23 January 2025

Disability Representative and Carers Organisation (DRCO) Attendees: A4 Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia, Australian Autism Alliance, Blind Citizens Australia, Carers Australia, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, Community Mental Health Australia, Deaf Australia, Deafness Forum Australia, Disability Advocacy Network Australia, Down Syndrome Australia, Every Australian Counts, Inclusion Australia, JFA Purple Orange, Mental Health Australia, National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, People with Disability Australia, Physical Disability Australia, ReImagine Australia, Women with Disabilities Australia, Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance

Independent Advisory Council (IAC) Attendees: Dr Sharon Boyce, Dr Leighton Jay, Samantha Jenkinson, Sylvana Mahmic, James Manders, Sam Paior, Dr George Taleporos, Mark Tonga

Apologies: Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, Gavin Burner (IAC), Jennifer Cullen (IAC), Jarrad Cuthbert, Co-chair of the Participant Experience Pathway Co-design Working Group, First Nations Disability Network, National Ethnic Disability Alliance, Self Advocacy Resource Unit, Leah van Poppel (IAC Principal Member)

Key outcomes

New Co-design Working Group Co-Chairs were welcomed:

- Kelly Cox who a member of the IAC Home and Living Reference Group and is the Sector Co-chair of the Home and Living Co-design Working Group.
- Katharine Annear is the Sector Co-Chair of the Assessments and Budgeting Co-design Working Group. Katharine is also a member of the Children, Young People and Families Reference Group.
- Scott Fitzpatrick is the Agency Co-chair of the Navigators Co-design Working Group and Branch Manager of Partner Policy.
- Daniel Grant is the Agency Co-chair of the Assessment and Budgeting Co-design Working Group.
- Erin Ingham is the Agency Co-chair of the Participant Safeguarding Co-design Working Group

The Agency has prepared an early-stage high level draft of the Co-design Forward Plan.

- This includes a slide that captures in one view the high level codesign and consultation activity that is proposed to occur between now and July 2025.
- The months between February and April 2025 will be an intense engagement period.
- Over the next two months, the Co-design Working Groups will map their final work plans to the Forward Plan and it will be published publicly.

- The sector is vocal about the short timeframes for co-design and legislation consultation to occur.

Sarah Hawke, Branch Manager, NDIS Policy, Legislation and Engagement with Department of Social Services (DSS) advised that the Government is progressing disability and health reforms together. The critical timeframes for national health reform are creating compressed timeframes for the disability reform consultation.

Co-design and consultation are informing work DSS is undertaking to develop a new rule under Section 44 (5) management of funding. The new rule will assist the Agency in identifying risks, applying appropriate safeguards, and making more consistent and equitable decisions about likely compliance with section 46, spending on NDIS supports and in accordance with a participant's plan.

The following items were raised:

- Risk to participants who self-manage being transitioned to agency managed plan and being unable to access non-registered providers. Which may result in a participant losing access to key supports.
- Need for clearer information on 'what might be considered' and 'what must not be considered,' instead of also including 'what must be considered.'
- Need for a 3-month transition period for any changes made to the plan management type. This transition period will allow a participant to address any NDIA concerns, demonstrate ability to appropriately self-manage, and/or allow for alternative supports to be put in place.
- Need for appeals against the Agency's decision to change plan management type to be prioritised.

The Forum was invited to provide any additional feedback on the draft rule to NDISConsultations@dss.gov.au.

Peggie Tobin, the NDIA's new Branch Manager for Policy introduced topics for consultation:

- Section 44 - the NDIS rules on plan management;
- Section 47 - the conditions that must be met before the CEO (or delegate) can change a participant's plan; and
- Section 48 – plan reassessments.

The Forum divided into four break out rooms to consult on the topics. A summary of the consultation discussions will be circulated to the Forum.

What you can share

This summary can be shared with your organisation, members, and networks

Actions from this meeting

Action	Details	Responsibility	Due date	Status
	Actions arising 22 November 2024			
1	As a priority, Agency to progress a conversation on additional resourcing to the sector and work directly with the groups who identified their interest to be involved in this discussion.	NDIA	Dec 2024	Closed
2	Work with Assessment and Budgeting and Navigator Co-Chairs to ensure their work is built in early for consultation with this stakeholder group.	NDIA	Dec 2024	Open
3	Agency to publish the forward plan publicly.	NDIA	Jan 2025	Open

4	DSS to share further information on priority rules with this stakeholder group to inform tailoring and decision making about the areas groups are most interested in being involved in.	DSS	Dec 2024	Open
5.	Further feedback for DSS regarding S44 (4) Management of funding rule to be emailed NDISConsultations@dss.gov.au	ALL	Dec 2024	Closed
6.	Nick Avery to email Corri with feedback on S44 Plan Management paper.	Nick Avery	Dec 2024	Closed
7.	Agency to consider transition arrangements (for. e.g three-month transition) for changes in plan management.	NDIA	Dec 2024	Closed
8.	Agency to follow up with relevant business areas on feedback on other topics including eligibility reassessment communications and review timeframes.	NDIA	Dec 2024	Open

9.	Agency to provide a consolidated summary of the discussion held today in the breakout rooms.	NDIA	Dec 2024	Closed
	Actions arising 23 August 2024			
1,	Provide status update on the Individualised Living Options initiative and any evaluations undertaken of the initiative	NDIA	Nov 2024	Closed

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