

16 November 2018

Assistant Minister for Social Services, Housing and Disability Services, Sarah Henderson, today announced the commencement of the rollout of a new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Complex Support Needs Pathway.

The new Complex Support Needs Pathway will provide specialised support for participants living with a disability who have many different challenges impacting on their lives such as mental health issues, incarceration or homelessness, and need a higher level of specialised supports in their plan.

Ms Henderson said the new pathway has been developed following extensive consultation and engagement with participants, families, carers and sector representatives.

"In April 2017, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) initiated a review in response to feedback from participants and providers that their experience with the NDIS was not meeting expected standards," Ms Henderson said.

"The announcement today of improved planning for participants with complex support needs is the latest in a series of significant improvements to be delivered for the NDIS.

"The Federal Government is working with the NDIA to improve the experience of NDIS participants, their families and carers, and the organisations that deliver vital disability support services.

"The Complex Support Needs Pathway follows recent NDIS improvements including specialised supports for people with psychosocial disabilities, face-to-face planning (where preferred), a new NDIS contact centre, a new-format NDIS plan and improvements to the MyPlace portal.

Ms Henderson was briefed on the Complex Support Needs Pathway in Melton, Victoria today.

Ms Henderson said the Complex Support Needs pathway will have dedicated NDIA Complex Support Needs planning teams and a network of specialised planners with strong experience in high level coordination and/or allied health experience.

"A key feature of the new pathway will include NDIA liaison and support coordinators – people who have the networks, skill and knowledge of government and community services to provide the support required for complex needs.

"A program of training has been developed to support these specialised planners. The training is highly interactive, allowing more senior planners to share their own experiences."

NDIS Participants are identified for the Complex Support Needs Pathway by the complexity of their situation and personal factors such as being homeless or returning to the community from living in residential aged care. Involuntary or voluntary involvement with particular government

systems such as Justice or mental health would also be factors which would necessitate entry to the complex support needs pathway.

At full scheme, it is estimated around 10 to 15 per cent of NDIS participants may require complex support - noting participants' needs may change over time.

The Complex Needs Support Pathway will be progressively rolled out nationally commencing in the Brimbank-Melton and Western Melbourne areas of Moonee Valley, Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay and Wyndham this week, with Western Sydney areas of Parramatta, Cumberland and Canterbury-Bankstown commencing from 30 November 2018.

The commencement of the pathway in these locations will provide valuable learning to ensure that the Pathway will deliver improved experiences and outcomes for participants nationally.

For more information, visit the [NDIS pathway experience](#).

Background

The Complex Support Needs Pathway includes six key features to deliver better outcomes:

1. Pre-access, local engagement and strengthening connections to other services
Strengthening local engagement and liaison with other government services and community supports with clear pathways and connections into the NDIS to ensure participants experience a joined up approach to their support.
2. Access, detailed handovers and connections
Detailed handovers from states and territory systems, existing service providers or 'hard to reach' support workers at the point of access, and streamlined access decisions using local NDIA Liaison and Specialised Planner.
3. Specialised Planners and Complex Support Practice Lead
Planning conversations with participants and other stakeholders, led by a NDIA Specialised Planner, focused on ensuring deep understanding of participant life circumstances.
4. Skilled Support Coordinators and effective plan implementation
Stronger focus on maintaining a participants' critical supports, via a skilled Support Coordinator to assist with the development of service plans and agreements, mitigating risks of service failure and coordination with other government services and community support systems.
5. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation
Regular monitoring and evaluation of the plan, and participant outcomes, with the ability to make minor adjustments to supports and approaches to improve effectiveness.
6. Review outcomes and progress
Plan reviews measure participant progress toward outcomes, acknowledge achievements and adjust the participant's plan to support their next set of goals and outcomes,

including assessing if the participant should remain in the Complex Support Needs Pathway or transition to the general NDIS Pathway.

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