11 December 2019

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has released data about outcomes for participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

The data is the third release by the NDIA as part of the NDIS Public Data Sharing Approach and aims to increase community understanding of the Scheme's operation and highlight areas for continued focus.

Progressive data releases are part of the Australian Government's commitment to a transparent NDIS. The outcomes data collected by the NDIA represents one of the largest surveys of the disability sector – participants, their families and carers – that has ever been conducted in Australia.

At the time of collection at 30 June 2019, there were 16,417 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and 24,023 CALD participants in the Scheme. By 30 September 2019, these figures have grown to 18,252 and 27,030 respectively.

NDIA CEO Martin Hoffman said that while the data shows several positive outcomes for both cohorts of participants — particularly in areas relating to community support and involvement —more needs to be done to improve access and understanding of the NDIS, especially when language is a barrier.

"The NDIS represents a significant opportunity to tackle the challenges facing people with disability and provide enduring solutions — and there are such opportunities in CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities where barriers to participation are historic, going back generations in many instances," Mr Hoffman said.

"Work continues to build stronger connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island and CALD communities and the NDIS to ensure these communities are receiving the full benefits of this world-leading Scheme.

"As part of the government's plan for the NDIS, a $20m Community Connectors program was recently announced. This will be a key tool in finding new ways to reach those who live remotely, or who need a different range of supports to help them access and navigate the NDIS."

The NDIA is also investing in grants to more than 30 CALD organisations through the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program to better connect people with disability with disability, community and mainstream supports.

"What we are seeing is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and CALD participants are doing better the longer they are in the Scheme. In particular, community and social

participation for CALD participants aged between 15 and 24 increased 18 per cent in the second year," Mr Hoffman said.

"We want to ensure more people have the same opportunity to succeed this way, and by releasing this data we can include all other areas of the community in the conversation about how best to do that."

The latest data is available here , read about the government's NDIS Plan.

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