

Submission in regards to the NDIS Amendment bill 2024.

I am making this submission in the hopes that the bill is reassessed and the measures to protect people with disabilities and people on the NDIS are protected from the insane war that is being waged on disabled people by the federal government and Bill Shorten.

For a long time, participants have been fighting for basic support from the NDIA staff, who have very little knowledge of the struggles people with disabilities face and, in some instances, do not care that their actions are causing severe mental anguish and whose actions border on human rights abuse.

We, as disabled people, are begging for support funding; we go through numerous reports, we have invasive functional capacity assessments done, and then when it is clear all the reports are completely ignored by the planners putting the plans together, so we are advised to and so we ask for help from the AAT, we get highly paid NDIA barristers from large expensive firms, who fight a David and Goliath battle against us, and in many cases, are asking for shortcuts that are unconscionable.

In my situation, I have had a L.A.C state in documents to the planner that, despite my being paralysed from the waist down and in a wheelchair, I “lacked the motivation to look after myself and do my housework.” So, based on the LAC’s recommendations based on her own opinion and personal biases, not the extensive medical evidence they were given, my new plan had very little funding, and as a punishment for my needing help, I was taken off self-managed and made agency-managed, based on the above reasoning. I fought this and was told it would take time to change back to self-managed, even though I then was left without any support at all. As a consequence of not having any support, I had a fall, broke ribs, and ended up with a punctured lung. I was reviewed by a doctor at the hospital, and they found that due to a lack of support, I was severely malnourished, dehydrated, and had excoriation and skin infections from incontinence burns. I was also in a severe situation, as I was recovering from broken ribs and punctured lungs, so I had compromised breathing. It still took months at the AAT with barristers trying to nickel and dime me on supports. I was asked if I could survive on 2 incontinent pads a day and 6 hours of support a week despite the reports recommending 8 hours a day of support and 10 incontinence pads.

The barristers tried to ask me if I could not use qualified allied health professionals who were licensed, trained, and insured to perform allied health services and asked if I could get my support workers to do my physiotherapy, speech pathology, and other allied health services, even though it was illegal under the legal requirements of Allied Health professionals. When I contacted the board that registers Allied Health professionals and advised them of what the barristers were advising me to do, they wrote a report advising that the Allied Health Association would be submitting a legal case to the NDIA over the barristers pressuring me to have my supports commit illegal acts that they were not qualified to do. They said they wanted any correspondence from the NDIA barristers advising me to use unqualified support as part of their case against the NDIA.

This is just a few things that are illegal that the NDIA have done to me. I can only imagine how many people who didn’t understand what was happening have been conned by the NDIA and their barristers into unsafe situations that they know are illegal.

Now, with their submission to change the NDIA and take away the limited protections that disabled people have with the NDIS, is a very scary time for people who are on the scheme and facing the possibility of being at the mercy of someone with limited disability training, deeming that the supports they have accessed aren’t necessary and raising a debt against people who in a lot of cases, are poor and without any income other than a pension, and having to pay huge support bills. The

submission states that they don't need any physical proof of wrongdoing, just the NDIA's belief that the support shouldn't be funded.

They are proposing no co-design and no whole-of-person approach, which doesn't allow people's entire interrelated disabilities, only the ones NDIA deems coverable, which they can decide to no longer fund at any time. This also allows the NDIA to pick the cheapest disability to fund at any point, meaning that people with life-threatening and severe disabilities are only covered for "minor" disabilities that attract limited funding. This is a dangerous possibility and with the proposed unclear rights to appeal needs assessments, it sets a very dangerous precedent.

The limits proposed on choice and control. This is incredibly scary, and it is also very discriminatory toward disabled people, as there are currently no limits on able-bodied people to live how they want, and be able to go where they want, do what they want etc, even those on Government Centrelink benefits, they are not dictated on how they are to spend their welfare payments. Still, they are doing it to NDIS participants? Not only is it morally wrong, but it also is Illegal as per the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The fact that Bill Shorten is trying very hard to force the hand of the committee and other parties who are trying to review the Bill and make amendments by going on tv with a packet of Tim Tams and saying for the ministers to swing by his office and sign off on the Bill, to save the tax payers 1.1Billion smacks of backdoor dealings and does nothing to instil any credibility in this Bill or in Bill Shorten. It has been proven his figures are wrong. However, he is chanting it on every morning show on TV, and the public is becoming very distrustful of NDIA participants and the scheme itself. This has caused people with disabilities to be viewed as fraudulent and not deserving of any help and support, which then puts us at further risk of harm and discrimination.

The Liberal Government made a shambles of the NDIA, and Bill Shorten is ensuring that he continues the decimation of the NDIS. If the NDIA implodes the economy will implode. Supports, Allied Health, and providers comprise Australia's largest workforce. More people are employed by NDIS participants, and providers than any other industry. For every dollar the NDIA gives in support, the government receives \$3 back in revenue and taxes into the economy. I do not comprehend why the NDIA and the government are disputing the money being pumped back into the economy by participants and their support needs. The taxes paid by support and allied health providers will be enough to fund the NDIA. Sadly, I feel that the Govt wants to keep those support taxes for themselves to pay their huge salaries and shorten speechwriters.