24 October 2025

“We want to be involved in the NDIS as it is our lives. We need a conduit to express our needs and represent our community.” - Working Group Member

What we talked about

Topic 1: Overview of the new planning approach and Support Needs Assessment

- We heard about the I-CAN 6 and how it will be used as part of the support needs assessment in the new way of planning.
- The I-CAN 6 was developed by the Centre for Disability Studies at Sydney University.
- A partnership between the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Disability Studies (CDS) was successful in the procurement process to source a tool that would help in developing support needs assessments. This was an open competitive process. The partnership allows the NDIA to use the(I-CAN) version 6.
- Trained supports needs assessors will meet with participants to collect information about their support needs. Participants will talk about their daily life, needs and preferences and confirm information the assessor has collected and understood.
- The NDIA will recruit the assessors and make sure they have the right skills and training to do the assessments.
  Participants will receive support and information before the meeting, when they receive their report and budget, and to implement their plan.

Topic 2: Question and Answer Session

The group co-chairs led a discussion with NDIA staff about the new planning approach and the SNA process. Questions were collected from working group members before and during the meeting. The NDIA team said:

- We are working with participants to see what the new way of planning feels like, and to get feedback along the way.
- There will also be specific co-design on key pieces of communication.
- Assessors will need to have the proper accreditation, but also need to be empathetic, be able to have person centred, strengths-based conversations, and good understanding or lived experience of disability.
- There will be a slow and gradual transition to the new way of planning for a period of at least five years starting from July 2026.

What we heard from the group

There is some support for moving to considering the whole person instead of just clinical assessments.

- The current review process does not work for people with disability. People are hopeful that the new process will allow conversations to happen along the way.
- We need to communicate well about the new way of planning and what it means for existing participants who may not transition early.
- There is uncertainty and concern about how the SNA will be used.
- Success will be reliant on fairness and transparency.

Topic 3: Next steps for the group

- The group has been working together for over 12 months. As part of this the NDIA wants to talk about what is working, what is not working, and what might happen next. We would like to do this at the next meeting.
- The NDIA is focusing a lot of effort on delivery of the new way of planning.
- We need to consider the best way to make sure safety is part of the the new way of planning, while being mindful of resources available.

We heard

- The group has valued working together in this way.
- The role of the co-chairs and their steering of the meetings was celebrated.
- The group appreciates the NDIA’s transparency about the need future of the group and the opportunity to come together for another meeting next month.
- We need to be clearer about what type of engagement we are doing with this group and with the community and sector (co-design, informing or consulting).

“A true co-design model of these working groups would be a very good way to start us developing those changes, rather than these meetings that once again have fallen into information sharing. There needs to be an element of getting together to come up with solutions. While the agency is still coming up with the answers, they are not our answers.” - Member

What we agreed

We will talk about a work plan for the group at our next meeting and reflect on the work we have done so far.

Next meeting

Tuesday, 18 November 2025, 2-4pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Time).

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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