

My submission

I suffer from a mental health issue and have done so for 15 years. I function quite well in society and do not need to avail myself of any services. However, in the past two years I have become a carer for my partner who is on a disability support pension. I have now needed to access some services to support both of us in this difficult time.

My initial reaction to the proposed National Disability Insurance Scheme is that it appears to try to improve on some of the problems occurring in the current system. That is a good thing. The other reaction I had was that it appears that it will be very costly to administer these services through a "system".

The immediate thing that stood out was the proposed method of administering services that start with an assessor coming into the home to determine what services are needed by the person suffering the disability.

I wonder why it this assessment cannot be accomplished via one's local GP; their medical specialist, or their hospital out-patient services, all who are already in the business of assessing the person as to their requirement for assistance with daily living activities. They all record a person's disability and the degree of impairment.

So why not allow these trusted sources to instigate these services without the requirement to have a further level of assessment introduced through an NDIS appointed assessor who would have to (a) visit the disabled person and make the assessment (1-2 hours), (b) write a report (1 hour) and (c) liaise with various organisations? Steps (a) and (b) could be removed.

The type of administration I am suggesting already occurs when one suffers an injury at work and liaison occurs between doctors and the workers' compensation bodies both effectively and efficiently.

It would save the NDIS scheme the high cost of employing and training assessors thus freeing up further funding for the person with disability instead of going to funding for administrative purposes.

It would also have the benefit of a stress-free transition to the proposed services for the person with disability as having to deal with a non-specialist assessor and 'go through it over and over again' tends to be a negative emotional experience.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Susanne Lewis