

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

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Note: I have been a paraplegic for over thirty years and during that time have received services and equipment on many occasions. I have dealt with many agencies in both Victoria (14 years) and now South Australia (16 years).

The idea of the NDIS is fantastic. It is far too long overdue, but better late than never. The idea of a levy, on all tax-payers, to pay for this scheme is fair and equitable as one never knows when an accident or illness may render one severely disabled. To have the peace of mind that at the onset of a disability, a scheme was in place to pay for all of your services/equipment would be one (huge) burden not to have to worry about.

Eligibility:

Should be available to ANY person with a proven, long-term disability, whether physical, psychological, neurological, or of any other type whatsoever.

Client choice

& Control: It would be necessary to have preferred suppliers of services/equipment but with probable multiple suppliers or agencies for each type of disability, the client should then be able to choose, within reason, the supplier of their choice.

Services

Offered The full range of services, regardless of type, should be
And needed: offered for each disability, as going "half-way" would be absolutely pointless.

How delivered:

Could initially best be delivered using existing lines of delivery, e.g. DisabilitySA, using O.T.s, Physios, Counselors etc. etc.
As time goes by, the delivery of services might be streamlined by using agencies other than government, as I believe they deliver a better service, a better product and in a more realistic time-line.

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Financial: I do not believe that direct payment to the client as is now done with the CAPS Scheme (rather than CAAS) is the way to go as there is too much opportunity for using the money for purposes other than for which it is intended. It would be best to leave the provision of services/equipment to the various agencies as is done now.

Pace of Change:

Immediate implementation of the NDIS would be ideal.

In reality, introduction of the NDIS as urgently as possible is necessary.

It will not be acceptable to have one report after another, enquiries, etc, taking many years to complete before the scheme is finally implemented.

Aspects of the current system to preserve:

Assessment of:

- the individual to prove long-term disability;
- the types of services required;
- the types of equipment required.

Aspects of the current system not to retain:

The huge numbers of staff in agencies such as DisabilitySA. With a more streamlined work-force, there would be more cash available to provide services and equipment.

Long waiting lists/times. Once the client has been assessed as having a long-term disability, they should not have to wait for services and/or equipment.

Early intervention:

At the onset of a disability, the person MUST be assessed urgently, at least to a provisional level, and once their 'disabled' status is verified, then they would be in the system as a client in need of services/equipment. A full, binding assessment could be done within say, six months. In the meantime, however, the client would be eligible for services/equipment, based on the provisional assessment. By 'urgently' in this context, I mean within, say 120 days which should give time to obtain medical reports and make a decision. If this is the way the system is set-up, then all stakeholders would be obliged, under the same set of rules, to work together to this end.

If a person's situation changes, whether for better or worse, then they should be re-assessed, again as a matter of urgency.

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