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I have now had the privilege of being CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) for more than five months. During this time I have visited most of our regions and spent time with participants, providers, representatives of the disability sector, government and members of the community to learn about the opportunities and challenges that we face.

We have a large and exciting task ahead to deliver a world leading National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). I am confident in the NDIA and our ability to continue evolving and improving to deliver on our purpose to 'empower people with disability to choose and achieve their goals in inclusive communities and workplaces.'

A key priority for me as CEO is to take a disciplined approach to prioritising and implementing our [Corporate Plan](#) to deliver on our top priorities which are:

1. Ensuring a quality experience and outcomes for participants;
2. Enabling a competitive market of innovative supports;
3. Monitoring and responding to costs pressures to ensure the NDIS remains financially sustainable; and
4. Delivering a high quality NDIA, with the right systems, processes, controls and capabilities.

Part of this task is making sure that we share our progress, our achievements, and our challenges.

I would like to take the opportunity to start sharing regular updates on Transition progress.

This message is aimed at the disability sector, providers, peaks and interested members of the community.

It will provide a regular snapshot of how the NDIS progressing, what has been happening over the last few months and where we are focusing our efforts going forward.

Highlights this period

Aspiration 1. Better participant outcomes

The first aspiration in our Corporate Plan is focused on delivering quality outcomes and experience for participants.

In October last year we announced a new pathway experience following an extensive review commissioned by our Board. Updates include:

- The establishment of the Participant Reference Group,
- Progressing our pilot and hearing early feedback from participants, their families and carers, and
- The release of the [Pathway Review Report](#)

Aspiration 2. A growing market of innovative supports

The second aspiration in our Corporate Plan is growing a competitive market with innovative supports. Highlights this period include the [Independent Pricing Review](#):

- The Board commissioned the Review to better understand issues relating to creating a strong, innovative and viable provider market.
- The Review has 25 recommendations related to markets, pricing and interventions - all supported in principle by the NDIA Board.
- To support implementation of the recommendations, we will establish a Pricing Committee, which will help provide greater transparency and an active monitoring of pricing decisions as the market evolves and grows to meet the needs of participants.

Aspiration 3. A Financially sustainable NDIS

The third aspiration in our Corporate Plan is a financially sustainable NDIS. Recent highlights include [COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report - 31 December 2017](#):

- There were 132,743 participants with an approved plan at 31 December 2017, with a further 9,523 children supported in the ECEI gateway - this means we delivered 19,965 plans this quarter - an increase of 18 per cent for the quarter.
- The number of registered providers has grown by 17 per cent over the last quarter - bringing us to a total of 12,328 registered providers as at 31 December 2017.
- Our Short Form Outcome Framework shows that the NDIS is making a difference - with 72 per cent of people saying the NDIS has assisted with daily living and 62 per cent of people saying the NDIS has assisted with social, community and civic participation. This is consistent performance from the last quarter.

Aspiration 4. A high performing NDIA

The fourth and final aspiration is a high performing NDIA. Highlights include Partners in the Community in South Australia:

- \$72 million in funding for Bapcare and Mission Australia as Partners in the Community delivering Local Area Coordination services in South Australia from March 2018
- \$47 million in funding for Early Childhood and Early Intervention services provided through the South Australian Department for Communities and Social Inclusion from March 2018.

What else are we working on?

For our participants

- 35 workshops are underway to develop tailored pathways for participants with psychosocial disability, and people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and rural and remote contexts, as well as for people entering through the ECEI gateway.
- We are also working with key sector representatives, such as Mental Health Australia, to make sure the pathway experience is delivering the right outcomes for everyone.
- We are also putting in place arrangements to better support participants with complex needs involved in the justice system, including working with state and territory colleagues to ensure we have the right arrangements in place to Maintain Critical Supports (historically referred to as "Provider of Last Resort").

For our providers

- Ten NDIS National Provider Forums, including one webinar, are underway to provide information and insights about the role of Providers in the growing NDIS market.
- Following the most recent [COAG Disability Reform Council](#) meeting we are undertaking consultations on [Specialist Disability Accommodation \(SDA\)](#) to make sure the market has all the information it needs to invest in SDA and build accommodation for people who require specialist housing solutions.
- We are improving timeliness and support for provider payments. In December 2017, it came to our attention that a number of providers were experiencing issues with payment processing times and claims. A new Provider Payment Team has been set up in response. This team will be a single point of contact for providers, and assist providers to understanding processes and reduce delays in payments. You can [contact the payments team by email: provider.support@ndis.gov.au](mailto:provider.support@ndis.gov.au)
- We have provided a submission to the JSC on the NDIS on [Market Readiness](#)

I will provide these updates regularly as a snapshot of progress and also challenges and opportunities we face.

Thank you for your ongoing support as together 'we empower people with disability to choose and achieve their goals in inclusive communities and workplaces.'

And finally, please take the time to check out a video explaining the current series of provider forums being held around the country.

Feedback from providers has been very positive and we already have over 800 providers registered to participate in a provider-focused webinar scheduled for April 24.

[Transcript for 'Connect with the NDIS at your local provider forums'](#)

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