



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability
Insurance Scheme Report:

NDIS Participant Experience in
Rural, Regional and Remote Australia.

MARCH 2026

Introduction

The Australian Government welcomes the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Report: NDIS Participant experience in Rural, Regional and Remote Australia.

The Report makes 10 recommendations and includes an additional comment and recommendation from the Coalition. The Government supports seven of the Report's recommendations, supports in principle two recommendations, notes one recommendation and supports the Coalition's recommendation.

The Government is committed to improving the NDIS, with significant reforms to the Scheme underway. In alignment with the Committee's recommendations and the outcomes of the NDIS Review published in December 2023, the Government is progressing significant reforms to enhance the Scheme's accessibility, efficiency, and cultural responsiveness for all participants, including those living in geographically and culturally diverse communities.

Key reform measures include simplifying and streamlining the NDIS application process, developing accessible guidance tailored for rural, regional, and remote communities, and co-design of cultural competency initiatives with local stakeholders.

The Government is also prioritising strategies to improve access to healthcare and to address workforce and skills shortages. This includes incentives for medical and allied health professionals to work in regional and remote areas, enhanced training opportunities, and support for First Nations language interpreting. This important work is being undertaken in a collaborative approach by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA), the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), and community representatives, ensuring that the evolving NDIS remains equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all participants.

Response to Recommendations

Key Theme: Simplifying NDIS application process and creation of accessible guidance

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency develop and implement a plan to further simplify and streamline the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) application process and create and publish accessible guidance materials for rural, regional and remote communities, consistent with the recommendations of the NDIS Review and the evidence received by the committee.

Response:

The Government supports Recommendation 1. The Government is committed to simplifying and streamlining the NDIS access process, including for people living in rural, regional and remote communities. The Government will build on existing initiatives that support people living in rural, regional and remote communities to gather access evidence and provide guidance on access pathways. The Government will improve the development and publication of accessible guidance materials supporting more equitable access to the NDIS across Australia.

Key theme: Building cultural competency and service flexibility

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the National Disability Insurance Agency, through co-design with disability communities in rural, regional and remote Australia, develop a training and cultural awareness program for National Disability Insurance Scheme staff and contractors operating in rural, regional and remote (RRR) communities, focusing on:

- *Building knowledge and understanding of disability*
 - *Developing cultural awareness and competency*
 - *Understanding and responding to the challenges for people with disability and RRR communities*
 - *Greater flexibility in delivering services to meet the needs of people with disability; and*
 - *More access to interpreters in RRR communities*
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Response:

The Government supports Recommendation 2. The Government recognises its strategic role in improving staff cultural competency to better assist First Nations NDIS participants in rural, regional, and remote areas.

The Government is committed to strengthening training and cultural capability for staff delivering the NDIS in rural, regional and remote communities. The Government is building on existing training and cultural capability initiatives, incorporating local protocols and regionally appropriate content, and supporting flexible, locally informed training approaches rather than a single national model. This will support improved understanding of local contexts and better service delivery outcomes for people with disability in rural, regional and remote communities.

In addition to following Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement protocols, the Government supports cultural competency with mandatory Indigenous cultural capability training. Staff development will align with DHDA capability review through the First Nations Capability Unit and its Uplift Project, which focuses on strengthening staff's cultural understanding and responsiveness.

Additionally, the NDIA and other Government agencies have implemented cultural capability frameworks for their workforce. These initiatives incorporate cultural safety standards across contact centre and frontline roles, ensure active participation of First Nations representatives in the design and delivery of training programs, and provide opportunities for all staff to expand their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and perspectives.

The Government, through the NDIA, launched the NDIS First Nations Strategy 2025-2030. This strategy was co-designed with First Nations participants, providers, and community leaders. It sets out a roadmap to make the NDIS more equitable, culturally safe, and community-centred for First Nations people. It includes integrating First Nations governance into NDIA decision-making, co-design processes, and operations, as well as systematically monitoring and sharing effective approaches to inform continuous improvement.

The Government acknowledges the critical role of language in supporting the wellbeing, culture, and identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) offers access to First Nations Interpreting Services, including the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service (NT AIS), which also extends cross-border support to the South Australian Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands and the Western Australian Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

The Government has provided funding of \$2.0 million over 4 years (2022-23 to 2025-26) to deliver the Free Interpreting Service (FIS) for Allied Health Professionals Program. Since starting in October 2022, the program has been accessible to privately practicing allied health providers in 32 Local Government Areas (LGAs), to support the provision of allied health services for people with low English proficiency.

Key theme: Improving healthcare access and workforce shortages

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, in consultation with the National Disability Insurance Agency, work with the medical profession and communities in rural, regional and remote areas to explore practices and initiatives to ensure that people with disability in rural, regional and remote communities obtain timely access to medical and allied health services.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing work with the medical profession, the National Disability Insurance Agency and disability communities in rural, regional and remote (RRR) areas to explore initiatives that could help address shortages of medical professionals, allied health professionals and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) workers in RRR areas of Australia, including:

- *Incentives for NDIS service providers to attract and retain workers based in rural, regional and remote areas;*
- *Incentives for medical professionals, allied health professionals and NDIS workers to live and work in rural, regional and remote areas*
- *Incentives and supports for people living in rural, regional and remote areas to undertake local education and training towards medical, allied health or NDIS worker qualifications*
- *Initiatives to attract qualified workers in Australia and overseas to live and work in rural, regional and remote areas; and*
- *Working with state and territory skills departments to build capacity and encourage attainment of accreditation in First Nations language interpreting, which builds workforce capacity in rural, regional and remote communities.*

Response (combined 3 and 4):

The Government supports Recommendations 3 and 4. The Government is working collaboratively with communities in rural, regional and remote areas, to improve timely access to medical and allied health services for people with disability living in rural, regional and remote communities.

The Government will build on existing initiatives that support local workforces, increase service availability, and strengthen collaboration across the health and disability sectors, including with First Nations stakeholders. This will support more equitable access to services and improved participation in the NDIS.

The long-term investment by the Government in rural health education capacity and infrastructure – in particular the Rural Health and Multidisciplinary Training (RHMT) Program - is an important platform to build on. Integrating training and service provision in areas with high need and potential for future employment will support an increase in workforce supply, quality and sustainability.

National Allied Health Workforce Strategy

The Government, in collaboration with the states and territories, is developing the first National Allied Health Workforce Strategy, which is a coordinated approach to address maldistribution and supply issues through improved planning, innovative models of care and better integration of allied health into broader health care teams.

One of the priorities is to increase allied health access and presence in rural, regional and remote areas. Actions under consideration include place-based learning and placements, pathways into and from Vocational Education and Training (VET) to higher education, tailoring incentives and support for career progression/retention for rural, remote, and regional allied health professionals.

The Strategy also seeks to grow and build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce through ensuring culturally responsive environments, building on supports, and advancing professional development opportunities to enable career progression for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Rural Health Workforces

Significant investment by DHDA has occurred in clinical training programs and in attraction and retention of rural health workforces. Each program/initiative has defined scope, specific target groups and intended outcomes; noting the common entry level training required and the interdependence of each sector which is pronounced in regional, rural, and remote settings. Supports and incentives are variable across professions and sectors.

An Integrated Care and Commissioning (ICC) project in South-East New South Wales, in which the NDIA is partnering with DHDA and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), is providing support for people to train in disability, aged care and Aboriginal health. The training project will be delivered by the University of Wollongong.

The Government is exploring migration pathways to support the disability workforce and to attract qualified workers in Australia and overseas to live and work in rural, regional and remote areas. Careful consideration of issues specific to the disability sector workforce will ensure any pathway supports worker safety alongside the promotion of safe and ethical service delivery.

Improving alignment across the care and support sector

To progress strategic alignment across the care and support market sectors to improve availability and delivery of supports and the services, the Government has provided funding of \$27 million for a partnership DHDA, DVA and the NDIA to conduct ICC trials across six regional and remote locations. The ICC trial sites are Kimberley (WA), Central West (QLD), South-Eastern (NSW), Gippsland (VIC), Northern Tasmania, and Whyalla/Port Augusta (SA).

The ICC initiative partners with community stakeholders to identify barriers to service delivery and develop local, place-based solutions to improve access to services and tailor services to meet community needs. Commissioning approaches underway include workforce training, capacity building and investment in IT, and progress towards collaborative joint commissioning across disability, aged care and veterans' services.

Investment in vocational education and training

The Government is investing \$58.2 million over 4 years to establish the VET component of the \$427.4 million Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP). CPP (VET) will be available nationally to domestic students studying a Diploma of Nursing at a TAFE or other registered training organisation. CPP aims to support VET and higher education students manage the costs associated with undertaking mandatory placements as part of a teaching, nursing and midwifery, and social work qualifications. From 1 July 2025, a payment of over \$300 per week is available to eligible new and existing domestic students while undertaking their mandatory placement.

The Government has established ten Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) to ensure the VET system responds to Australia's evolving skill needs. HumanAbility, the JSC for the care sector including disability, health and allied health, is responsible for identifying the workforce priorities, mapping education and career pathways, developing VET products, ensuring training aligns with industry and learner needs, and advising on the workforce issues.

HumanAbility's 2024 and 2025 Workforce Plans acknowledge the importance of increased access to quality training, including in remote and regional Australia. HumanAbility's 2024 Workforce Plan prioritises greater quality of, and access to, contemporary training and qualifications. This includes:

- developing and supporting delivery of training which meets the needs of regional/remote communities and supports greater access to employment opportunities in these areas.
- Identifying systemic barriers to training delivery in regional areas.

National Skills Agreement

The 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement is a five-year partnership between Australian, state, and territory governments to strengthen the national VET system, with collaborative action on shared outcomes and national priorities, including addressing critical skills and workforce shortages.

Sustaining Essential Care Services is an agreed national priority under the National Skills Agreement, and through a National Skills Plan and jurisdictional action plans, governments have committed to work towards:

- Attracting and retaining more diverse cohorts in care and support programs including First Nations people, men, people of diverse ages, people with disability, those from CALD backgrounds and remote communities.
- Growing the VET pipeline of skilled workers to keep pace with demand for care and support services.
- Ensuring education and training provided is high quality, responsive to current and emerging skills needs, widely available including in areas with thin market, supports entry into the sector, and provides clear pathways for career progression and improved upskilling, re-skilling, and mobility.

The Government, in partnership with state and territory governments, is delivering \$1.5 billion in joint funding for over 500,000 free TAFE and VET places across Australia from 2023 to 2026. The Government has also made free TAFE a permanent feature of the national VET system, investing over \$1.6 billion to 2034-35 to support at least 100,000 places per year from 2027, underpinned by the Free TAFE Act 2025.

The Fee-Free TAFE Skills Agreement includes training places across national priority sectors, including the care and support sector. Free TAFE data up to 30 September 2025 shows over 198,000 enrolments in the care and support sector, representing 27.4% of total enrolments. In addition, there were over 248,700 Free TAFE enrolments (over 34%) in inner and outer regional areas, as well as remote and very remote Australia.

The Government, through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System, provides financial support nationally to apprentices and trainees training in priority occupations which are listed on the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List. This includes occupations in the care and support sector. From 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026, the Australian Government will invest up to \$5,000 per priority apprenticeship, consisting of up to \$2,500 for apprentices/trainees and up to \$2,500 for employers. Apprentices/trainees who must move away from their parents' or guardians' home to start or continue training may also be eligible to receive the Living Away from Home Allowance.

The Government is investing up to \$325 million over five years under the National Skills Agreement, with matched funding from states and territories, to establish nationally networked TAFE Centres of Excellence. The TAFE Centres of Excellence are strengthening the capability and capacity of the VET system, providing high-quality and responsive skills training for critical and emerging industries, including sustaining essential care and support services.

The Regional and Remote Essential Care Services Centre of Excellence, located across the Charles Darwin University's and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education's campuses in the Northern Territory, is creating educational pathways to equip the First Nations healthcare workforce to address the challenges that remote and regional communities regularly face.

Mobile TAFE

At the 25th Garma Festival on 2 August 2025, the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, announced that the Government will provide \$31 million to deliver Mobile TAFE. Mobile training units will enable VET providers to take skills on the road and train the next generation of workers in outer regional and remote communities. A partnership between governments and First Nations organisations will identify projects that meet local skills needs for outer regional and remote First Nations learners.

The \$50 million TAFE Technology Fund supports TAFEs across Australia to upgrade and expand facilities such as laboratories, workshops and IT services. Of the 24 projects funded, 11 are in regional locations, representing a total investment of \$20.3 million. The two projects related to the healthcare sector are:

- TAFE Queensland, Thursday Island campus - \$1 million to establish a Thursday Island Health Hub, completed in January 2025. The Health Hub training space is a simulated learning environment which replicates an operational ward with a nurses' station and ward call buttons. The Hub connects to the TAFE Queensland network and other regional campuses to enable online training.
- North Regional TAFE Pundulmurra campus, WA – \$1.1 million to procure and install new specialist equipment in the existing Health Simulation Ward and establish a state-of-the-art Renal Simulation Ward located within the Health Simulation Ward.

Key Theme: Travel flexibility

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency incorporate greater flexibility to facilitate travel for National Disability Insurance Scheme participants who live in remote and very remote areas.

Response:

The Government notes Recommendation 5.

Pricing

The NDIA uses the Modified Monash Model (MMM), managed by DHDA, to classify a participant's remote status: MMM 1 (major cities) through to MMM 7 (very remote).

Based on this MMM classification, the NDIA applies Remote and Very Remote loadings to participant plans and to the relevant price limits. Consistent with the Committee's recommendations, to support flexibility and service viability the NDIA has in-place the following:

- Higher Price limits: to account for higher costs, price limits are 40% higher in Remote areas (MMM 6) and 50% higher in Very Remote areas (MMM 7).
- Provider Travel: there is no travel time limit applicable for travel in Remote and Very Remote areas. Providers can enter specific arrangements with participants to cover travel costs up to the relevant hourly rate for the support item. Providers delivering support can also claim for non-labour costs. This could, with prior agreement of participants in remote and very remote areas, include claims for items such as the cost of flights and accommodation for travel in these areas.
- Isolated Towns Classification: The NDIA creates additional flexibility by reclassifying non-remote locations as remote or very remote when surrounded by Remote or Very Remote areas, ensuring that pricing reflects the actual cost of service delivery. The full list of Isolated Towns has recently been published in the Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits to increase transparency.

Support for participants in remote and very remote areas

The NDIA is committed to ensuring the NDIS is accessible and culturally appropriate for eligible First Nations people with disability in remote areas and is implementing initiatives to support this, including expanding its Remote Community Connectors program.

The NDIA provides funding of over \$26.8 million per annum for a network of approximately 136 Full Time Equivalent Remote Community Connectors and Co-ordinators to support 575 remote communities, following expansion to almost 70 more communities. Remote Community Connectors fulfil a critical function in First Nations communities promoting awareness, understanding and connection between NDIS participants, providers, and the NDIS, and supporting participant well-being. Remote Community Connectors are employed through local service partners, primarily Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

The NDIA Remote Servicing Model supports people living in remote and very remote Australia through a combination of place-based services and geographically tied remote servicing teams that support both individuals with disability, and communities as a whole. Over 200 NDIA staff work with people in remote and very remote areas through their NDIS journey. The remote servicing teams also have dedicated sector engagement and market development staff, who work with communities to identify local ways to improving access to the NDIS for their communities.

Remote servicing teams work with individual participants to pool support (referred to as Coordinated Funding Proposals), so transport and community access cost overheads are shared among participants collectively. This market development work enables the NDIA to plan with local communities and to help them use alternative commissioning approaches to secure servicing.

Rural and Remote Advisory Group

A Rural and Remote Advisory Group has also been established to ensure the NDIA receives advice from people outside government who understand the unique environments that make up Australia outside the cities. Membership to the group reflects the diversity of rural and remote regions and communities.

Key theme: Cultural safety training for NDIA staff and partners

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency develop and publish plans to implement additional First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse cultural safety training for its staff and partners.

Response:

The Government supports in principle Recommendation 6. The Government acknowledges that having strong workforce capability and understanding of cultural safety is vital to the NDIA ability to deliver equitable, responsive and high-quality services for First Nations and

CALD participants, their families and carers. The NDIA is working to deliver additional cultural safety training and awareness.

With the expiry of the NDIA First Nations Employment and Inclusion Plan 2022-2025, the NDIA is developing a refreshed NDIA First Nations Workforce Strategy 2026-2030, which will focus on improving levels of recruitment and retention of First Nations peoples working at the Agency. Each of these plans aim to achieve greater cultural safety and awareness across both First Nations and CALD diversity groups. This work includes:

- First Nations cultural safety and allyship training program for NDIA staff, to be rolled out in 2026
- Targeted cultural sensitivity training to the Agency's Peer Support Contact officers to understand CALD staff perspectives and experiences
- Development of additional cultural sensitivity training for staff, from First Nations and CALD perspectives

The NDIA is also progressing the First Nations Strategy 2025-2030, and the NDIA Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2028. These include other initiatives to improve NDIA workforce capability and to address the broader challenges faced by First Nations and CALD communities in obtaining access to, and supports that respond to participants' cultural needs through, the NDIS.

Actions implemented from the NDIA CALD Inclusion Plan to raise cultural awareness and encourage cultural safety for CALD staff include the establishment of a CALD staff network and promoting cultural heritage dates of significance.

Key theme: Culturally safe service delivery

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the National Disability Insurance Agency work with First Nations community-controlled organisations to deliver culturally safe National Disability Insurance Scheme services to First Nations participants as preferred providers.

Response:

The Government supports in principle Recommendation 7 and acknowledges the need to improve the supply of culturally safe services for First Nations participants. A key initiative to achieve this is the First Nations Market and Sector Development Strategy, which is being developed under the NDIS First Nations Strategy 2025-2030. This includes market stewardship actions that grow and sustain First Nations-led disability services, and improve provider quality that enables culturally safe practice, particularly in rural, regional and remote areas.

The ICC partnership of DHDA, DVA and the NDIA is supporting a project in the Kimberley region, Western Australia, to assist Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

(ACCHOs) to extend their service offerings from primary health into disability and aged care service provision. The Government will continue to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and First Nations businesses as key contributors to the delivery of culturally safe NDIS services.

In August 2024, the NDIA Independent Advisory Council (IAC) First Nations Reference Group assumed the functions of the previous First Nations Advisory Council (FNAC). The IAC First Nations Reference Group provides advice to the NDIA Independent Advisory Council and the NDIA Board on policy issues affecting First Nations people with disability.

The NDIA released its First Nations Strategy (2025 to 2030) as a five-year road map to improve outcomes for First Nations people with disability. The strategy was developed with First Nations participants, carers, providers, and peak bodies. Its goal is to ensure that the NDIS delivers and continues to enable improved outcomes in the lives of First Nations people with disability.

A First Nations Strategy implementation plan will be co-designed in early 2026, followed by a monitoring and evaluation plan that will allow the NDIA to track progress, demonstrate accountability, identify what works, and learn from First Nation voices.

Key theme: Culturally safe, accessible communications

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency work in partnership with First Nations community-controlled organisations to develop communications strategies and materials to deliver information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme in First Nations languages, and work with First Nations community-controlled organisations to create opportunities for First Nations people to undertake interpreter training courses.

Response:

The Government supports Recommendation 8. The Government recognises that effective communication in First Nations languages is essential to ensuring equitable access to the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly those living in rural, regional, and remote communities.

The Government is committed to improving the accessibility of information about the NDIS for First Nations communities. The Government will work in partnership with First Nations organisations, with an emphasis on community-controlled organisations, to develop culturally appropriate communication materials, supporting the delivery of information about the Scheme in First Nations languages. This work will build materials developed through the NDIA's alternative commissioning initiatives and support clearer understanding of the Scheme.

The Government will continue to collaborate with First Nations community-controlled organisations to co-design and deliver communications materials in a range of First Nations languages. This includes the development of Easy Read and audio-visual resources, as well as the translation of key NDIS information into priority languages identified in consultation with communities. The NDIA's First Nations Strategy sets out a clear framework for embedding First Nations knowledge and leadership in all aspects of NDIS communications, ensuring that materials are accessible, relevant, and respectful of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Government also acknowledges the importance of building a sustainable interpreter workforce to support NDIS participants. In line with this recommendation, the NDIA First Nations Group will undertake research with Services Australia, the Office of the Arts (IDIL – International Decade of Indigenous Languages) to identify current process and best practice around the provision of interpreter services to participants. Currently, within the Enterprise Agreement, the NDIA offers various Community Language Allowances for employees who can provide adequate or certified translation and interpretation services during their normal work.

Key theme: Inclusive, accessible multicultural communications

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends that the National Disability Insurance Agency collaborate with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse peak organisations to:

- *Improve communications strategies and materials to deliver information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme in community languages; and*
- *Improve accessibility and diversity of service from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse providers in rural, regional and remote Australia.*

Response:

The Government supports Recommendation 9 and is committed to collaborating with CALD peak organisations and community groups to improve the delivery of NDIS information in community languages, and to enhance the diversity and accessibility of services provided by CALD organisations. These efforts are central to the Government's broader strategy to make the NDIS more equitable, culturally responsive, and effective for participants across Australia, regardless of their location or background.

The NDIA has an established CALD Expert Advisory group, representing 22 organisations. The group represents their communities and networks. Additionally, the NDIA Community Engagement team collaborates regularly with over 24 CALD peak bodies and community organisations through structured workshops and roundtables to inform NDIA communication strategies. This includes with the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA), Multicultural Communities Council of SA (MCCSA), Settlement Services International (SSI), and Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV).

Feedback from ongoing engagement with these organisations has led to practical improvements such as translated fact sheets and easy-read materials, culturally appropriate resources, interpreter-supported webinars, and in-language videos. These partnerships ensure communications are accessible and services are more inclusive of CALD community participants, including in rural and remote areas.

Key theme: Co-designing Better Commissioning

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the National Disability Insurance Agency conduct a review of the current alternative commissioning trials, including drawing on the Maningrida and Katanning experience, with a view to understanding best practice before expanding these arrangements to other remote and First Nations communities, in partnership with First Nations representatives and communities.

Response:

The Government supports Recommendation 10. Australian National University (ANU) was contracted to provide independent monitoring and evaluation of the Alternative Commissioning pilot. The final evaluation report has been completed and is available on the DHDA website. The pilot has informed further work including the Joint Work Program in five regional WA sites, included in the 2025 Commonwealth-Western Australian Bilateral Agreement.

The NDIA launched a specific Remote Servicing Model in late 2024. The model responds to recommendations from the Independent Review of the NDIS (NDIS Review) and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission). The NDIS Review provided significant recommendations on addressing thin markets and commissioning challenges in remote Australia. The Disability Royal Commission focused more on the cultural appropriateness of services for First Nations people, in addition to the impact of remoteness on service access.

The NDIA is implementing lessons from the pilot through the broader remote servicing model. This will support consideration of future market commissioning approaches in partnership with First Nations representatives and communities.

Key theme: Advanced Notice of Pricing

Coalition Additional Comments

Recommendation 1

1.10 The National Disability Insurance Agency should ensure that any future pricing changes are announced with a minimum of three months' notice prior to their commencement date.

Response:

The Government supports in principle Recommendation 1 in the Coalition's Additional Comments. In December 2025, the NDIA released a Three-Year Pricing Workplan which establishes the program for reviewing NDIS pricing approaches. The scheduling of work within the plan is designed to develop and publicly release annual pricing recommendations prior to June 2026.

Considerations in finalising pricing outcomes earlier include:

- The Fair Work Commission annual wage case which determines disability support worker wage rates is generally not finalised until June.
- The required flexibility to implement urgent pricing adjustments and intervene and steward the market, in response to changes in market conditions.