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Dear Dr Ian Holland,

I am grateful for having the opportunity to contribute to the Senate Inquiry on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) 2012, on Thursday the 21st of February 2013, in Melbourne.

I would like to provide additional material to my responses to questions taken on notice during the inquiry.

In regards to my introduction (page 19) we now understand that 28.6 per cent of all younger people (aged under 65) in residential care are people with dementia, which represents 2,373 people. I have also been informed that people with younger onset dementia are eligible within the NDIS.

In response to the question from Senator Carol Brown, "Are you happy with the triggers that are in the bill in terms of amendments to plans?" (page 24) I would like to add the following:

- I do agree that participant's should be able to change their statement of goals and aspirations or request a review of their plan at any time (Division 4, 47 and 48). However, if the CEO decided not to conduct a review after being requested by the participant, the CEO should provide feedback as to why the review was not conducted (Division 4, 48).
- I believe the NDIS rules should allow participants to have maximum flexibility in changing support arrangements without triggering a review. The system needs to be flexible so that the participant can change provider within a service type, or change the time of day for the service, without a review being triggered.
- There should be a trigger of an automatic review of a participant's plan if the carer, client or service provider notices physical, mental, financial or emotional changes. This is particularly important for participants with dementia as changes and degeneration in cognitive impairment can occur rapidly. This again highlights the importance of early intervention and preparing a long term plan for those with dementia, as there is a progressive change in cognitive abilities. Even if there is no decline or change in the person's disability there should be an automatic time period for review, for example a review every six to twelve months.

In response to Senator Smith's question on page 25, "I just want to be clear whether you have or have not yet received clarification as to whether or not people with early onset dementia will be part of the NDIS." I have received clarification that people with young onset dementia are included within the NDIS but I have not received written confirmation.

Yours sincerely

Glenn Rees
CEO
Alzheimer's Australia
7th March 2013