

Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into NDIS

January 2012

Background and intention

For 18.5% of Australia's population who are the most disadvantaged and financially distraught members of Australia's citizenry we need as a nation to ensure that the appropriate funding and resources are in place through the NDIS.

This will provide independence for many people with a disability and enable both carers and those with a disability to make a contribution to the Australian economy.

- No longer will families with sons or daughters with special needs live in fear of the future.
- No longer will those with special needs be so disadvantaged in the support they receive and contribution they can make.
- No longer will Australia be a third world provider to those who require our support.

As a nation we can be proud of what a properly funded NDIS can deliver, carers can be proud of the achievements of their sons or daughters and those with a disability can be proud of greater independence and the potential to participate in the workforce.

"Every Australian with a significant disability deserves the support they need to reach their potential in life. It's up to our political leaders to deliver a sustainable funding model that makes this a reality," John Della Bosca

The NDIS needs to be rolled out the way the Productivity Commission intended, as fast as possible to meet existing high level need and enable people to plan their futures and live better, valued and productive lives.

There needs to be a firm commitment to the funding of the NDIS in the Governments forward estimates. We need to ensure that the funding required does not become a political issue when Government revenues are under pressure. This needs to be locked in once and for all, "a core government responsibility" as recommended by the Productivity Commission.

I believe that all Australians would also make a contribution though Medicare if required.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Joint Select Committee

Wastage, duplication, politics and excessive bureaucracy are the enemies of an efficient NDIS. Therefore a joint select committee should be formed to oversee the successful implementation of this major reform. This should be a bipartisan committee enduring changes in Government.

Regulation

There are many well meaning charities in Australia providing assistance to those with a disability. There is little co-ordination between the service providers and much duplication and inefficiencies. Some form of regulation /oversight of these charities with the view of encouraging integration and increased productivity would assist the effectiveness and priorities off an NDIS.

Hubs

To ensure minimal duplication suburban Hubs could be formed to cater for the particular needs of those with a disability. This could be coordinated by the State Governments through the relevent councils. This would enable specialised services within a region creating economies of scale and specialised care.

Productivity and Efficiency

Strict guidelines and benchmarks need to be established in order to avoid wastage. This should involve limiting bureaucratic involvement, measure the contribution to society along with the cost and minimize duplication from the not for profit sector. We also need to ensure that people with disability and their families and carers are in the driver's seat deciding best use of NDIS funding to meet their needs.

Priorities

There are 6 priorities for a successful outcome for the NDIS.

1. Quality and readily available respite care
2. Independent living for those with a disability with specialised accommodation and support
3. Education and training where appropriate
4. Work opportunities made available for those who can participate
5. Financial support for at home carers
6. Quality aged care facilities

Vision

A successful roll out of the NDIS will ensure that every Australian with a disability has the opportunity to make a contribution to the Australian economy, live independently or have professional quality care and the families of those with special needs the ability to lead their lives that is not burdened with fear of the future and financial pressure.

This is something that every Australian can be proud of.

Grant Patterson