

NDIS opening statement to be delivered by Representing Minister

The Albanese Labor government is committed to restoring the NDIS that will always put the interests of participants first. We are cleaning up the mismanagement of the last 10 years.

We started the repair of the NDIS as soon as we came into Government. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is here to stay.

As promised, the Government has released the Independent Review of the NDIS on 7 December 2023, which recommend actions that needed over the next few years to help get the NDIS back on track and deliver better outcomes – not just for Australians with disability but for all Australians, families and communities.

The **independent NDIS Review** Panel travelled to every state and territory – including regional and remote communities. It heard directly from:

- More than 10,000 Australians and worked with disability organisations to reach out and listen directly to more than 1,000 people with disability and their families in detailed working sessions.
- Recorded more than 2,000 personal experiences, and received almost 4,000 submissions.

When the NDIS works, it changes lives – hundreds of thousands of lives.

The Review heard about the erosion of non-NDIS disability supports since the introduction of the Scheme, turning it into the only lifeboat in the ocean.

The Review gave 26 recommendations and 139 actions to fix the NDIS.

We are committed to working with the Australian disability community on the implementation of any changes in the report, as we respond further throughout 2024.

The Albanese government achieved a historical decision in National Cabinet on 6 December that agreed to a way forward on disability reform by working together to:

- Implement legislative and other changes to the NDIS to improve the experience of participants and restore the original intent of the Scheme.
- Jointly design additional Foundational Supports to be jointly commissioned by the Commonwealth and the states.
- Adjust state and territory NDIS contribution escalation rates, increasing from 4 per cent to be in line with actual Scheme growth, capped at 8 per cent, commencing from 1 July 2028.

On 30 January, the Albanese government announced a **significant investment** to DSS, NDIA and the NDIS Commission of \$130 million to support design and consultation on the priority recommendations of the NDIS Review.

This builds on the funding provided at budget, with a record \$732 million invested in the NDIA to improve the quality of the planning process which will ripple through the smooth running of the whole Scheme. Additionally the government has provided \$142.6m to the Commission to help keep participants safer by adding approximately 270 new staff. We are already seeing complaints been resolved faster and have seen more compliance activity than ever before.

Labor will always support the APS to do their job well and that includes the NDIS Commission workforce.

We haven't waited to crack down on dodgy providers that rip off participants – that's why the Labor Government has also funded the establishment of a multi-agency taskforce chaired by the ACCC to crack down on **unfair NDIS pricing**.

On Monday, Minister Shorten announced a **Registration Taskforce** led by eminent lawyer and advocate Natalie Wade to work with participants, families, representative organisations, workers and providers on the implementation of the NDIS Review's recommendation to introduce a risk-proportionate regulation system for the NDIS.

- We are committed to reducing cost growth to safeguard the Scheme for future generations of Australians with disability and ensure every dollar goes to those who need it most.

We have **continued to engage** with participants and have been hearing from thousands of participants at **NDIS Review townhall** events led by the Minister for NDIS and the Review's co-Chairs Bruce Bonyhady, Lisa Paul and Panel members.

- A Labor Government created the NDIS. Only a Labor Government can and will get the scheme back on track after a decade of neglect so it can better support people with disability as it was intended to.