8 October 2025

The Autism Advisory Group met on 8 October 2025 for the fifth meeting of the year. The meeting was held online.

Focus of the meeting

The focus of the October meeting was:

- Navigators
- NDIS Pathway for Children.

Navigators

The NDIA shared a recap of the vision and objectives of the new navigator function, and an overview of recent co-design and engagement activities.

The vision is to create an inclusive, accessible, and effective navigator service that ensures all individuals with disabilities can easily identify, access, and manage the supports they need to work towards their goals and thrive within their communities.

The Agency has undertaken multiple engagements on the working model for the navigator service, including sessions with participant focus groups and reference and advisory groups.

The NDIA is currently synthesising themes and insights from these co-design and consultation activities.

Members provided the following feedback:

- Acknowledgment of the intersectionality between the varying information and documents participants need to provide across the NDIS.
- Navigators need to have a good understanding of the different presentations of autism in women, girls and those that identify as gender diverse.
- In regard to geographical considerations participants need access to services that are neuro-affirming in areas that are close to where they live.
- The NDIA needs to factor in the positive impact that local knowledge and relationships will have on the success of the outcomes for some people.
- The NDIA needs to clarify how participants will move within the 4 different levels of navigator services.

NDIS Pathway for Children

The NDIA shared an updated presentation and sought feedback and insights on design concepts for a new pathway for children.

The NDIA is designing the new children's pathway in such a way that allows for adjustments as needed, pending any future decisions of Government including:

- Design for integration across the broader ecosystem, with a particular focus on Thriving Kids and NDIS integration.
- Multiple inputs into the design process (data, evidence, lived experience voices, feedback from experts and sector).
- Child and family experience is very important in the design process.
- Design within known parameters (legislative framework, workforce supply challenges, business systems, etc).
- Simplify and reduce steps.
- Reduce waiting times.
- Provide opportunities for parents to 'self-serve' in order to reduce their administrative burden and interactions (such as online portal to track access request progress and upload documents).

The NDIA shared an updated presentation of the intersectionality of the pathway between the navigator role between, mainstream and community services, Thriving Kids, and the NDIS.

Autism Advisory Group next meeting

The Autism Advisory Group's next meeting is on 16 December 2025.

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