5 June 2025

What we talked about

Topic 1: co-design and ways of working

The group discussed the time, resources, and information needed to co-design.

Topic 2: participant experience of new assessments

The NDIA shared an overview of the participant journey. It focussed on preparing for a support needs assessment and the new assessment process.

The group discussed key stages in the participant journey and gave feedback on details that need to be considered.

What we heard

- How we co-design
  - Playing back what we heard is important. The NDIA should show what has changed and give stakeholders a chance to validate insights.
- Communicating about the new participant journey
  - The NDIA should explain why participants need to go through the assessment process.
  - The NDIA needs to use realistic examples in communications, rather than showing the “happy path”. Acknowledge the complexity for participants and talk about what happens when something goes wrong.
- Who participants work with in the new planning process
  - The different roles and people a participant will work with need clarifying. Participants don’t want to have to talk to lots of new people about the same thing.
  - There are risks around participants and staff having different priorities. Staff need to be appropriately recruited and trained, and the process needs to be trauma informed.
  - Clear understanding of what information a participant will be asked for at every step is important.
  - A trusted health professional may be better to give information about a participant. Participants know who knows them best and who they trust to share information about their disability and support needs.
  - Concern about needing to engage with an unknown allied health professional for an assessment.
- The participant experience

- It is unclear how the support needs assessment is linked to other parts of the participant journey, e.g. access and using their plan.
- There are opportunities to understand participants more holistically, including how other health conditions and circumstances change the support they might need.
- Understanding the support needs assessment, when it starts, what is involved, and making sure there is informed consent is essential.
- Each participant will have a unique experience. Each of the steps in the process needs to be customisable to suit each participant.
- Participants should be able to see and validate the information the NDIA is collecting.
- The time needed to complete an assessment and receive a budget may result in a negative experience for some participants.

What we agreed to do

- Finalise terms of reference with clear information on the role of the group.
- Give the group clear updates on actions.
- Review how much information can be shared to enable deeper discussions.
- Continue work on the new participant pathway and experience based on the group's advice, input and feedback.

Who we met with

Participants, Disability Representative and Carer Organisations, Independent Advisory Council and Reference Group members, subject matter experts and NDIA staff.

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