

Parliamentary Joint Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Senate Inquiry

Hello, My name is Tricia and I am a participant of the NDIA. Thank you for inviting people who live with disability in their lives today.

I would like to share:

- some concerns of mine
- some opinions
- some suggestions and
- make some recommendations that are designed to ensure the NDIS and NDIA, through their person centred focus, support and resource people who live with disability in their lives to become the best individuals they can be and take their place as valued members of Australian Society.

Then Australia will demonstrate It is a World Leader in redressing the inequality experienced by people living with disabilities.

Time has not allowed me to prepare a comprehensive document for today so I will briefly outline the issues I wish to raise, and send you a.s.a.p my detailed submission.

Topics:

1. NDIS Legislation

The current legislation offers people living with disability in their lives, their cares, families and friends a framework where change can occur and the supports required to build the capacity of participants to where they can design a better life.

My concern is with Reasonable & Necessary.

The dictionary defines Reasonable as -

1. as much as is appropriate or fair; moderate.

Many People with disability live below the poverty line which doesn't come close to meeting the costs of living with a disability let alone providing opportunities to build a healthy and productive life.

Switching the Reasonable and Necessary to Necessary & Reasonable.

The Dictionary definition Necessary as :

1. being essential, indispensable, or requisite:
With Necessary prominent supports and resources will be delivered with the individual's need in focus. There will then be time to explore the options available under

appropriate and moderate while seeking the best outcome possible.

2. Planning

As a participant I have had two extremely bad experiences of planning. I am currently being reviewed, at present, which also looked as if it were to be my third bad experience. However, I stood my ground and requested a face to face interview with my planner where I could engage with her human to human.

Apparently because of demand on planners and other staff within NDIA we, the participants, rate a phone conversation to discuss and plan not a year of our life in advance but now two.

Person centre means the planner and participant, meet together to talk about the plan, what the participant, their family and carers want for the next period of their lives.

The discussion of the planning relationship and its importance in the building of the capacity of participants, their carers and families to design a better life. These are mentioned prominently in the NDIS Legislation and the Productivity report that supports the NDIS

3. Outcomes

There is no way participants will not understand that their plan is also the property of NDIA as they strive to perform to criteria and meet KPI;s that we have to adhere to to continue to receive support.

Outcomes will be individual. There is a danger that when the processes and procedures are developed for defining outcome that the Individual and the life they want to live will need to conform to set parameters based on justifying expenditure. Ordinary Australians don't live like this why do we?

4. Procedures:

The more procedures you put in place, the more management levels you develop the further you move away from knowing and understanding the participants, their aspirations and goals.

5. The untouchable areas of life:

Health, Housing & Employment. As humans we all need our basic needs to be met before we can perform higher order functions. Maslow speaks about meeting the basics of food, clothing, housing, health , education, employment then the individual can strive to produce and contribute to the whole.

Because these other service areas are provided by the state and, in some cases, not for profits pivotal areas of participants lives may not change keeping them in the situations NDIA is there to change.

6. Service Providers

My experience as a participant, who has previously never received services other than a DES, Disability Employment Service, is that service providers are set in their ways unable to provide individually responsive services because they have set ways of operating

I am currently experiencing services wanting to do everything in my plan because I don't have enough money to pay their staff. I am being charge for a full hours work when I receive 12mins of service.

7. Transport

A most vital service for all participants because most of us cannot drive. A car, the freedom it offers is available to everyone who can drive. It offer opportunities to ,at will, spontaneously journey to where ever to do whatever takes your fancy in the moment. A wonderful privilege.

Newcastle needs to develop a greater range of affordable and accessible transport options so participants can transport themselves independently .

8. Poverty:

The majority of people living with disability in their lives live on a Centrelink benefit. This form of income does not help people who have additional cost related to their disability.

It is time to consider wider options that offer people with disabilities access into employment.

9. Access to the Portal:

There needs to be more work done to make the portal more accessible. Perhaps participants with expertise in computing could be of assistance.

A little note on Access Centrelink and Medicare Office don't have speech programs for people with vision impairment or blindness.

11. The Advisory Board:

The proposed changes to the advisory board reduce participants opportunity to be representative of all participants. Their unique understanding of being a participant in the scheme and their lived experience of disability will mean the board doesn't have them there for consultation.

12. Dissemination of information

As a participant I want to be part of making the scheme a success by building innovation and opportunity into every operation of the scheme and the agency.

Participants who have the qualification and skills deserve a right to work within the agency and service provision areas so they can directly contribute to its success.

To speak today the requirements are beyond many of us. My attempt to participate is not as high a quality as I would like to present but I don't have the appropriate technology, nor did I have a sufficient length of time to prepare a professional response or the resources, at hand, to provide ten written copies of what I discuss.

I want to discuss these issues and more so that you, the committee, can gain a clearer understanding of our position and what it would take to open opportunities for us. I know others in the audience would also like to speak and tell their stores.

I thank you for the opportunity of being here today. You need to hear our experiences good or bad. We all contribute to this country. We are employers building the beginning of the service industry that is moving Australia away from the end of the mining boom into a future of prosperity.

Myself I am a foster parent, a support for my friends, a community volunteer and unlike the majority of you sharing my expertise, experiences, knowledge, support and desire to participate in the building of a movement that will give Our Beautiful Country a positive face on the world stage unpaid for my time and expertise here today.