

The Importance of Independent Plan Management Services within the NDIS

I am writing this submission as the owner and operator of a small independent NDIS Plan Management business. I currently support approximately 200 participants and families, most of whom are within my local community.

I genuinely love my role as a Plan Manager. For many participants, Plan Management is far more than simply processing invoices. It is often one of the most consistent and accessible forms of support they receive throughout their NDIS journey. Participants and families regularly contact us to better understand their plans, budgets, service agreements, funding categories and how to safely navigate the complexity of the NDIS.

As a smaller provider, I believe I can offer a level of personalised service that is difficult to replicate within larger or centralised systems. Maintaining a participant base of around 200 people allows me to properly monitor budgets, identify irregular spending patterns, assist participants to avoid overspending and ensures providers are claiming correctly and compliantly. It also means participants can speak directly with someone who knows them, understands their circumstances and can respond quickly when issues arise.

Independent Plan Managers also play an important supporting role within the broader NDIS ecosystem. In practice, many Plan Managers assist participants with understanding their funding usage and monitoring their plans in ways that reduce pressure on Local Area Coordinators (LACs) and NDIA staff. This allows LACs to focus on planning, connections and other important responsibilities.

Plan Managers are often the first line of defence in identifying:

- incorrect or duplicate claiming
- non-compliant invoices
- potential fraud or overcharging
- supports that may not align with NDIS rules
- participants at risk of exhausting funding early

Without independent Plan Managers performing this monitoring role, I believe there would be significantly increased pressure on participants, providers, LACs and the NDIA itself.

I also wish to acknowledge the importance of technology and software innovation within the sector. My business is well supported by Caresquare, whose software systems allow me to operate efficiently while maintaining strong oversight of participant budgets and claims. Their team has consistently been approachable, responsive and adaptable to industry changes, which has allowed smaller providers like myself to continue delivering high-quality support to participants.

Importantly, independent Plan Management also provides participants with choice and control. Participants should have the ability to choose a Plan Manager who suits their communication style, cultural background, location and support needs. Many participants value working with smaller local providers because they feel known, respected and supported as individuals rather than numbers within a larger system.

I also write this submission from the perspective of a parent of an adult NDIS participant. While our family currently self-manages, I understand that there may come a time where I am no longer able to provide the same level of support, guidance and administration for my daughter. Like many parents, I hope she will continue building independence, making her own choices, and eventually “leave the nest” with the right supports around her.

When that time comes, I would want her to have access to a trusted, independent Plan Manager who can help guide and support her through her life journey. Having compassionate and knowledgeable Plan Managers available gives families reassurance that participants can continue to navigate the NDIS safely and confidently, even when family circumstances change over time.

I strongly advocate for Plan Management services to remain an independent and participant-directed support within the NDIS. Removing or centralising Plan Management risks reducing participant choice, reducing personalised support and increasing pressure on other parts of the Scheme.

Independent Plan Managers are not simply invoice processors. We are an important safeguard, an education point for participants and families and a practical support that helps many people successfully navigate the NDIS.

Thank you for considering my submission.