

From:
To: [Community Affairs, Committee \(SEN\)](#);
Subject: Spam: Submission to the Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012
Date: Friday, 25 January 2013 3:25:41 PM

Please consider this email a formal submission by me to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

The current disability system has many problems that need to be addressed.

I have had the good fortune to work within the disability sector for 26 years, during which I have seen massive changes in the types of service delivery by both the Government and Non Government sectors. Many of the changes have proved to be advances for those with disabilities in ways that were inconceivable when I entered the sector all those years ago.

It is unfortunate though, that when I reflect on what has transpired over time I also see the broadening divide between those that have access to quality service provision and those individuals who are devoid of any access whatsoever. There is a huge underclass of people within our communities who have the undisputed right to receive supports that will give them the dignity that is an inherent human right but which is denied them because of a myriad reasons. This is truly a sad indictment on our society, and particularly when viewed from the perspective that we have just emerged from one of the greatest growth periods in our nations history, and yet we still have this ever broadening divide that we must hope the NDIS will go some way to changing.

My particular area of expertise so to speak within the sector is employment, specifically managing an Australian Disability Enterprise. It has, and continues to be an area that gives me a great deal of satisfaction, a satisfaction that is soon tempered when I am compelled to regularly turn away job seekers with disabilities as I don't have any vacancies in our outlet capacity. My organisation like many around the Commonwealth often actually operate with numbers above our funded capacity because we recognise that we are often the last and only option for people who may be in what can only be described as desperate situations.

We operate in what was originally a regional area that has developed along a growth corridor of a state capital and as such the population has boomed, along with an equally proportionate number of people with disabilities. These people are keen for employment and or other support services only to find that they are denied them due to lack of basic funding for programmes. This occurs not only within my federally funded sphere but also within the state governments area of jurisdiction. The state responsibilities, are to me, even more alarming in respect to the neglect that is shown to many families of people with disabilities. I have been witness on numerous occasions where people were denied supports that they are and should be provided with just so as some petty public servant may satisfy the accounting wisdom of their bureaucratic overlords. Families and individuals that are unable to self advocate, and, or were unable to secure others to act on their behalf are highly likely to not receive the supports necessary to enable best possible outcomes for the individual with a disability.

I remain optimistic that the NDIS will offer far more equitable distribution of funds for those that require services but it could also be fraught with danger for organisations as the new funding arrangements may inadvertently jeopardise their fiscal viability. In particular during the initial introduction phase. The daily problems within mine and most other Australian Disability Enterprises will still no doubt be with us after the NDIS roll out. The "Duality of Focus" which is inherent in every ADE will still be a reality for all of us, and from the transition to the new scheme I hope that ongoing viability for organisations is given due consideration.

Quality service provision, whilst not necessarily commensurate with funding dollars, is still reliant on an adequate level of dollars so as to not allow the field to be driven to a point where all is at a level of the lowest common denominator. Opportunity such as the NDIS come rarely in a nations history and I wish those of you who have the task before them all the best with your assignment.

The main features of the NDIS that will make a difference to the community are:

Better access to education and work opportunities, More employment of people with disability and less reliance on social welfare, Increased ability to coordinate services to suit the "whole" person/family

The most important services for the NDIS to provide are:

Employment support, Accommodation options, Case management, planning and coordination

I support the introduction of the NDIS.

I am hopeful that through the introduction of the scheme equity in services received by people will be the norm across the Commonwealth irrespective of back ground such as education, socio-economic position or location. And in particular for the largest group of people within our society that are recipients of the DSP, those with mental health problems, so that they might soon get the supports that are almost entirely absent or so under resourced at present.

I agree for my submission to be made public

Regards,

Mr Ian Reeves