

I am a parent of a 37 year old who is a severe epileptic and has an intellectual disability. He desperately wants to move out of home and be with his peers but needs supported accommodation. We hope that one day soon he will be in accommodation and be settled, happy and safe before anything should happen to either my husband or me.

I strongly agree with the introduction of the NDIA but there are areas that concern me and I feel it needs to be fine-tuned to ensure that it is a viable entity for the future. It should not be an invitation for individuals to get all they want. I don't believe it should fund decking, iPads, sporting fees, etc. These are items that should be saved up to purchase just like the rest of us do.

We are fortunate in Australia to have the help that we have but it has always been hit and miss, with the people who cried the loudest getting support and those unaware of what they could get missing out and struggling to survive. With the introduction of the NDIA we have a plan and feel more secure.

Prior to NDIA my son received a Mobility Allowance and added to this amount to pay for the taxis to and from work and day programs. After his plan commenced the allowance stopped and the taxi company bills the NDIA for all his travel. We have no idea what is being charged there is no accountability, most days he travels with two or three extra clients in the cab. Because we do not get a copy of the invoice we have no idea if the cab charge is shared or if they are billed as if on their own. We do not contribute to the costs anymore which I don't feel is correct as I strongly feel that clients should still contribute something, nothing should be totally free. I have heard of a parent who refuses to allow her grown son to use taxis and she is being paid .75c a kilometer to take him herself. I take my son some days but that is my choice and I don't believe I should get paid anything, it is the same as if I took my husband to work.

Prior to the NDIA Respite we always paid a small amount approximately \$20 a day when my son stayed in a DHS respite house, now there is no payment required and again I feel that we should pay some money, then the money will spread further. I would rather contribute and get the full 63 days than see it the number of days reduced. We need the full allowance of 63 days respite as we are older and this is our time to travel and do things that we have waited a lifetime to do together.

I believe that clients should receive copies of all invoices for any expenses in their plan to again ensure that it is correct and then we may also have a better idea of what has been spent and perhaps prevent going over budget.

I have been astounded on hearing some things that have been funded, I do not see the NDIA as a bottomless bucket of money and feel that people have to be realistic and ensure the scheme continues and is available for all Australians. This is not the opportunity to go on a shopping spree.

I understand Service providers are struggling; we used to pay a small fee for day programs, now that has changed. Some programs costs and a lot don't cost, it was easier prior to NDIA as we did not have to remember each day to take money for the day but at least this teaches the client that you have to pay if you want to do special programs like the horse-riding program my son attends one afternoon a week.

Our experience with our planner was positive, she listened to us and always kept us informed, she has since left the NDIA and now we have lost our contact and feel lost. There are certain areas that I do not understand, we have not had a review since we started the plan on 23 September 2013, and I have never been contacted by our LAC whatever that is. Should we have had a new planner appointed?

In the short time since the NDIA commenced there has been so much unnecessary waste of funds, just in changing the name from NDIS to DisAbility Care then to NDIA. Signage, letterheads, business cards, etc, etc.

Sincerely

Sandra Lovell