

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

3.50 The committee is concerned about the number of NDIS plans that appear not to have been activated and recommends that independent work be undertaken to establish the veracity of the evidence that plans have not been activated and what the causes and consequences this may have on the Scheme.

Recommendation 2

3.72 The committee heard evidence that 'gaps in service' have been identified in each of the trial sites. The committee recommends that further work be undertaken by the Independent Advisory Council which is well-placed to identify and inform the Agency about where there are gaps in service and possible options for addressing these shortfalls.

Recommendation 3

3.78 As people transition to the NDIS, the committee is cognisant of the need to assist people develop the necessary skillsets to enable them to successfully move into the workplace environment and participate in the workforce, where possible. The committee recommends that work be conducted through the relevant Commonwealth departments of education and employment to assess what is and can be done to help participants make these choices. The committee also recommends working with employers to appraise issues concerning disability discrimination in the workplace, and remove barriers through education and reform to better integrate NDIS supports.

Recommendation 4

5.55 The committee recommends that as part of the planning process, the NDIA implement a process similar to normal insurance industry practices, where participants are provided with: clear disclosure documentation (about the planning process that includes reference to the 'no disadvantage test'); a written draft plan; incorporates a 'cooling-off' before a package is agreed; and requires participants to sign their final agreed plans. The committee believes that this is a fundamental element of the original intent of the policy to empower and provide choice to people with a disability in the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Recommendation 5

5.88 Based on the evidence received on transdisciplinary packages, the committee recommends that the Agency undertake a review of the current arrangements regarding transdisciplinary packages, in particular, the operational guidelines and advice and training it provides to its planners. This review should encompass and be informed not just by clinical experts and researchers, but it should also consult participants, carers and providers.

Recommendation 6

5.97 The committee notes the importance of the role of advocacy services in ensuring quality plans and supporting participants in the planning process. The committee recommends that certainty regarding the role and support for advocacy services in the NDIS be urgently resolved through the Ministerial Disability Reform Council.

Recommendation 7

6.17 The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency implement a system whereby its website is renewed on a systematic basis, alerting the public to changes in its online documentation. The list of changes—with links to the documents—should be able to be accessed easily. Urgent changes—such as a change to price lists—should be communicated under a 'News Flash' item on the NDIA's website.

Recommendation 8

6.32 The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency publicise details about its internal systems for receiving and responding to feedback. The key performance indicators should be publicly listed and the Agency's performance against each indicator should be provided at regular intervals on the NDIA's website and in its Annual Report. The public should also be able to compare data sets over time.

Recommendation 9

6.37 The committee commends the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) for the survey results it has achieved to date. To improve the transparency and integrity of future survey results, the committee recommends that the NDIA consults with the Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Clearing House about the design and methodology of surveys to ensure that they are fit for purpose and consistent with best practice survey design principles. The NDIA should publish the methodology of surveys on its website and in its Quarterly Reports to the Council of Australian Governments Disability Reform Council.

The committee also recommends that the survey is extended to include carers and parents.

Recommendation 10

6.40 The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency develop a systematic way of gathering qualitative feedback from National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants and carers of NDIS participants. Careful thought should be given to ensuring a broad cross-section of feedback, encouraging views from people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Recommendation 11

6.45 The committee recommends that the Agency continue to ensure greater representation of people with disability in its staffing profile, particularly in the planner role.

Recommendation 12

6.49 The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency develop and implement an information campaign to inform young people living in residential nursing homes in the trial sites of the process for applying to become a participant with the NDIS.

Recommendation 13

6.53 The committee recommends that all future bilateral negotiations and amendments to transitional arrangements are finalised and publicised well in advance of commencement dates to ensure and provide confidence and certainty for all stakeholders.

Recommendation 14

6.56 In accordance, with the progressive roll-out of the NDIS to remote Indigenous communities, the committee recommends that governments work together through the Ministerial Disability Reform Council to consider adopting an approach, in consultation with the appropriate Indigenous organisations, to phase in all NDIS-eligible persons at the same time in each community.

Recommendation 15

6.76 The committee recommends that the Ministerial Disability Reform Council expedite roles and responsibilities and any funding arrangements for Tier 2 services. The committee commends the attitude and direction that the South Australian Government is taking in its involvement with Tier 2 and the sector, and recommends that states and territories adopt this approach.

Recommendation 16

6.84 The committee is aware that there is currently a shortfall in the number of workers in the disability sector, particularly in professional roles. It is aware of research that the number of full time disability sector workers will need to increase substantially to meet demand by full Scheme in 2018. The committee recommends that a workforce strategy be developed under the auspices of the Ministerial Disability Reform Council that identifies the issues, challenges, options and recommendations to meet demand.

Recommendation 17

6.99 The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency assist prospective and actual participants in building the necessary skills and knowledge to manage their own support package. Workshops should be available for participants who are seeking information on self-managing their plan. The committee believes that promoting self-management of plans will provide participants with choice and control which should in turn lead to greater innovation and responsiveness from service providers.

