

Welcome to the latest edition of the CEO Sector Update.

I'm keen to provide you with some details on recent announcements from what has been a productive period.

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

On 12 September 2019, I represented the NDIA at the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety in Melbourne. As part of its inquiries, the Royal Commission has been exploring challenges facing younger people in residential aged care.

The Agency has an important role to play in assisting younger people in residential aged care by making sure they have supports to help them live in other settings, if that is their goal.

In recent months we've made it easier for participants to include Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) funding in their plans through the SDA Rule changes earlier this year. We have also made a range of other improvements including releasing more information to the SDA market, as well as price increases to provide further assurance to investors and others involved in building the SDA market.

We are committed to continuing to do more to make the whole process easier for participants and continue to focus on delivering against activities in the [Younger People in Residential Aged Care Action Plan](#)

The hearing highlighted a need to focus on modelling SDA supply and demand, ensuring interim milestones and targets are developed and achieved, and enhancing our monitoring and reporting. I look forward to sharing more about our progress in this space in future updates.

The Royal Commission also served as a timely reminder of how important it is for us to get the Scheme right, particularly for young people in aged care and their families. A number of NDIS participants also appeared in front of the Royal Commission and I want to acknowledge the strength of those who shared their personal stories to advocate for change. I was proud to hear, in several cases, the Scheme had helped move participants out of aged care.

Portal changes for automatic plan extensions

Since his appointment, the Minister for the NDIS and myself have been travelling the country, listening to feedback from participants, their families and carers about what is working well in the Scheme, and where we still need to improve. The Prime Minister has also been holding a series of roundtable, which our Minister and I have been attending as well.

In response to feedback, the Minister asked the Agency to address an issue participants and providers experience when there is a gap between the lapse of a plan and a new plan being approved. In some circumstance, the gap meant participants were unable to pay for supports until a new plan was in place.

In early August, we began automatic extensions of plans due to lapse within seven days. Extending the plan for 28 days ensures participants can continue to access supports and services during the plan review process. The extension also means providers can continue to claim for the supports they have provided until the new plan is approved. Of course, it is always our aim to ensure that participants plans are reviewed and updated well in advance of their lapse date. The changes will only impact a very small proportion of participants.

Participant Service Guarantee

As you would be aware and been participating in, in mid-August the Minister announced a review of the NDIS legislation and rules, with a focus on improving wait times and processes for participants. The review, being led by David Tune AO, is due to be completed by December 2019 and will inform the development of the NDIS Participant Service Guarantee, due to be in place from July 2020.

The NDIS Participant Service Guarantee will set out what participants can expect in terms of timeframes for accessing the Scheme and receiving their plans, with a particular focus on children and participants who require Specialist Disability Accommodation and assistive technology.

The Minister has opened the public consultation for the review. You can complete [online survey](#) or [provide a submission](#) as part of the process. Consultations will close on 31 October 2019.

Disability Related Health Supports

The NDIA has now commenced implementation of the changes agreed by Commonwealth and State and Territory Disability Minister to clarify the boundaries between the NDIS and health-related services to ensure NDIS participants receive the supports they need. From 1 October 2019, NDIS participants will be able to receive funding for the disability-related health supports they need as a direct result of their disability, and as part of their daily life, through their NDIS plans.

The NDIS now funds disability-related health supports for participants who need help to manage a range of needs including those associated with continence, respiratory care, nutrition, wound and pressure care, dysphagia, diabetes, podiatry and epilepsy. Most participants will get disability-related health supports included in their NDIS plan at their next

plan review.

The Agency has also released an Operational Guideline and updated the 2019-20 Price Guide and Support Catalogue to include more than 90 disability-related health supports now funded under the NDIS.

A suite of information for participants, providers and the health sector, including Easy English versions, and further information is available on the [Disability-Related Health Supports](#) page on our website.

Release of 2019-23 NDIA Corporate Plan

In mid-August, the Agency released its [2019-23 Corporate Plan](#), which is an essential part of our planning framework, stating our key strategic priorities for the coming year and beyond. In short, it provides direction to the Agency's work. The Corporate Plan was developed by our Board in conjunction with our Executive Leadership Team, taking into account Ministerial and Government priorities.

We refresh our Corporate Plan each year to ensure our strategic direction remains appropriate for our current operating environment.

We have a strong focus on putting participants at the centre of everything we do, which is reflected in the first of our five aspirations set out in the Corporate Plan:

- a quality experience and outcomes for participants
- a competitive market with innovative supports
- a connected and engaged stakeholder sector
- a financially sustainable Scheme
- a high-performing NDIA.

The addition of a new stakeholder-focused aspiration is recognition of the important role the sector plays in helping us deliver and improve the Scheme. We are keen to work collaboratively with you to determine what the new aspiration looks like in practice.

Other announcements I would like to draw your attention to:

- On 5 September 2019, Minister Robert announced that the Scheme is supporting [more than 30,000 South Australians](#)
- We opened our [Mainstream Capacity Building and Economic Community Participation grant rounds](#) on 9 September 2019. Up to \$62 million will be available to make mainstream health services and the community more inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities.

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- [\\$65 million in funding was provided to thirty seven organisations](#) to improve the accessibility, quality and consistency of information available for people with disability, their families and carers, as well as for relevant supports and services, under the ILC National Information Program.
 - As part of the NDIS Public Data Sharing Approach, we recently released more data on the [Data and Insights page](#) of our website, this time focusing on psychosocial disability and the NDIS market. In addition, a new [interactive map and tool](#) on the NDIS website allows users to search data by specific region, disability type, age group and support and provider types. More information about the [schedule for data releases](#) is available on the NDIS website.

As we are early into the second quarter of 2019-20, our attention is firmly set on the work ahead of us and what we want to achieve before the end of the year. We look forward to keeping you updated and working with you on Scheme progress in the coming months. As always, thank you all for your ongoing commitment to the success of the Scheme.

Warm regards,

Vicki

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3 December 2020