16 September 2025

Quote from attendee: I like to be able to be in control of my information, including who sees my information, and change that when I need to.

What we talked about

The NDIA shared with the group the new way of planning, which includes the Support Needs Assessment (SNA) that will start from mid-2026. This gives more time to work with participants and the disability community to test and improve the process before it begins, and to help people get ready for the changes.

The group revisited what was shared in August 2025 about goals in the new way of planning. Members of the group said goals should show what participants want to work towards and what they're good at, but many find it hard to come up with goals without help. Concerns were raised about goals being used as performance measures, creating pressure or anxiety. Several participants said their goals were written by planners, not by them, and highlighted how important it is for participants to write their own goals.

Topic 1: Participant Service Guarantee (PSG) in the new way of planning

The group discussed how the timing of each step in the new way of planning journey fits with the Participant Service Guarantee (PSG), which promises clear timeframes and better service. The group shared which steps feel rushed, confusing, or stressful, and where more time or flexibility is needed. This feedback will help shape how the PSG supports a better planning experience

Topic 2: Visibility of participant information for both the participant and NDIS staff

The group discussed how the new planning pathway and the NDIS portal could help reduce the need for participants to reshare information every time they interact with the NDIA. Ideas included letting participants update their own information and making sure key details are visible to both staff and participants. The goal is to reduce repetition, improve consistency, and make the process feel more respectful and efficient.

What we heard

Topic 1: Participant Service Guarantee (PSG) in the new way of planning

- There are mixed views on the timeframes in the Participant Service Guarantee (PSG) for the new way of planning. While the structure was appreciated and it's good for participants to know what to expect, many felt the 28-day window to prepare for a Support Needs Assessment (SNA) was too short.
- While the PSG aims to improve consistency for participants in what to expect and when key steps will happen it must still allow for choice, flexibility, and fairness.
- Timeframes should reflect individual needs and circumstances, not be fixed. A rigid system risks excluding people with complex or changing situations.
- When the NDIA contacts participants to prepare for their Support Needs Assessment, it should clearly explain why contact is being made and use the participant's preferred contact method including any accessibility requirements. Surprise phone calls can be stressful and make it harder for people to prepare or respond.
- Good service and participant experience, means being respectful of lived experience, allowing time where needed, and avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.

Topic 2: Visibility of participant information for both the participant and NDIS staff

- Participants want to manage and update their own information - like contact details, goals, health status, and communication preferences - through the NDIS online portal, securely and without needing NDIA staff support, especially before a Support Needs Assessment.
- Participants want to know what information is being used in decision-making and be able to flag outdated or incorrect reports.
- Participants want visibility into which documents Support Needs Assessors have read and the ability to correct or remove inaccurate information. This helps them prepare, respond, and ensures decisions are based on accurate and relevant data.
- Sensitive information needs to be protected. The group shared examples of trauma and privacy breaches, and want limits on who can see personal details, with audit trails to track access.
- Life changes, like health, housing, or support needs should be easy to update and trigger the right follow-up actions, such as plan reviews or funding adjustments.
- Participants want to own their "About Me" section in their NDIS Plan. They want to keep it accurate and relevant and choose who can see it - especially as their circumstances change.
- Participants want to decide what information is shared with NDIS staff, using tick-box controls and role-based access.
- Not all participants can use the NDIS online portal. There needs to be other ways to update participant information and trusted people who can help, with safeguards to ensure they act in

the participant's best interest.
- Staff training is essential. There is a need for well-trained staff who understand the system, use participant information and data appropriately, and come prepared to meetings.

What we agreed on

- Continue working with participants and stakeholders to refine the Participant Service Guarantee timeframes as part of the new way of planning.
- Improve how participant information is accessed and updated by both participants and NDIA staff, reducing the need for participants to retell their story.

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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