



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance
Scheme (NDIS) report:

NDIS ICT Systems

March 2019

The Australian Government welcomes the report of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (the Committee) Inquiry into *NDIS ICT Systems* (the Report).

The Report contains six recommendations to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The recommendations cover a number of issues relating to Information Communication Technology (ICT), including:

- rollout of the participant and provider pathways;
- quality control of publicly published documents;
- tracking and responding to participant queries;
- knowledge management systems; and
- co-designing future ICT enhancements.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting people with disability, ensuring that they can attain the highest possible health, wellbeing and community engagement outcomes throughout their lives. While the NDIS is designed to assist people with disability to achieve their goals while exercising choice and control, it is acknowledged a number of challenges relating to ICT remains and requires ongoing work.

The Australian Government supports all of the six recommendations made in the Committee's report.

Recommendations and responses

1. The committee recommends the NDIA start the national rollout of the new pathways and make publically available a clear schedule of the changes to be introduced along with implementation dates.

Response: Supported

The NDIA will provide a clear schedule of the national rollout of the new pathways on the NDIS website.

The NDIA commenced rollout of pathway enhancements in October 2018, including improvements to:

- the standard NDIS participant pathway;
- the redevelopment of the Early Childhood Early Intervention pathway;
- the establishment of the Complex Support Needs pathway;
- the implementation of psychosocial disability and hearing service streams; and
- the NDIS experience for:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
 - communities that live in remote and very remote areas; and
 - participants that identify as LGBTIQ+.

Some of these enhancements will initially be tested and evaluated in selected locations, before being implemented.

The NDIA is currently finalising the development of a public facing schedule of Pathways Program enhancements, including:

- a detailed description of the enhancement;
- the timing of the enhancement release, including if it is part of a progressive deployment approach;
- the location/s of the release (i.e. national or location based); and
- a description of the participants that may be impacted by the changes.

In addition, the NDIA will engage with stakeholders through regular and ad-hoc forums convened by the NDIA and promoted in local areas by NDIA engagement teams.

2. The committee recommends the NDIA review all documents, including guidelines, forms and policies, prior to their upload onto the new website to ensure that they are current, clearly dated, fit-for-purpose and written in clear language.

Response: Supported

The NDIA officially transitioned to a new website in January 2019. The NDIA is ensuring all documents, including guidelines, forms and policies, are current and clearly dated prior to their upload onto the new website.

Further enhancements to the website and content is planned for 2019, including Plain English guidelines, review and update of information on the website — to ensure it is accessible, current, clearly dated, and fit-for-purpose.

3. The committee recommends the NDIA:

- implement a tracking system to enable end-users to track the status of their queries;
- create specialised NDIS Contact Centre teams based on the common types of issue raised by end-users; and
- co-design with end-users a fit-for-purpose chatbot for the website and portals.

Response: Supported

The NDIA has investigated options for a tracking system to enable end-users to track the status of their queries. The recommended solution is scheduled for delivery in the first quarter of 2019.

The NDIA has revised a number of business processes to improve the caller experience. These changes have seen First Call Resolution rates improve from approximately 70 per cent to over 85 per cent since the transition to the new contact centre. Further enhancements have been designed that are expected to lift the First Call Resolution rates to above 90 per cent of calls received.

The NDIA accepts that not all calls can be resolved at first point of contact. To cater for scenarios where call hand-offs are required, the NDIA has commenced establishment of centralised teams to provide responses to common types of issues raised by end users. For example, Plan Review teams were piloted in January 2019, with learnings used to progress similar changes across other contact types.

The NDIA is actively investigating the introduction of “webchat” functionality for the contact centre in 2019. The learnings from this will be used to explore the introduction of computer powered “Chatbot” functionality in the latter part of 2019.

The NDIA transitioned to the new contact centre in June 2018, replacing the Department of Human Services with Serco as the service delivery partner. Following the transition the Agency has successfully improved service levels to Participants and Providers. For the period 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2018:

- 83.2 per cent of all calls were answered in 60 seconds - against a KPI of 80 per cent of calls answered in 60 seconds;
- over 560,000 calls were received by the NDIA contact centre, with an average response time of 28 seconds
 - this volume of calls was 31.5 per cent greater than the same period last year — with a response time two minutes and 42 seconds more efficient than previous service delivery levels
- abandoned call rates have decreased to 1.5 per cent (from 14.9 per cent for the same period in 2017).

4. The committee recommends the NDIA urgently recommence work on the development and implementation of its knowledge-management system to ensure consistent decision-making processes and accurate provision of advice across the agency.

Response: Supported

The NDIA is committed to establishing an agency wide Knowledge Management solution in 2019. The agency reviewed the Knowledge Management business requirements during November and December 2018 and is currently assessing potential technical solution options.

5. The committee recommends the NDIA publish on the participant and provider portals the launch dates of future portal changes along with training materials.

Response: Supported

In late 2018, the NDIA commenced providing messaging on the Participant and Provider Portals of future portal changes and/or system outages. As part of the User Interface / User Experience (UI/UX) redesign, links to detailed training materials (in accessible format) will be provided for each modification.

Messaging regarding future portal changes is provided once a release date is confirmed by the Department of Human Services (NDIA's ICT Shared Service Provider). This is typically a month prior to the release date.

6. The committee recommends the NDIA work with service providers and participants to co-design future enhancements to the portals and 'Provider Finder' tool.

Response: Supported

The NDIA is committed to working with service providers and participants in designing future enhancements to the portals and 'Provider Finder' tool. The NDIA established the Participant and Provider reference groups in 2018 through the Pathways program to assist with planned changes to the portals.

A 2018 review of the portal design and development approach highlighted the importance of focusing on the User Interface and Experience (UI/UX). As a result, the participant reference group will be expanded to assist with the planned redevelopment of the Participant Portal. This will be conducted using an approach to ensure that the needs of the end-users are understood and met.

In addition, in late 2018 a pilot was conducted with Provider representatives to test the feasibility of straight through processing. This approach will continue in 2019 as we look to move to the introduction of Application Programming Interfaces to address data inconsistencies between the NDIA and the service providers.