

22 April 2021

Mr Peter De Natris  
Strategic Advisor Early Childhood Intervention and Autism  
Policy, Advice and Research  
Design, Digital and Strategy Group  
National Disability Insurance Agency

By email to: [Peter.DENATRIS@ndis.gov.au](mailto:Peter.DENATRIS@ndis.gov.au)

Dear Mr De Natris

**Re: Consultation paper: Interventions for children on the autism spectrum**

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the Consultation Paper on interventions for children on the autism spectrum (the Consultation Paper).

The RANZCP is a membership organisation that prepares doctors to be medical specialists in the field of psychiatry, supports and enhances clinical practice, advocates for people affected by mental illness and advises governments on mental health care.

The RANZCP has more than 6900 members including more than 5100 qualified psychiatrists and over 1800 members who are training to qualify as psychiatrists. Psychiatrists are clinical leaders in the provision of mental health care in the community and use a range of evidence-based treatments to support a person in their journey of recovery.

The RANZCP welcomes initiatives to strengthen and clarify interventions for children on the autism spectrum within the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Early intervention for children on the autism spectrum has the potential to dramatically improve the futures of children and their families.

The RANZCP supports the Consultation Paper in principle, particularly the first part which aligns and supports the [Interventions for children on the Autism Spectrum \(A synthesis of research evidence\) Report](#) released in November 2020.

Given symptoms and impairment in functioning can change considerably from time to time, any changes to permanency for the psychosocial disability stream will influence funding packages. The RANZCP is pleased that the Consultation Paper commits to continuing to develop decision making guidance based on evolving evidence. The RANZCP would welcome opportunities to be involved in the development of any guidance around early intervention for children on the autism spectrum particularly as it relates to the interface with mental health as 'early' intervention should continue as mental health issues can appear for the first time later in life and 'early' intervention should not be limited to 'earlier in age'.

The RANZCP appreciates the engagement we currently have with the National Disability Insurance Agency and continues to welcome opportunities to support and develop best practice guidance for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. To discuss any of the issues raised in this letter, please contact Rosie Forster, Executive Manager, Practice, Policy and Partnerships Department via [rosie.forster@ranzcp.org](mailto:rosie.forster@ranzcp.org) or by phone on (03) 9601 4943.

Yours sincerely



Associate Professor John Allan  
**President**

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