10 July 2025

The Children’s Expert Advisory Group (CEAG) met for their eighth meeting on Wednesday 10 July 2025.

The meeting was held online.

Focus of the meeting

The chair, Melissa Clements, Branch Manager, Children’s Strategy and Services, National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) opened the meeting.

The meeting focused on an update on the NDIA pricing changes, an update on the funding periods, a review of the CEAG Terms of Reference and an update from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) on foundational supports.

NDIA Pricing Changes

The NDIA acknowledged concerns members raised regarding changes to the pricing arrangements. This included concerns about:

- The impact of changes to travel claiming requirements on access to therapy supports in natural settings for children. It is best practice in early intervention for therapy supports to be delivered where children live, work and play, rather than in clinical settings;
- The impact of lower price limits for some therapy supports resulting in providers exiting the market, particularly in remote and rural areas; and
- A lack of consultation with the CEAG about this change.

The NDIA Markets team joined the meeting to discuss pricing changes, and further work planned on therapy price arrangements.

CEAG members provided feedback to the NDIA regarding:

- Best practice early intervention support being delivered in a child’s natural settings.
- Differing needs of children from adults and while there are some similarities, the need for a differentiated approach in pricing.
- Suggestion for the NDIA to better support providers to coordinate travel to optimise opportunities to deliver services to multiple children in the same location.
- Considerations to ensure equity for all children and families.

NDIS Plan Funding Periods

The NDIA provided an update on funding periods. The NDIA spoke to:

- Current guidance and policy on funding periods, including direction provided to delegates on how to set appropriate funding periods for plans for children and low value plans. NDIA also confirmed guidance regarding how delegates should consider participant/family preference for funding periods.
- How funding for some supports can be included in the first funding period.
- Consultation undertaken to inform the policy and guidance.
- Data and feedback about how participants use their first plans.

CEAG member feedback included:

- The evolving nature of child development, particularly in early childhood, and associated rapidly changing needs.
- Concerns about the implications for imposing quarterly funding periods on ability for children to access intensive therapy supports.
- Possible reasons for low rates of plan utilisation for children.

Foundational Supports Update

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) provided an update on the work with states and territories to design foundational supports for children.

CEAG member feedback included:

- The importance of embedding foundational supports in mainstream systems such as child and maternal health and education.
- The importance of ensuring that anyone using future general or targeted foundational supports, or the NDIS, continues to have access to mainstream services.
- The importance of continuity in service delivery.
- Considerations for the complexity of delivering services to rural and remote communities.

CEAG Next Meeting

CEAG will meet again on 28 August 2025. This meeting will be held online.

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