



Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

15 August 2019

Dear Committee Secretary

**Re: QDN submission on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment
(Streamlined Governance) Bill 2019**

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) welcomes the opportunity to provide this high level submission on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Streamlined Governance) Bill 2019.

QDN is an organisation of, for, and with people with disability with over 2000 members and supporters. QDN operates a state-wide network of members who provide information, feedback and views from the lived experience of people with disability to inform systemic policy feedback to Government and peak bodies. QDN's submission is reflective of the views of our members and allies.

QDN acknowledges the development of this Bill and the Australian Government's intent to streamline governance processes of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). QDN also acknowledges the assertion in the explanatory notes of this Bill that the NDIS Rules discussed are administrative only and do not impact on individual's NDIS Plans.

QDN notes that the proposed model of governance appears to be moving from a consensus model, where agreement among the States and Territories is sought before action is taken to a consultative model, where State and Territory governments (referred to in the legislation as Host Jurisdictions) are consulted.

Regarding the proposed changes around appointment of Board Members, QDN believes a reasonable argument can be made that there should be more constraint around the appointment of Board members due to the need to ensure the Board and Independent Advisory Committee's (IAC) composition reflects contemporary NDIS governance issues as well as the different compositions of each State and Territory. Importantly, given the national nature of the Scheme, governance arrangements should allow for strategic feedback and direction that reflects the

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diversity of jurisdictions' geographical spread and topography and the particular NDIS key issues impacting each. In Queensland, for instance, getting 30,000 new participants into the Scheme is a key priority which has seen the bi-lateral agreement with the Commonwealth extended by 12 months. This has not been reflected in other jurisdictions.

Similarly, QDN believes the IAC composition should reflect the broad skill set required to achieve effective Scheme governance, including representation of people with lived experience of disability and their families. QDN believes the advisory structures in the Scheme need further review. QDN supports a model where there is an IAC in every jurisdiction linked to the national IAC, to ensure specific knowledge of the lived experience and circumstances of people with disability and their families is captured in each jurisdiction and acknowledging this knowledge is an important consideration in NDIS governance matters. This could align with a review of the governance structure and overall consultation system of the Scheme.

Regarding the changes to NDIS Rules, QDN believes the proposed processes may assist in giving clarity around expectations and timing for Joint Hosts to give feedback and perhaps will result in being able to quickly make improvements to the NDIS.

QDN agrees that the NDIS needs significant reforms in its governance structure to address interface issues between the Commonwealth and States and Territories. Now that the NDIS has achieved full roll out and interface issues with State service systems is such a critical issue with our members and all people with disability, QDN believes the role of the States and Territories needs to be more central to the scheme. This requires an overall strategic approach that sees the States/ Territories as partners with the Commonwealth and ensures the Scheme has improved integration with other service systems. QDN believes a thorough review of governance arrangements could achieve this.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission. If you have any further questions, please contact me at QDN on telephone 07 3252 8566

Yours sincerely,

Paige Armstrong,

Chief Executive Officer, Queenslanders with Disability Network