



Delivered by the
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Hon Kevin Andrews MP
Chairman
Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Andrews

Thank you for the opportunity to observe the discussion at the public hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Inquiry into the provision of services for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition, on 28 April 2017 in Melbourne.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) welcomes feedback and is committed to acting on the experiences of people with disability, their families, carers and the broader community to build a successful and sustainable NDIS. My colleagues and I found the public hearing instructive and appreciated the open discussion.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify a number of points made at the public hearing, specifically as part of the discussion on Forensic Disability services.

The statement that there are no NDIS participants in prison with an approved NDIS plan is incorrect. Whilst it is not possible to provide a national figure at this stage, the Vic West regional office in the Barwon region of Victoria confirm that there are at least 12 NDIS participants incarcerated within local facilities in the Vic West region. The NDIA funds reasonable and necessary supports to each participant based on their needs and in line with the COAG principles between the NDIS and mainstream service systems, particularly the mental health and justice sectors. Some supports are currently being delivered within correctional facilities while some participants who are on day release may have funded supports outside delivered outside the facility to enable successful transition into community life. In addition, support coordination services work with participants prior to release to ensure a local support provider is in place at the time of release and that participants are connected to family, where possible, and community.

During trial, NDIA staff in the Barwon regional office worked collaboratively with Corrections Victoria, local Correctional facilities, Disability Liaison Officers and the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services to streamline access and planning processes for eligible NDIS participants who were incarcerated. This has included:

- NDIS planning taking place inside the facility
- Funded supports with the aim of supporting a successful transition to the community
- Maintaining engagement with existing support workers following incarceration

- Sustained engagement with services to ensure support at the time of release into the community
- NDIS planners and support services remaining engaged with the participant to discuss goals and aspirations post release.

The local stakeholder relations team has also worked in partnership with correction staff to provide training and support around the NDIS and the planning process. This has enabled the team to establish links and a collaborative approach. NDIA staff have provided training to case managers and prison staff about the NDIS and have developed working arrangements with the Victorian Department of Justice.

These positive examples of working with mainstream services continue in transition to full scheme and the learnings from trial are being incorporated into the development of a consistently applied practice model that supports participants who have complex forensic needs.

A final point to note is that the NDIS fits within the framework of the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (NDS). Broadly, the NDS recognises that people with disability have varied lives, not all of which will or should be impacted through support delivered by the NDIS.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Disability Reform Council (DRC) agreed in September 2016 to reinvigorate all governments' efforts to drive progress under the NDS, including through the release of a second implementation plan and commitment to improving the responsiveness of mainstream systems to the needs of people with disability. The NDIA is working in collaboration with the mental health sector to highlight the need for the mainstream mental health system to plan and implement effective psychosocial supports for those people outside the NDIS target population. This work also extends to participants who have complex forensic needs.

The NDIA looks forward to the opportunity for further discussion about these and other issues of interest to the inquiry at the hearing on 17 May 2017.

Yours sincerely

Louise Glanville
Deputy CEO – Governance and Stakeholder Relations
National Disability Insurance Agency

10 May 2017
