

From:

Sent: Monday, 17 August 2015 5:48 PM

To:

Subject: National Disability Housing Recommendations - 17 July 2015

Hi Mal,

Please find below confirmation of the urgent Disability Housing recommendations, which were briefly discussed a few days ago.

We look forward to assisting you to implement them.

With best regards

Peter Yeo

President: PointZero5 Foundation

Direct:

Disability Housing Nationally - Recommendations – 17 August 2015

1) Introduction

- a) Right now, throughout Australia there are over 80,000 People with a Disability who are seeking appropriate disability housing.
- b) Amongst these there are over 6,500 young people in aged care facilities.
- c) There are massive waiting lists for accessible and affordable housing.
- d) By 2020, if no action is taken, there will be up to 130,000 NDIS participants without appropriate disability housing.
- e) There is no real clarification how to solve this problem, or Federal / State Government action plan – everyone is waiting to see what the other does to unravel this problem – in the meantime all those less fortunate People with a Disability and their Families are suffering in a dreadful, appalling and offensive way.
- f) From July 2018 the NDIS, hopefully as announced, will have \$700 million each year to invest in stimulating the construction of disability housing – what is happening in the meantime?...Nothing - except more unnecessary suffering for People with a Disability and their Families!

2) Disability Housing Facts – Individuals

- a) People with Disability generally wish to live in the community, with over 50% wishing to live in their own homes where they have autonomy.
- b) A further 10% wish to live in a share-house with one or two friends who may or may not be people with disability.
- c) An additional 12% prefer to live in either ‘core and cluster’ arrangements or ‘intentional communities’, in which each person has their own private unit, where they could be wholly self-sufficient, with support if that was their choice. Such arrangements would have common facilities, and/or support arrangements for each individual.
- d) There are no recommended lists available of approved disability builders, disability renovators, or disability maintenance businesses available – even Government Departments of Housing do not know of, and endorse any such building businesses, nor will they even supply or recommend any of the tradespeople they use for maintenance.

Immediate lists of approved disability building businesses should be created, together with recommended alternatives of disability architect designs for such new housing.

3) Disability Housing Facts – Future Construction Recommendations

- a) All new residential construction, should be, at a minimum, built according to the silver level Liveable Housing Australia accreditation standards. This would reduce the cost and increase the supply of accessible housing in Australia.
- b) Presently, it is the understanding the NDIA in the future will use the NDIS trial sites to test and report on new models for creating accessible disability housing, with a focus on stimulating private investment in new housing stock. However private investors are not eventuating fast enough, if at all.

These above trials will eventually inform the community and policy makers of the most efficient ways to increase housing options for people with disability.

From current reports, these endeavours are not occurring and progressing fast enough and satisfactorily.

To ensure the above requirements are completed rapidly, an urgent appointment of a Disability Housing Board should be created to oversee these

total Projects, again including predominantly People with a Disability who know exactly what is required.

- c) All future NDIS housing funding from 2019 should be allocated to deliver only new housing for people with disability, rather than maintaining existing housing stock – that is, this announced minimum of \$700 million a year from 2019 should be directed towards increasing viable housing options for people with disability.

4) Disability Housing – Immediate Federal Government Recommendations

- a) As State Governments in general are not greatly assisting towards any New Disability Housing, a large percentage of current and pressing funds from the existing extra Medicare levy should be placed into this arena forthwith.

The immediate funds should be for...

- i) Maintaining existing disability housing to an acceptable standard, certified by a qualified Disability Occupational Therapist - with any such renovations to be completed within 3 years - this includes dwellings in City and Regional Towns, and not just existing State Disability & Aged Care Departmental Houses, but Apartments as well.
- ii) All existing State Departmental Houses and Apartments suitable only for able bodied people at present, should be upgraded to be capable to include basic disability bathroom rails easily (holes in the wall can be left for rails to slip into and lock at a minutes notice), good shower access for all types of people but where shower chairs can easily roll into, and appropriate wheelchair ramps if required at a any stage.

It should further be noted that if renovations surrounding hallways and doors are necessary in the future, any new doors and passageways should be renovated to suit wheelchair access – these functions to be completed over 5 years, with the obvious exceptions where eg., apartments have stair access only.
- iii) As soon as the Disability Housing Board has been appointed, they will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the above via a CEO appointed by them, and approved by the Chair/Committee of the NDIS Joint Standing Committee.
- iv) Again, where possible, People with a Disability should be employed or contracted to conduct the above tasks.

- b) For any builders or developers to be interested in assisting with new Housing for People with Disabilities in the future, any project must be viable for them to a certain extent.

Because, with no existing figures and guarantees for builders/developers to assist currently, very few presently wish to commit to large, or any, disability developments which are required.

If guarantees of some kind are offered, where builders/developers will receive a small return for their involvement, we estimate over 10 major approved builders/developers will gladly be involved in each State.

The above appointments can only be successful if...

- i) The Federal Government underwrites the NDIS Building Project below, so no approved builders/developers appointed, can lose substantial funds from these projects - again all these appointments will be under strict guidelines set out by the Chair/Committee of the NDIS Joint Standing Committee / Disability Housing Board.
- ii) The above 4bi) should be only approved by the Chair/Committee of the NDIS Joint Standing Committee to allow major Banks, or approved lending institutions, to permit approved builders/developers to be confident to commence construction of disability housing with some order of guarantee.
- iii) As part of this undertaking, State Governments should be requested to contribute a substantial amount of land at a peppercorn rental toward the total NDIS disability housing project – this would most likely have to be in conjunction with Municipal Councils.
- iv) The funding of these projects should be further realised by...
 - A major proportion of an individual's disability pension being placed into the rental/lease of the housing they receive, or
 - The purchase of disability housing by a person with a disability and/or their family to be along the lines of successful retirement village / aged care groups, whereby disability consumers contribute say, 25% of the purchase price in year 1, followed by 15% in year 2, plus a weekly management fee.
 - If this latter option was preferred, any difference in profits once the building is sold should be split 50/50 with the builder/developer.
 - To assist with this total funding, each Person with a Disability and/or their Family will be shown how to raise monies to assist fund their housing via friends and local charitable institutions.

- Additionally, all Disability Applicants will, if required, be shown how to successfully approach Investors / Charitable Institutions / Philanthropists to assist with gaining their funding in a precise and rapid way. The writer will gladly be able to assist in both the latter 2 points, as part of the Disability Housing Board.

To discuss further options or suggestions, please call Peter Yeo, President of the PointZero5 Foundation, direct on _____, 7 days a week between 9am and 8pm.