

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Response to Productivity Commission Draft Report

Feedback from self-advocates and service users – Bendigo, 12th April 2011

Points raised in response to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report - these are the things that people at the meeting thought were important:

Flexible support

People with a disability need the right to have flexible support, especially for personal care. One example of this is that people can choose the time they want to be supported to go to bed.

Resources in communities

People who have difficulty with seeing need to be able to get around easily. One of the things they need is good paths. They need paths that are kept in good condition. They also need to be able to know where there are areas that are not safe.

Transport

Transport is very important so that people can be independent in the community. We want all buses to be accessible. It must be safe to use public transport. Timetables need to be printed in different ways (for example, having photographs on the timetables may also help people remember where to get off the bus)

We need everybody to understand that it is important to leave the spaces kept for people with disabilities on public transport free. People should not park in disability car spaces if they do not have a disability. There needs to be more education of the public. We will all feel comfortable in our community if everyone is aware of the needs of people with disabilities.

Young people in nursing homes

Young people with high support needs should be able to live with other young people. It is not good for them to live in nursing homes.

Housing

We felt this is a really big problem. People need to be able to choose who they share housing with. Housing needs to be accessible in all ways. There needs to be more choice in types of housing available to people with disabilities.

Employment

People need to be able to work and get paid for it. The wages need to be fair. Often the work offered to people with a disability is repetitive and boring. People need to be able to choose different kinds of work, work that has variety and is interesting.

Some people want to do volunteer work.

Some people are able to work more than others. Everyone needs to be paid for what they do.

All workers get some days off when they are sick. People with disabilities may need some extra days. They may need to go to see doctors more than other people because of their disability.

There are issues with Centrelink that affect people on the disability allowance who work. These need to be worked out so that people who want to work do not give up income and get the financial benefit of working. If people with disability do work they don't want to lose the money they get from Centrelink.

Medical services

People with disabilities need doctors who listen to them, not just to the support workers or other people. Support staff should be there to help only if needed.

Children's services

It is important that the needs of children are included in the NDIS. The NDIS must support children to get what they need as they grow up.

Equipment

People with disabilities need many different kinds of equipment. They may need things like a special wheelchair, a speech machine or a hoist. They need to get equipment that is right for them. They must also get it quickly. At the moment it takes too long to get the right equipment.

If the equipment breaks down, it must be fixed quickly. It is difficult to manage without the equipment we need.

If repairs cost a lot, people should be able to pay this off over time.

Urgent needs

It has been suggested that the NDIS would not start for the whole of Australia until 2018. People with disabilities would have to wait 6 more years. This is too long to wait for better support services. We want to see that some changes start to happen now. We want to highlight this as very important.

Meeting Attendees:

Gary Thompson
Norm Beams
Phil Wilkinson
Matthew Tuckerman
Peter Macdonald
Shannon Hoare
Nigel Carroll
Lee-Ellen Kirchhofer
Kim Barlow
Jye Yeats
Lynn Sturgess
Sam Jalland
Ebony Robinson
Liesel Minkevicius

Support Workers:

Anne Donaldson
Cindy Chittenden
Gail Gray
Dave
Sarah

Facilitators:

Barbara Solarsh, Regional Communication Service, Bendigo Health
John Willis, Golden City Support Services