will consider strategies for driving cross-system cooperation, across agency portfolios and across service-delivery systems.

As the Australian Government progresses actions under this plan, it will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families, carers, representative organisations and communities.

Closing the Gap

The Prime Minister's annual Closing the Gap report outlines national progress against the Council of Australian Government's Closing the Gap targets. Closing the Gap is a long-term, ambitious framework that acknowledges that improving opportunities for Indigenous Australians requires intensive and sustained effort from all levels of government, as well as the private and not-for-profit sectors, communities and individuals.

In addition to a bottom-up approach to Australia's most compelling social challenge of improving the education, employment and wellbeing of the first Australians, we need to envisage a future with more Indigenous professionals with a disability in decision-making roles in government, industry and academia.



A process for monitoring progress

The two-yearly reporting process for the *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* will be the primary mechanism for reporting against this plan.

Outcomes under this plan will be reported through the Strategy's progress reports, commencing with the 2018 progress report. In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, the Plan will be updated following the release of the progress report.

In February each year the Prime Minister delivers an annual report to the Parliament on progress against the Closing the Gap targets to address Indigenous disadvantage in life expectancy, child mortality, education and employment. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has commenced reporting on disaggregated disability data in relation to Year 12 attainment and employment as part of the Prime Minister's annual *Closing the Gap Report*.

Under the *Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy*, Commonwealth agencies are required to report annually to the Australian Public Service Commission and in their annual reports on current Indigenous representation. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will publish Indigenous representation by agency from September 2015. This information is also included in the Prime Minister's Closing the Gap Report from February 2016.

Progress against current policies and programs of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023* (See Appendix A), as well as the future priority areas of relevance for disability will be captured in future iterations of the *Implementation Plan* for the Health plan. The next iteration of the Health plan will be published in 2018.

Progress will also be captured through broader reviews of policies and programs that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, for example, the review of the *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Action Plan*.



Excerpt from First Peoples' Disability Network:

By any measure, Aboriginal people with disability are some of the most disadvantaged Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability are resilient people and this often means they progress through life without expecting or seeking the supports and services they are entitled to for a full and inclusive life. For too long the rights of Aboriginal people with disability and their families to access the supports they are entitled to have largely been overlooked.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people often face multiple barriers to their meaningful participation within their own communities and the wider community. This is exacerbated for those living in remote areas, where there is a lack of specialist disability services. Australia's First Peoples face barriers across their lifespan—in education, employment, housing, health and justice—and it is the cumulative impact of this that results in disadvantage and exclusion.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability are the experts of their own lived experience. They understand where the system is working well to support them, and understand the setbacks they face when it is not. They see where people who need support are falling through the gaps, and live out the consequences when it happens. They understand the importance of community to an empowered and inclusive life, in which they are connected with their culture.

By drawing on the wisdom and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, this plan can deliver meaningful and practical solutions.

Addressing the inequity experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is not one person's responsibility—it is everyone's.

There are layers of social and cultural complexity which can be effectively navigated when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability take a leadership role in the creation of an action plan that encompasses the lived experiences of people across the country, from the cities to the small rural communities.

All parts of the system can and must work cohesively to change what needs to be changed so that First Peoples with disability have choice and control, not just in their daily lives, but in navigating the changing sector and the landmark national reforms. This input is valuable, appropriate and necessary in order to deliver a coordinated and inclusive action plan, through which cooperative action can occur.



Appendix A: Other strategies and initiatives linked to the Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability

Closing the Gap

In 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to ambitious targets to address the disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in life expectancy, child mortality, education and employment. In May 2014, COAG agreed to a new target to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance within five years (by 2018).

The seven targets aim to:

1. close the gap in life expectancy within a generation (by 2031)
2. halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade (by 2018)
3. 95% of four-year-olds enrolled in early childhood education (by 2025)
4. close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school attendance within five years (by 2018)
5. halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for Indigenous students (by 2018)
6. halve the gap for Indigenous Australians aged 20–24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates (by 2020)
7. halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (by 2018).

The targets are set out in the [National Indigenous Reform Agreement \(NIRA\)](#).

Closing the Gap is a long term, ambitious framework that acknowledges that improving opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people requires intensive and sustained effort from all levels of government, as well as the private and not-for-profit sectors, communities and individuals.³¹

Closing the Gap holds all government programs and services accountable for understanding and addressing the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. It recognises that specific programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are only a small part of the overall effort needed to address Indigenous disadvantage.

This Plan is linked to the National Disability Strategy outcome areas, and will also help contribute to the Closing the Gap targets and priorities. These will, in turn, contribute to the overall aim of closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

31. *Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Closing the Gap Prime Minister's Report 2017.*



Indigenous Advancement Strategy

The Australian Government has established the *Indigenous Advancement Strategy* (IAS) to improve outcomes for Indigenous Australians and close the gap on disadvantage. The IAS has fundamentally transformed the way Indigenous programs are funded and managed, with simplified ways to apply for funding and reduce red tape. The IAS has also changed how the Government engages with Indigenous people and communities, and is focused on delivering long-term, sustainable outcomes to ensure service providers deliver results that meet the needs of local communities.

The IAS has a particular focus on five key areas:

Jobs, Land and Economy – Getting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into work, fostering Indigenous business and ensuring Indigenous people receive economic and social benefits from the effective management of their land and native title rights.

Children and Schooling – Getting children to school, improving literacy and numeracy and supporting families to give children a good start in life, and increasing Year 12 attainment and pathways to further training and education.

Safety and Wellbeing – Making communities safer so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy similar levels of physical, emotional and social wellbeing as that enjoyed by other Australians.

Culture and Capability – Increasing participation and acceptance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the economic and social life of the nation.

Remote Australia Strategies – Addressing the disproportionate disadvantage in remote Australia and the need for strategic grant funding for local solutions.

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability face multiple disadvantages and their needs are not always catered for, the *Indigenous Advancement Strategy Guidelines*, updated in 2016, recommend that where possible, relevant applications for funding should highlight how the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability will be addressed.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives for health

The *Indigenous Australians' Health Programme* (IAHP) and the *Indigenous Advancement Strategy* (IAS) respectively invest in better health outcomes, albeit in different ways. Each program has an intersection with disability care.

The IAHP, which commenced on 1 July 2014, provides for better chronic disease prevention and management through expanded access to and coordination of comprehensive primary health care. Activities under the IAHP include nationwide tobacco reduction, healthy lifestyle promotion activities, and a care coordination and outreach workforce based in Aboriginal community controlled health services, general practitioners (GPs), specialists, and allied health outreach services.



Additionally, the Australian Government provides more affordable medicines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#).

The IAS supports actions across the five programs listed above which take a comprehensive approach to the social and cultural determinants of health. It addresses the Australian Government's three priorities of improving school attendance and workforce participation, and building safe communities which are key drivers in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Conversely, any work in these priority areas must be underpinned by improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Achievements through health investments and the IAS complement and support the aims of these initiatives.

The IAS is delivered through a regionally-based Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) network, which is led by twelve regional managers, located across Australia, who work with local communities to support actions that are responsive to the needs and priorities of individual communities. Regional managers are supported by local staff that facilitate collaboration and coordination across Australian Government programs at the local level.

The Government is also reviewing the *Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework: a National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2004–2009* (the Framework). The renewed Framework aims to support the vision that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities enjoy the highest attainable standard of mental health and social and emotional wellbeing, and will be published in late 2017.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023

On 22 October 2015 the Government launched the Implementation plan for the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023*. The Implementation plan takes forward the overarching vision of the Health plan by progressing strategies and actions that improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and prevent and address systemic racism and discrimination in the health system. The Implementation plan incorporates actions across the life course and covers seven domains: health system effectiveness, maternal health and parenting, childhood health and development, adolescent and youth health, healthy adults, and healthy ageing. One of the key objectives of the Implementation plan is to drive coordination across Government to improve health and wellbeing. The next iteration will continue to work on the social and cultural determinants of health which are also determinants of disability.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023 and the Implementation plan are available on the [Department of Health website](#). The Implementation plan also includes, for reference, a comprehensive list of linked strategies and frameworks.



NDIA Rural and Remote Strategy and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy

On 17th March 2017 the NDIA released both the *Rural and Remote Strategy* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy* (the Strategies). It is recognised that a targeted and tailored approach to delivering the NDIS in rural and remote areas and to people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds is essential. Both Strategies detail approaches to guide the NDIA's work in delivering the NDIS.

The Rural and Remote Strategy addresses the following goals:

Easy access and contact with NDIA – People living in rural and remote communities are able to access the services of the NDIA in a way that works for them.

Effective, appropriate supports available wherever people live – The range, choice and quality of disability supports available to a person in a rural or remote community is sustainable and as diverse as possible.

Creative approaches for individuals within their communities – Individuals will shape supports based on how they interact within their community and this will differ from community to community.

Harnessing collaborative partnerships to achieve results – Start by understanding what already exists and work alongside to leverage success.

Support and strengthen local capacity of rural and remote communities – The NDIS delivers an economic and capacity building return to local communities.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy focuses on strengthening engagement through 10 priority areas:

Communication and sharing of information – Ensuring the key messages about the NDIS are developed and delivered in the 'proper way'.³²

Cultural competency – The ability to identify and understand, and incorporate into policy development and service delivery, the different cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and communities.

Sharing best practice – Approaches to capturing, sharing and incorporating best practices which are implemented the 'proper way'.

Local solutions – The mechanisms by which place-based approaches are identified, developed and supported. Local solutions relate to participants, providers, employees and partnerships.

Participant-centric design – The experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, their carers and communities to inform the implementation of the NDIS.

Market enablement – Supporting providers to provide the right services in the right locations in the 'proper way'.

Leveraging and linking – Identifying existing approaches, knowledge and infrastructure that can be leveraged to support the 'proper way'.

Cultural leadership – How the NDIA leaders and partners demonstrate the values and expected behaviours of the 'proper way' engagement.

32. The 'proper way' is a colloquial phrase used to describe a way of doing business in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in a manner which is compatible with the community's values and customs.



Supporting internal infrastructure – The infrastructure required within and across the NDIA to embed ‘proper way’ practices, such as organisational policies, procedures, systems and practice guidance.

Tracking progress – How the NDIA will define and measure successes in engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and communities.

*The strategies are living documents and provide a guiding approach rather than a template for implementation. As the NDIA continues to roll out the NDIS it will continue to listen and learn as it builds and delivers the NDIS.

States and territories and local government

While this plan is focussed on actions to be taken by Australian Government agencies, the important role of state, territory and local governments in achieving outcomes for people with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people cannot be underestimated. All governments, through COAG, have made a commitment to both Closing the Gap and the *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020* (the Strategy).

The Australian Government is continuing to work collaboratively with state and territory governments and the Australian Local Government Association to progress outcomes under the Strategy. The Strategy’s second implementation plan, *‘Driving Action 2015–2018’*, identifies employment and improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability as key areas of national focus. The increased focus will facilitate collaborative effort across all tiers of government whilst promoting opportunities for joint work, sharing of best practice and specific actions within each jurisdiction’s sphere of responsibility.

Appendix B: National Disability Research and Development Agenda – funded research projects

Research Organisation	Scope of the research	Intended outcomes and new information
<p>Dr John Gilroy</p> <p>The University of Sydney</p> <p>\$492,633 (Incl. GST)</p> <p>Enablers for Aboriginal Peoples with <i>Disability in Central Australia to Live and Stay on Country</i></p> <p>Method: Culturally appropriate qualitative research</p>	<p>This project aims to:</p> <p>Identify and examine the factors that inhibit and enable Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) peoples with disability of Central Australia to live and stay on their traditional Country.</p> <p>Identify and examine the factors that inhibit and enable Anangu and Yarnangu with disability in the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Lands to live a life they desire on or off Country. This project uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics definition of disability as “a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities”. This definition underpins the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjara Yankunytjatjara Women’s Council (NPYWC) eligibility criteria to access disability supports.</p>	<p>Contribute to the current national government policy and research priority areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.</p> <p>Findings will be discussed with NPYWC Directors and at general meetings on the Lands. The knowledge translation plan will ensure that data and results are controlled by and disseminated to the NPY people, and other stakeholders, in the most appropriate format. A plain English illustrated report will be developed and used as a reference tool.</p>
<p>Mr Scott Avery</p> <p>First Peoples Disability Network Australia</p> <p>\$550,000 (Incl. GST)</p> <p><i>Community-driven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability research program (“Living Our Ways”).</i></p> <p>Method: Consultation narrative</p>	<p>This is a community-driven approach to the development of a research agenda and standards where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability guide both the priorities and the manner in which the research is conducted.</p>	<p>The primary outcome is a First Peoples Disability Research Agenda for undertaking disability research by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The research will describe a structural frame for conducting research with the First Peoples disability community, and identify priorities for further research as identified through the narrative evidence.</p>



Research Organisation	Scope of the research	Intended outcomes and new information
<p>Professor Denise Wood Central Queensland University</p> <p>\$860,139 (Incl. GST)</p> <p><i>Digital enterprise: Enhancing social and communication skills, and improving education and employment outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people with disability in rural, remote and metropolitan areas of Australia.</i></p> <p>Method: Participatory action research (PAR) approach using mix-methods involving a longitudinal, pre-post group design.</p> <p>User-centric model in which the intervention is user-led.</p>	<p>This project aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the rate of participation in further education, employment and entrepreneurial activities of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth with disability in rural, remote and metropolitan areas of Australia through development of their information technology, creativity, entrepreneurial, and communication and social skills. • Enhance the capacity of participants who have been least able to participate in decision-making in the past to have greater agency in the shaping of the research and the goals they wish to achieve through their participation. • Increase the quality of life of participants, and their parents and carers. • Create an intervention model that can be easily replicated in any mainstream setting throughout Australia including schools, further education institutions, community settings and workplaces. • Demonstrate how education, training and skill development can become accessible to young Australians with disability through internet connectivity, leading to improved productivity. • Contribute the findings from participatory research involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in rural, remote and metropolitan areas across Australia to inform disability policy, and culturally appropriate strategies for enhancing the social, educational and employment participation of Indigenous youth in regional and remote areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved participation of young people with disability, particularly Indigenous youth and those in regional and remote locations, in formal education by engaging them in activities that are motivating and build their self-esteem and self-efficacy. • Increase in the number of young people with disability who progress to further education and employment opportunities by providing them with the opportunity to build their technical and social skills while undertaking mentored further education and training. • Enhanced capacity of participants to be agents in the decision making process through the participatory research design employed in this study. • Strengthening the networks of parents and carers of young people with disability through supports provided in the community and online, and providing strategies for empowering families to also play a more active role in the decision making process. • Improved capacity of mainstream education providers to provide services that are flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of young people with disability through online modes of delivery and/or mentored activities in community settings. • Providing a model that can help to inform policy and future decision making regarding strategies for enhancing the participation of young people with disability in education, employment and social activities within their communities.



Research Organisation	Scope of the research	Intended outcomes and new information
<p>Anna Arstein–Kerslake The University of Melbourne Law school</p> <p>\$514,936 (Incl. GST)</p> <p><i>Unfitness to Plead and Indefinite Detention of Persons with Cognitive Impairments: Addressing the legal barriers and creating appropriate alternative supports in the community.</i></p> <p>Method: Supported decision-making model</p>	<p>This project aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the social, legal and policy issues leading to unfitness to plead findings and indefinite detention in Australia, with a focus on the experiences of Indigenous people. Provide and evaluate supported decision-making for up to 60 individuals with cognitive impairments who have been charged with a crime and who may be subject to unfitness to plead processes. Recommend options for the reform of unfitness to plead law and policy. 	<p>This project will provide a form of advocacy that respects the rights, will and preference of people with cognitive impairments, including Indigenous people, in the criminal justice system.</p> <p>The expected outcomes are the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the differences and similarities in unfitness to plead laws and policy across the Australian states and territories. Creation of good practice model(s) in supported decision-making in the criminal justice context that can be used in Australia and abroad. Creation of recommendations for law and policy reform in compliance with human rights standards.



Appendix C: Australian Government actions

This section sets out the targeted actions that the Australian Government is committed to undertake, which aim to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. These actions are set out alongside existing effort that may already impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

The table below sets out tangible actions across service areas of government relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. Some examples include:

- Addressing service gaps and unmet need in rural and remote areas/communities through the [National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\)](#).
- Implementing culturally appropriate engagement strategies in the roll-out of the NDIS.
- Increasing promotion and awareness raising of the [Employment Assistance Fund](#) and the [JobAccess Service](#) as the national hub for workplace and employment information for people with disability, including targeted communications through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative organisations.
- A targeted employer engagement strategy and communications approach to increase employer demand for employees with disability, inclusive of Indigenous Australians, as part of the Department of Social Services' development of more detailed proposals for reforms to [Disability Employment Services](#) which seek to improve performance and improve employer willingness to hire people with disability. The proposals were approved by Government in the 2017 Budget.
- Improving access to health services more broadly through engagement with the new [Primary Health Networks](#) needs assessment, planning and service commissioning process.



Outcome 1 – Inclusive and accessible communities

People with a disability live in accessible and well designed communities with opportunity for full inclusion in social, economic, sporting and cultural life.

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Remote Housing Strategy (formerly the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing) is a comprehensive COAG reform that aims to address overcrowding, homelessness, poor housing conditions and severe housing shortage in remote Indigenous communities within ten years (to June 2018).</p> <p>The National Indigenous Housing Guide assists organisations to design, construct and maintain housing tailored to local considerations and supports a safe and healthy living environment. The Guide includes advice on how to consider the needs of people with disability in the design and construction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing.</p>	<p>Further improvements in the development and implementation of housing strategies to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability will be discussed at bilateral meetings between housing departments across governments. Relevant actions will be identified, documented and implemented.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet)</p>	<p>The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet works closely with jurisdictions through the Remote Housing Strategy to achieve outcomes. This includes working together to ensure relevant federal and state legislation is complied with in the construction and repair of housing, and that effective performance measures—that are outcomes based and locally relevant—are identified and used to measure success.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>A key principle of the NDIS is that all people with disability have the same fundamental rights as all members of Australian society to participate in the social and economic life of the community and to make their own choices and decisions.</p> <p>The NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) is about making sure that people with disability are connected into their communities and ensuring our community becomes more accessible and inclusive of people with disability.</p> <p>Overall ILC has two main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) People with disability have the ability to achieve their goals (capability). b) People with disability are included in all aspects of community life. This is achieved through the delivery of information, linkages and referral and individual capacity building activities direct to people with disability and also through capacity building activities across communities, organisations, and mainstream service delivery, to influence attitudes and practices in a way that can lead to greater inclusion and engagement of people with disability. 	<p>NDIS ILC activities are being commissioned in a way that is appropriate to the needs of diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>During the transition of ILC, projects are being initiated that will help prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations for ILC.</p> <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>ILC activities in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities reflect local community priorities.</p> <p>ILC investments create culturally sensitive community networks and contact points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability.</p> <p>Number and location of Local Area Coordinators supporting remote communities.</p>



Outcome 2 – Rights protection, justice and legislation

People with disability have their rights promoted, upheld and protected.

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Individual and systemic disability advocacy is funded through the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) and through the Disabled People’s Organisation Australia, including funding for the First Peoples Disability Network and the Indigenous Disability Advocacy Service</p>	<p>There is room to increase both the accessibility of non-Indigenous disability advocacy supports and the coverage of advocacy supports specific to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>The reform of NDAP in 2016-17 will improve the current disability advocacy supports available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>Data from the Department of Social Service’s Data Exchange (DEX) will indicate if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive increased advocacy supports.</p>
<p>The Department of Social Services’ Access and Equity Policy encourages their funded service providers to ensure that diversity is not a barrier for people engaging with their services.</p> <p>The Access and Equity Policy provides guidance to funded programs and services to ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are accessible by all eligible Australians • are responsive to their needs • deliver equitable outcomes. 	<p>Under the Access and Equity Policy, service providers delivering services to identified cohorts must consider whether services, projects, activities or events require adaptation, or if additional assistance should be provided to ensure accessibility.</p> <p>For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people this also includes understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and local issues that may be present, in addition to considerations for people with disability.</p> <p>The Access and Equity Policy caters for (but is not limited to) the following cohorts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Australians • people who are deaf or hard of hearing • people who are blind or have low vision • people with an intellectual impairment/disability • people with mobility and access restrictions. <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>To guide service providers to consider inclusivity, the Access and Equity Policy provides a list of ‘considerations for service delivery’ against each identified cohort.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The NDIS recognises that people with disability have the same rights as all Australians and is committed to ensuring that people with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have equity of access to the NDIS.</p> <p>The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is ensuring that its systems and processes, especially for access and planning under the NDIS, are appropriate for people with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>The NDIA is ensuring culturally inclusive physical environments that make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders feel welcomed and connected and plans, materials and resources are visually appealing in a culturally inclusive way.</p> <p>The NDIA is ensuring cultural competency by identifying, understanding and incorporating into policy development and service delivery, the culture of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and communities. Demonstrated by all NDIA staff, NDIA partners (including LACs) and suppliers. Providers and contractors are encouraged to increase their cultural competency through the support of NDIA literature including the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy</i>.</p>	<p>Work is underway to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that NDIS access and planning processes (for example around proving identity and making access requests) are sensitive to the circumstances of people with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. • Develop a national and regional cultural competency training program for in-house and outsourced staff—which starts at induction—on how to do business in the ‘proper way’. <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>Systems and forms for NDIS access and planning are appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (such as verbal access request processes and alternative evidence used as proof of identity). Develop a checklist for minimum standards for engaging with communities in the ‘proper way’ which is supported by a resource of key individuals, leaders, influencers and organisations for each community.</p>



Outcome 3 – Economic security

People with disability, their families and carers have economic security, enabling them to plan for the future and exercise choice and control over their lives.

Employment

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Disability Employment Service (DES) providers help people whose primary barrier to employment is their disability, injury or health condition, to find and retain sustainable employment in the open labour market.</p> <p>Some DES providers are contracted as specialist providers to assist a nominated disability or participant cohort. This allows specialist providers to tailor service delivery around the needs of a particular group. Currently, four providers deliver specialist services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 18 sites in NSW, QLD & WA.</p> <p>All DES providers must develop an Indigenous Employment Strategy which outlines how they intend to provide training and employment opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>	<p>Increase the participation of Indigenous job seekers in DES by better tailoring communication of promotional messages towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>While job placement and outcome rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are only slightly below their participation rate in DES, DSS will work with relevant organisations such as the First Peoples Disability Network to identify ways to improve outcomes for Indigenous participants.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>Increase in the participation in DES for Indigenous job seekers.</p> <p>Increase in the 26 week outcome rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people proportional to their representation on the DES caseload.</p>
<p>A Cultural Awareness training package is available for front line staff of employment services, including staff of DES providers.</p> <p>The six part e-learning package is designed to build the capacity of employment service providers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and develop stronger links to employers to achieve better participation outcomes for this cohort.</p>	<p>The Government will actively promote the use of the cultural awareness and competency package among DES providers.</p> <p>DSS will investigate if additional content is needed regarding disability in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and, if so, will introduce additional content required.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>An increase in the completion rate of the training package.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Employment Assistance Fund (EAF) provides financial assistance to a person with disability or their employer for workplace modifications, equipment and services required for them to be able to perform their work duties. The EAF is delivered through the JobAccess service. From 1 July 2016 – 1 March 2017, 2.25% of EAF applications were for people that identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.</p>	<p>Increasing promotion and awareness raising of the EAF and the JobAccess Service as the national hub for workplace and employment information for people with disability, including targeted communications through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative organisations.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>An increase in the number of EAF applications for people that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.</p>
<p>The Government announced changes to improve DES as part of the 2017-18 Budget, with a view to implementing new arrangements from 1 July 2018. The changes are based on extensive research and consultations conducted by a Disability Employment Taskforce within DSS. Two rounds of public consultation occurred in 2015, with people with disability, employers, disability employment providers and relevant representatives for each of these stakeholders.</p>	<p>The Taskforce established baseline information on employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians with disability in the service system, focused on achieving at least the same outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers as for all Australians.</p> <p>The DES program is being re-designed to improve its performance of placing people with disability into a job. It will include risk-adjusted outcome fees based on a participant's probability of achieving an employment outcome, with higher payments for achieving outcomes for those less likely to gain employment, and lower payments for achieving outcomes for those more likely to gain employment. The risk-adjusted outcome fees would apply to all DES participants and, in practice, would mean that providers choosing to work with clients who have more significant barriers to employment or in more challenging labour markets would be better rewarded for achieving an employment outcome for a DES participant.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers achieve at least the same outcomes as all Australians.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Government introduced a new employment services system, jobactive, on 1 July 2015. The model promotes stronger workforce participation by all Australians of working age and will help more job seekers move from government income support to paid employment. The new jobactive program provides several elements to support the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, job seekers with disability and other groups of job seekers into employment.</p>	<p>All employment service providers will have targets for assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers find and stay in employment and there is a 10% weighting for Indigenous outcomes in the Star Ratings System. There are higher payments for employment service providers who help job seekers who have complex needs.</p> <p>The new jobactive program includes a quality assurance framework. The framework will assess and improve the quality of providers' service delivery to all job seekers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and people with disability.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Employment)</p>	<p>For Indigenous Australians, including those with disability, engaging in jobactive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the proportion of job seekers achieving employment and/or education. • Reduced gap in outcome rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous job seekers in jobactive. • Better engagement through increased attendance in employment services. <p>Reduced time between referral of job seeker and commencement in jobactive.</p>
<p>The <i>Indigenous Advancement Strategy</i> (IAS) Jobs, Land and Economy Programme (JLEP) assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults to find employment, own their own home, run their own business, and provide for themselves and their families.</p> <p>JLEP increases the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working and training for local jobs in their communities. Projects funded under this programme have targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and those seeking employment in the disability sector.</p>	<p>The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (PM&C) Indigenous Advancement Strategy guidelines recommend that where possible and relevant, applications for funding should highlight how the needs of Indigenous Australians with disability will be addressed.</p> <p>PM&C will commence reporting on disaggregated disability data on two Closing the Gaps targets; Year 12 attainment and employment; as part of the Prime Minister's annual Closing the Gap Report to Parliament.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet)</p>	<p>Data on JLEP participants with disability (compare Indigenous and non-Indigenous):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of job placements. • number of 26 week outcomes achieved.



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Australian Government is committed to people with disability receiving employment services to address their individual needs.</p> <p>Job seekers residing in remote locations are serviced under the Community Development Programme (CDP). CDP providers have a permanent presence in each region. This allows CDP providers to assist job seekers with tailored services based on their individual circumstances and strengths.</p>	<p>CDP providers must assist job seekers with disability with services tailored to their needs and assessed capacity to work. Providers must support job seekers with disability to address relevant vocational barriers and non-vocational barriers to build their capacity to work, gain employment and participate in activities.</p> <p>CDP providers should also be aware of additional support services which could be accessed through JobAccess.</p> <p>For job seekers with disability, a full employment outcome payment will be payable at 13 and 26 weeks where the jobseeker is fully off income support or their hours in employment meet the job seeker's assessed capacity to work. This ensures that CDP providers and employers are suitably resourced to support people with disability to obtain and keep a job.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet)</p>	<p>Data on CDP job seekers with disability (compare Indigenous and non-Indigenous):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of job placements • number of 13 and 26 week outcomes achieved.
<p><i>As One: Making it Happen 2016–19</i> builds on the initiatives and momentum of the As One: Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy (2012) to improve the employment experience of people with disability in the Australian Public Service (APS).</p> <p><i>As One</i> aims to increase the representation of employees with disability across the APS, including Indigenous people with disability. It has been informed by consultations with employees with disability, APS agencies and community and private sector bodies working in the disability field.</p>	<p>The Australian Public Service Commission will continue to support agencies to implement a feasible plan that delivers results. There are four key action areas which all include a focus on Indigenous people with disability. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expand the range of employment opportunities for people with disability • invest in developing the capability of employees with disability • increase the representation of employees with disability in senior roles • foster inclusive cultures in the workplace. <p>(Lead – Australian Public Service Commission)</p>	<p>Success will be measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an increase in the number of people with disability who come to work for the APS • an improvement in reported job satisfaction for employees with disability. • an increase in the number of people with disability in senior leadership roles • an increase in the number of employees who identify as having a disability in agency human resource systems.



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Australian Government has set an Indigenous employment target for all Commonwealth agencies of three per cent by 2018.</p> <p>The <i>Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy</i> will support agencies to achieve improved Indigenous recruitment and retention. The Employment Strategy was developed by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), in consultation with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Commonwealth agencies and Indigenous employees.</p> <p>The Employment Strategy will apply across the Commonwealth public sector, including the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police.</p>	<p>The Strategy sets out actions Australian Public Service agencies can take to improve Indigenous recruitment, retention and development. The Employment Strategy focuses on four key action areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expanding the range of Indigenous employment opportunities • developing the capability of Indigenous employees • increasing representation of Indigenous employees in senior roles • improving the awareness of Indigenous culture in the workplace <p>The APSC is developing a practical implementation guide to supplement the actions. The guide will be available on the APSC website and updated over the life of the Employment Strategy.</p> <p>(Lead – Australian Public Service Commission)</p>	<p>Progress towards the three per cent target will have been published annually by agencies on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website, as well as being included in the Prime Minister's Closing the Gap report to Parliament.</p>
<p>The Australian Government's Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) is committed to awarding a target of three per cent of Commonwealth Government's contracts to Indigenous businesses by 2020.</p>	<p>As Indigenous businesses have been shown to be 100 times more likely to employ an Indigenous person, the IPP has relevance to fostering employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.</p>	<p>Progress towards the three per cent target will be published annually by agencies on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) aims to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment within the NDIA, its partners and in the broader disability support network.</p>	<p>Strategies to be implemented by the NDIA may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing an Indigenous Employment Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment• recruiting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to reflect the cultural diversity of communities• promoting NDIA employment opportunities when visiting communities, through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and culturally appropriate material• facilitating traineeships, cadetships & other employment initiatives• identifying and implementing alternative recruitment methods, special measures, identified roles and development programs as suggested by the Australian Public Service Commission. <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed by the NDIA or in outsourced networks.</p> <p>The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed as compared with local area population.</p>



Income support

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Department of Human Services currently promotes access to a range of digital service channels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in receipt of Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Carers Payment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> run information sessions, for community organisations/service providers about on-line services where known, provide information about free Wi-Fi locations when a DSP recipient makes contact with the Department, provide an assisted self-service option, where possible, to educate DSP recipients in the use of the on-line channel. <p>(Lead – Department of Human Services)</p>	<p>When available, free Wi-Fi locations are publicised.</p> <p>Increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander DSP recipients who are able to access the Department’s services via self-service channels.</p>
<p>The Indigenous Service Officer (ISO) role assists with connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to a range of services, programs and payments administered by the Department of Human Services. This role ensures access to income support, if and when warranted. ISOs are well networked and have an intimate knowledge of services available across a range of communities. This would be the same for the Community Engagement Officer network.</p>	<p>The Department’s Social Work Services Indigenous Service Officers, Service Officers, Community Engagement Officers and the prison liaison officer network will provide advocacy to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability in connecting to a range of support services. The Department will also ensure, through a range of service channels, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander DSP recipients are informed of their rights and obligations in relation to eligibility.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Human Services)</p>	<p>Materials made available to relevant staff to ensure that they have the right information to provide services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers with a disability.</p>



Outcome 4 – Personal and community support

People with disability, their families and carers have access to a range of supports to assist them to live independently and actively engage in their communities.

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) providers are funded by DSS to deliver intensive support to parents and caregivers of children where child neglect is a concern in selected communities in the Northern Territory and Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands.</p> <p>Under the current DSS-funded Implementation Capacity Support Service (ICSS) model, available to all IFSS providers, additional workforce development and education needs are identified as part of the support planning process.</p>	<p>As part of the regular support planning process IFSS providers, with the ICSS provider, will assess what training needs they have in relation to delivering effective services to clients, including people with disability. As most IFSS clients are Indigenous, this assessment will include an assessment of the specific needs relating to Indigenous children and parents with disability. If identified as a priority, IFSS providers will then be able to access appropriate training as part of the ICSS model.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Social Services)</p>	<p>IFSS providers have capacity to respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with people with disability, including engaging appropriate support services.</p>
<p>The NDIS is designed to maximise social and economic participation of people with disability. In preparing for transition to the NDIS, the NDIA recognises the significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability. There are opportunities and challenges that arise in engagement and delivery of the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including those in rural and remote communities.</p>	<p>Consultation has commenced with the states and territories to plan for the full implementation of the NDIS.</p> <p>The NDIA will work with state and territory governments and service providers to inform Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability about the NDIS, including through the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy</i>.</p> <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>Throughout 2016 and 2017, the NDIA has developed the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural and Remote Strategy and associated Implementation plan for Transition to Full Scheme • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and Engagement Action plan.



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The NDIA is continuing to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build local partnerships and undertake relationship building activities to build trust, create a presence that is respectful, establish clear contact points and emphasise the importance of including people with disability in local planning and action</p>	<p>The NDIA publically released the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy</i> which highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The adoption of an 'I' model phased approach of 'introduction, initiation and invitation' for establishing sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.• Principles for engaging in the 'proper way' with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.• 10 key engagement priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a disability. <p>Through the development of Community Capacity Building Plans (CCBP), Local Area Coordinators (Partners in the Community) will identify and build on the strengths in their communities. These plans would include consideration of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The CCBP must detail the tools that will be used and the timeframes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• strengthening the community and mainstream service capacity• identifying and mapping assets and capabilities including existing plans and shared priorities• building connections to the community that may be useful to build community economic and social opportunities for people with disability• understanding diversity within the communities and the needs and possible supports for different cohorts of people with disability• building connections to the disability support providers and mainstream services to ensure diversity in choice for people with disability• identifying priority areas of effort to enhance and strengthen opportunities for Clients and Participants. <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>All NDIS Partners in the Community have developed a CCBP and are reporting outcomes.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
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<p>The NDIA is considering strategies to address service gaps and delivery of the NDIS in communities where service provision is complex and markets may be 'thin' or limited, such as in rural and remote areas.</p> <p>The NDIA has worked in trial sites to support the development of markets, including a specific project to encourage new providers and services in the Barkly region of Northern Territory and remote regions of South Australia, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing and supporting provider readiness • direct support to assist providers with NDIS registration processes • identifying immediate supply gaps presented by 'thin' or limited markets in communities; and developing responses. 	<p>The NDIA will work to support the implementation of the National Integrated Market, Sector and Workforce Strategy, which will include a National Action Plan describing the role of the NDIA and governments in enabling the NDIS markets.</p> <p>The NDIA will apply a market approach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support new and existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to work with the NDIA • consider local opportunities and community strengths. <p>In rural areas, the NDIA will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop descriptions for regional areas • consider options to increase the availability of supports for participants. <p>In remote areas, the NDIA will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build on current service delivery arrangements to facilitate opportunities for enhanced service delivery • take a considered approach to determine how to intervene, and with what levers to support market development. <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>The NDIA will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement actions in the Rural and Remote Strategy, including developing appropriate responses to stimulate the supply of services in remote areas. • Support existing providers in remote areas to transition to the NDIS. • Deliver the NDIA's Integrated actions in the <i>Market, Sector and Workforce Strategy</i>, agreed to by Senior Officials Working Group on 3 September 2015. <p>Increased range of supports available to people in remote communities.</p> <p>Number of providers recognised as community managed.</p>
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<p>The NDIA is committed to having a workforce that is culturally competent to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>	<p>The NDIA will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural awareness and sensitivity training for all NDIA staff; • training staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the 'proper way' • employing staff who identify as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander through the NDIA Indigenous Employment plan • actively developing networks with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to seek appropriate cultural advice or direction. <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>Number or percentage of staff participating in cultural awareness training.</p>
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Outcome 5 – Learning and skills

People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high-quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives.

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Australian Government put in place the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. This is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability.</p> <p>The Standards explain the obligations of education and training providers. Under the Standards, all education providers are required to make reasonable adjustments to assist students with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students.</p>	<p>The Standards were reviewed in 2015 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives were consulted. The review findings indicated that further work is required to continue to build awareness and understanding of the Standards.</p> <p>The Australian Government is committed to progressing national action to address the 2015 Review recommendations in partnership with state and territories as outlined in the Initial Australian Government Response (released in December 2015).</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training, Attorney Generals’ Department)</p>	<p>2020 Disability Standards for Education Review finds that awareness and understanding of the Standards has continued to improve.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Positive Partnerships was established in 2008 to help teachers and school staff, and parents and carers, to support school students with autism. While there is limited data on autism in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, field research has indicated that a high number of children from a broad range of these communities display characteristics consistent with a diagnosis of autism.</p> <p>Positive Partnerships worked with the First Peoples Disability Network during Phase 2 (2012–2015) to set up a National Aboriginal Reference Group.</p> <p>It developed community consultations, ‘get-togethers’, action plans and whole-school community programs. The Positive Partnerships website now has a comprehensive range of specific resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. During Phase 2, Positive Partnerships ran Aboriginal ‘get-togethers’ in five states. In addition to 82 workshops in metropolitan and inner regional locations, Positive Partnerships ran 27 workshops in remote or very remote locations and 31 workshops in outer regional locations.</p>	<p>The current phase of Positive Partnerships (to June 2019) is being delivered by Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect). An Indigenous Participation Plan is a critical element of the current project plan.</p> <p>This phase also involves collaboration with the Autism Cooperation Research Centre (CRC) at the University of Queensland, with a focus on extending outreach to students with autism in communities disadvantaged by language and distance, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p> <p>Aspect is continuing to work with the First Peoples Disability Network through the National Aboriginal Reference Group to develop the schedule and location for community consultations, ‘get-togethers’, action plans and whole-school community programs.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>Continued growth in numbers of schools, families and communities involved in the Positive Partnerships program.</p> <p>Additional materials are developed to support these schools and communities, including material developed through collaboration with the First Peoples Disability Network and with the Autism CRC.</p>
<p>The Australian Government and all state and territory governments agreed to a phased implementation of a Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) across all jurisdictions over three years (2013–2015). Almost all schools participated in the NCCD in 2015 and 2016. It is anticipated that high levels of participation will continue.</p> <p>Through this annual collection, schools and governments are reporting for the first time in a nationally consistent way on the number of students in Australian schools requiring an educational adjustment to access education because of a disability, where they are located and the level of adjustments they receive.</p>	<p>Along with collecting aggregated school level data on disability status, the Joint Working Group which oversees the collection will investigate the feasibility of incorporating or linking with demographic data in future years, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status. With this additional information, the NCCD in combination with other schools data could improve understanding of the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>All Australian schools participating annually in the data collection, producing data of sufficient quality for publication and for use to inform future policy.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Under the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform, jurisdictions are required to contribute to the national target of 375,000 additional completed qualifications throughout the Agreement, from 2012–2017.</p> <p>The national partnership aims to enable all working age Australians to develop the skills and qualifications needed to participate effectively in the labour market.</p>	<p>All states and territories have either a completion or commencement target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In addition, five of the seven states and territories have set commencement or completion targets for people with a disability.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>Increased completions/ commencements by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people.</p> <p>Increased completions/ commencements by people with disability.</p>
<p>From 2015, the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network delivers Australian apprenticeship support services to all apprentices across Australia, including Indigenous students with disability.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Network aims to increase Indigenous participation in Australian apprenticeships by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that opportunities to participate in apprenticeships are available ensuring that Indigenous Australians are aware of apprenticeship options available providing support to Indigenous Australians and their employers during the apprenticeship that is culturally appropriate and to assist in successful completion of the apprenticeship. 	<p>The Apprenticeship Network has a specific role in supporting apprentices at risk of failure to complete their apprenticeship.</p> <p>Indigenous apprentices and apprentices with a disability will be supported by the Apprenticeship Network as part of their universal service obligations and, if deemed at-risk, will have access to targeted services including mentoring.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>Increased completion rates for all Australian Apprentices.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program assists people with disability (aged 15–64), including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, to transition from school to tertiary education and subsequent employment. This occurs by funding organisations, such as universities, TAFEs, employment service providers and non-government organisations, to employ a national network of full-time NDCOs who operate within 31 NDCO regions across Australia.</p>	<p>NDCOs will continue to work with stakeholders at the local level to reduce systemic barriers, facilitate smooth transitions, build links and coordinate services between the education, training and employment sectors.</p> <p>The program is currently being evaluated.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>Number of local self-sustaining networks focusing on education, training and employment that are established or existing networks supported.</p> <p>Local stakeholders report improved knowledge of programs and services, increased collaboration and improved capability to facilitate successful transitions from school to tertiary education and subsequent employment for people with disability.</p>
<p>The Creating Parity report, released in 2014, recommended that all governments prioritise investment in early childhood to ensure children reach the developmental milestones necessary for succeeding at school.</p> <p>In 2015, the Australian Government announced the establishment of the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) as part of the Child Care Assistance Package. The CCCF includes \$10 million a year over two years to support the integration of child care, maternal and child health and family support services in a number of disadvantaged Indigenous communities. The CCCF integrated service delivery component commenced on 1 July 2016.</p> <p>The Australian Government has also committed \$12 million from the Indigenous Australian’s Health Programme (IAHP) to support this activity.</p>	<p>The aim of integrated service delivery is to ensure that Indigenous children in identified areas of high need achieve the learning and development outcomes necessary for a positive transition to school.</p> <p>As part of the implementation of the integrated service delivery response, options will be explored for providing greater access to specialist services and comprehensive case management for vulnerable children from 0–5 years of age and their families. This could include early diagnosis and intervention for Indigenous children with disability and/or developmental delay.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger linkages between schools, early childhood, maternal and child health and family support services in the selected locations. • Improved participation by Indigenous children and families in these services. • Improved quality of services. • Integrated services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ complement or enhance other government and community initiatives ○ identify and/or help to address early childhood service delivery gaps ○ can be replicated efficiently and effectively in similar locations.



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Australian Government invests in the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP) which commenced on 1 July 2016.</p> <p>The ISP provides support to eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability, providing them the opportunity to learn and develop in an ECCC service alongside typically developing peers.</p> <p>The ISP also introduces a new funding stream – the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) Innovative Solutions Support – which assists eligible ECCC services to fund innovative and flexible solutions to inclusion where a barrier has been identified but cannot be addressed through support provided by its Inclusion Agency and other ISP funding streams. ECCC services may access bicultural support through this stream which may include access to an Indigenous interpreter or translating services to support an ECCC service to enrol and settle a child/children from an Indigenous background.</p>	<p>ISP providers will continue to work with ECCC services to increase the knowledge and skills of educators and develop strategies to include children with additional needs in learning activities offered by the child care service. This includes supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with additional needs, including those with a disability.</p> <p>The service coverage of ISP providers and access for groups of children with additional needs, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with disability, will be monitored closely by the Department of Education and Training over the life of the program.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Education and Training)</p>	<p>The ISP supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased number of children with additional needs accessing and participating in mainstream ECCC services. • Improved capacity of ECCC services to include children with additional needs, including Indigenous children. • Increased awareness of the support services available for families of children with additional needs, including Indigenous children.
<p>A key element of the NDIS is maximising the economic and social participation of people with disability. The NDIA is undertaking work to help craft supports that will maximise the ability of school leavers with disability to transition to work.</p>	<p>The national roll out of the School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES) packages within individual NDIS plans along with collection of data and feedback to contribute to best practice around supports for this cohort.</p> <p>(Lead – National Disability Insurance Agency)</p>	<p>SLES provides supports adapted to the needs of people with disability from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and is delivering outcomes for this cohort.</p>

Outcome 6 – Health and wellbeing

People with disability attain highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives.

Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Most Commonwealth funded Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services deliver comprehensive, culturally appropriate primary health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including people with a disability, in urban, regional and remote areas. Comprehensive primary health care includes referral to specialists and allied health professionals and assisted transport to appointments.</p>	<p>In 2015–16, the Department of Health provided three year funding agreements to Aboriginal community controlled health services and other organisations to deliver comprehensive primary health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. Some services provide primary health care, referrals and assisted transport for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. Organisations will be required to report complete and high quality data—regularly against national Key Performance Indicators and annually against Online Service Reporting.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Key performance indicators are met</p>
<p>Under Community Service Obligations (CSO) with Australian Hearing, free hearing services are available for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth under 26 years old and many adults. Services offered include hearing tests and fitting of hearing aids; support for schools where many children have hearing problems; hearing health meetings with community members; and hearing health training for healthcare workers.</p>	<p>The Department of Health's 2015–2018 Memorandum of Agreement with Australian Hearing has implemented Key Performance Indicators aimed at improving coordination, access, effectiveness, and efficiency of services to clients with specialised needs, including a number of KPIs specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Key Performance Indicators are met</p>
<p>The Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF) aims to improve health outcomes for non-Indigenous and Indigenous people living in regional, rural and remote locations by supporting the delivery of outreach health activities, based on needs assessment. Within the broad spectrum of needs, there is a specific emphasis on maternity and paediatric health, eye health, mental health and support for chronic disease management.</p>	<p>Organisations funded under the RHOF will take into account the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, including those with disability, during the needs and assessment and planning process.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Organisations funded to support rural outreach will consult with Commonwealth government departments and be guided by advisory forums and Indigenous Health Partnership forums to identify community needs in the delivery of outreach health services.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The most recent National Indigenous Eye Health Survey (2016) found that blindness and vision impairment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults is three times higher than in non-Indigenous Australians. The Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS) increases access to optometry</p>	<p>The VOS includes specific funding to increase optometry services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients receiving optometry services through the VOS.</p>
<p>Primary Health Networks (PHNs) have been established to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary care services, particularly for those at risk of poor health outcomes, and improve coordination of care for patients.</p> <p>PHNs commission services from general practitioners, other primary care providers, secondary care providers and hospitals to better coordinate care across the local health system, so that patients requiring help from multiple health care providers, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, receive the right care in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>Community Advisory Committees provide perspectives to PHN Boards. PHNs are expected to ensure that Community Advisory Committees are representatives of their local communities.</p>	<p>Review of Community Advisory Committee membership through twelve month performance reports to ensure appropriate representation.</p> <p>PHNs will support health and well-being outcomes for people who have disability by understanding the health care needs of their PHN communities through analysis and planning. They will know what services are available and help to identify and address service gaps where needed, including in rural and remote areas, while getting value for money.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on PHN Boards, Clinical Councils and Community Advisory Committees as appropriate to the PHN region.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
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The Department of Health is providing funding through Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to local organisations that have been commissioned to provide services under the Integrated Team Care (ITC) program.

The aims of the ITC program are to:

- Contribute to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic health conditions, which may include those with disability, through better access to coordinated and multidisciplinary care.
- Contribute to Closing the Gap in life expectancy by improved access to primary health care services that are culturally appropriate (including but not limited to general practice, allied health and specialists) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

PHNs are commissioning primary health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to deliver the ITC program in their region.

ITC is provided by a team/teams of Indigenous Health Project Officers (IHPOs), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outreach Workers (Outreach Workers) and Care Coordinators. The team works in their region to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to obtain primary health care as required, provide care coordination services to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic disease/s—which may include those with disability, who require coordinated, multidisciplinary care—and improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to culturally appropriate mainstream primary care.

(Lead – Department of Health)

The success of this effort will be demonstrated by the reports from PHNs to the Department about the progress of ITC in their regions.

The Department of Health is managing the Government’s [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD\) Action Plan](#). Under the FASD Action Plan, \$4 million has been included specifically for targeted measures supporting the prevention of FASD within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through a FASD health promotion resource package. The key objective of the FASD health promotion resource package is to assist services—initially primary health care services receiving funding for New Directions: Mothers and Babies services—to reduce alcohol consumption during pregnancy, leading to a reduction in the incidence of disability related to FASD.

The Department of Health will enhance the capacity of maternal and child health services in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to prevent disability related to FASD. A health promotion resource package will be nationally implemented through New Directions: Mothers and Babies services, which provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, their mothers and their families with access to antenatal care. Participating New Directions: Mothers and Babies services will be provided with training and support as part of the implementation.

(Lead – Department of Health)

The success of this effort will be demonstrated by:

- the development of the FASD health promotion resource package
- provision of training to staff in New Directions: Mothers and Babies services nationally, with more qualified staff implementing the package as part of child and maternal health education programs.



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>Under the Australian Government’s FASD Action Plan, a FASD diagnostic tool will be finalised, and guidelines developed, to support diagnosis and early management of FASD, including appropriate referral pathways.</p> <p>Funding of best practice resources and more support for Drug and Alcohol services to directly engage with women at risk has also been provided.</p>	<p>The Department of Health will continue to liaise with service providers and key stakeholders, and consult with the FASD Technical Network to reduce FASD in the Australian population in line with the activities under the FASD Action Plan.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Release of the national FASD Diagnostic Tool.</p> <p>Implementation of the FASD projects under the National FASD Action Plan.</p> <p>Improved data collection on FASD.</p>
<p>Through the Department of Health’s Hearing Services Program, funding is provided for research and development activities into hearing health, prevention and rehabilitation funded research and development activities are undertaken by the National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL) and various research institutions, through the Hearing Loss Prevention Program (HLPP).</p>	<p>The Department of Health will promote the outcomes of research concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with hearing impairment or those at risk of acquiring hearing impairment via the Office of Hearing Services website and the Hearing Education and Research Network (HEARnet) website.</p> <p>Individual research institutions also disseminate their research outcomes via the online publications of reports and further promote their research through presentations, launches, media events and publications.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Research specific key performance indicators for the Hearing Services Program are met.</p>
<p>The <i>Australian Government Response to Contributing Lives, Thriving Communities, Review of Mental Health Programs and Services</i>, sets out a reform package that will transform Commonwealth mental health funding and programme delivery to achieve a more efficient, integrated and sustainable mental health system, to improve mental health services for all Australians.</p>	<p>Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will conduct needs assessments to inform activity work plans and then purchase or commission mental health services at the local level to deliver those services. One of the six key objectives for PHNs in mental health is enhancing and better integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health services.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Increased access to culturally appropriate and safe mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>

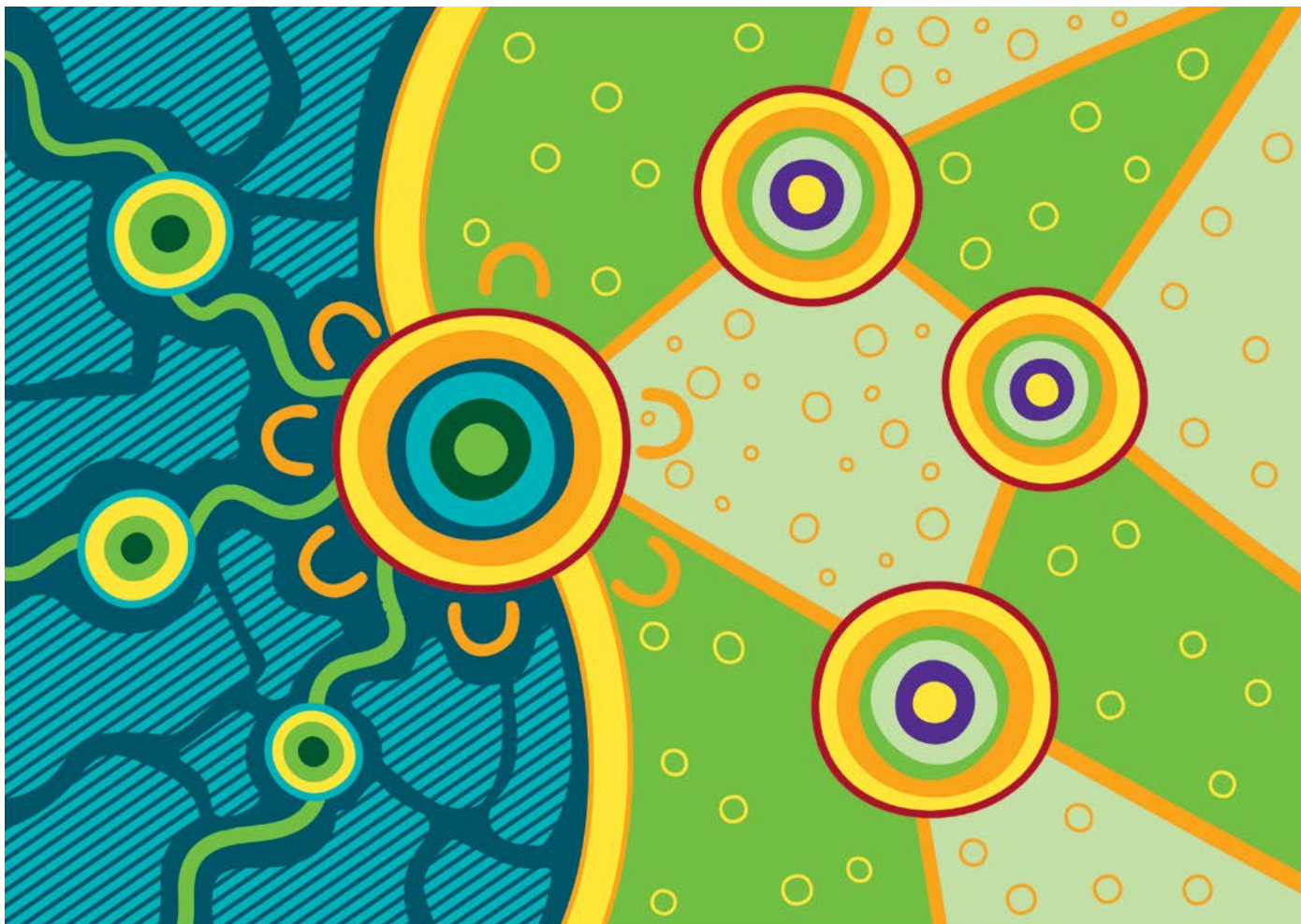


Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Australian Government and all state and territory governments have made a commitment to the development of the Fifth National Mental Health Plan (Fifth Plan).</p>	<p>The Fifth Plan will target those areas where jurisdictional collaboration will make a difference to people with a mental illness. Improving the mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is a priority area for this plan.</p> <p>(Lead – Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Principle Committee under Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council)</p>	<p>Timely completion of the Fifth National Mental Health Plan in 2016 with the Plan being endorsed by all health ministers through the COAG Health Council.</p>
<p>From 2015, the Australian Sports Commission commenced the <i>Sporting Schools</i> program, Australia's largest participation program that will encourage all children (including those with disability) to take part in sport-based activities. <i>Sporting Schools</i> will engage more than 850,000 children in primary schools across Australia.</p>	<p><i>Sporting Schools</i> will be available to all students across the country, including students with disability. Remote Implementation Officers have been engaged to support a whole-of-government approach to the advancement of participation in sport, through <i>Sporting Schools</i>, in regional and remote locations.</p> <p>(Lead – Australian Sports Commission)</p>	<p>Remote Sport Pilot projects, designed to address identified participation barriers for sport in regional and remote locations, will ensure continuous improvement of <i>Sporting Schools</i> program delivery in regional and remote locations.</p>
<p>People with severe and persistent mental illness are supported to engage with their communities through the Australian Government funded <i>Partners in Recovery Initiative</i> and the <i>Support for Day to Day Living in the Community</i> programs.</p> <p><i>Partners in Recovery</i> organisations facilitate collaboration between people with complex care needs, their carers and families, and the multiple services and supports they may come into contact with.</p> <p><i>Support for Day to Day Living in the Community</i> providers deliver structured and socially based activities to people whose ability to manage their daily activities and live independently is impacted as a result of severe mental illness.</p>	<p>The Department of Health will continue to work with the Department of Social Services and the National Disability Insurance Agency as programs that support people with severe and persistent mental illness are rolled into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). All governments have made a commitment to maintain continuity of supports for people accessing existing programs.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Program clients who are eligible for an NDIS Individual Funded Package under Tier 3 are supported to transition to the NDIS.</p>



Existing Effort	Targeted Actions	Measures of Success
<p>The Department of Health commissions the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) to collect data on around 200 primary health care Indigenous-specific health services funded by the Australian Government and to release the Online Services Report (OSR) annually.</p>	<p>The Department of Health will report data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability as part of the annual OSR and ask the AIHW to provide this data on a confidential basis to other departments for planning purposes.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of Health)</p>	<p>Data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability reported annually in the OSR and provided on a de-identified basis to other departments.</p>
<p><i>The Indigenous Advancement Strategy</i> includes a number of health and wellbeing related initiatives that have some impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Sports participation activities facilitate participation of people with disability. • Alcohol and other drug treatment services and social and emotional wellbeing activities specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 	<p>The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s new Indigenous Advancement Strategy guidelines recommend that where possible and relevant, applications for funding should highlight how the needs of Indigenous Australians with disability will be addressed.</p> <p>(Lead – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet)</p>	<p>The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is working closely with providers to achieve outcomes, including working together to arrive at effective measures of success that are outcomes based and locally relevant.</p>

The Artwork



The artwork by Jordan Lovegrove, Ngarrindjeri, depicts the many different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia from the sea to the land. The meeting places represent the support services provided to people with a disability; the colours reflecting the cultural appropriateness of the services provided. The larger meeting place represents the Department of Social Services meeting to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability, and the open circles reflect that information being sent out to the communities.

Artist

JORDAN LOVEGROVE

Indigenous Artist, Dreamtime Creative

Ngarrindjeri young man who combines intimate knowledge of Aboriginal communities and illustration skills to develop outstanding Indigenous artwork which is applied to a range of print and online communications.



Australian Government

