5 July 2024

This is a summary of the Participant Reference Group's (PRG) recent meeting.

The PRG consists of 22 participant and carer representatives across Australia. The PRG is a key platform to ensure the participant voice is heard and understood by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

Feedback from meetings is used to inform strategy, policy development, system and service delivery development and review, to support continuous improvement.

Chairperson's welcome

Donna Purcell, Branch Manager, Office of the Participant Advocate welcomed members to the sixth PRG meeting for 2024.

Donna introduced Jackie Saddington and Sam Patterson from the NDIA Service Guidance Branch to give an update on the co-design of the new plan and plan approval letter.

Presentation. Co-design of the new plan and plan approval letter.

The Service Guidance Branch met with PRG members in November 2023, and February 2024, to talk about how the NDIS plan and plan approval letter could be improved. They also met with many other people and disability organisations to create a Discovery report.

In March 2024, a group of 15 NDIS participants met with the NDIA for a 2 day co-design workshop in Melbourne. They worked together to co-design examples of the new plan and plan approval letter.

The Service Guidance Branch have been working hard to make sure the new plan and plan approval letter design was informed by the examples from our co-design workshop, the Discovery report and PACE requirements. The new plan and plan approval letter are now being built in PACE and will be ready later in 2024.

The Discovery report had 18 recommendations for changes to the plan and plan approval letter. We have met, or partially met, 12 of the 18 recommendations in this update. The 6 recommendations that were not met will be reviewed for future updates.

Changes to the Office of the Participant Advocate

There has been a lot of change in the NDIA from the NDIS Royal Commission and the NDIS review. The Office of the Participant Advocate (OPA) will be involved in a lot more engagement activities in future. We will also be working closely the Co-design Branch to make sure participants have a voice at the table for upcoming changes to the NDIA.

This has meant we need to make some changes to the way the OPA Branch operates. We are looking at how the Participant First team can be better supported within our Branch, and what roles need to be moved around to help this.

Unfortunately, this means Debbie Irvine will no longer be leading the Participant First team and will move to another area of the NDIA. From now on, Donna Purcell will be leading the PRG and will become more connected and engaged with this group. Donna will also chair the PRG meetings.

Final comments and close

Donna thanked Jackie and Sam from the Service Guidance Branch for their valuable update. It was good to see so many recommendations being included in the changes to the plan and plan approval letter.

Donna also thanked PRG members and is looking forward to our next PRG meeting which will be in person in Sydney.

Next meeting

Tuesday, 16 and Wednesday 17 July 2024

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