29 June 2014

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) commences in the Barkly on 1 July, giving local people with disability access to tailored support.

National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) chief executive David Bowen said the Barkly NDIS trial site will play a pivotal part in the national rollout of the scheme.

“The Barkly trial will inform how the NDIS will need to operate in all rural and remote areas,” Mr Bowen said.

“The about 140 anticipated Barkly participants are spread over 322,500 square kilometres – to put it in perspective, that’s more than 1.3 times the size of the United Kingdom,” he said.

“Service provision and infrastructure are significant challenges in every remote area.

“The NDIS will build on the existing disability services footprint and it is our hope the new scheme will allow resourcefulness and innovation within local communities.”

The scheme will fund the reasonable and necessary support needed for people to achieve their individual goals and aspirations.

NDIA general manager of operations Liz Cairns said individualised disability support plans are the key to changing lives.

“The scheme can help participants and their families to engage in education, employment and their community, become more independent and receive necessary equipment,” Ms Cairns said.

“The NDIS is the biggest social policy change in 30 years – it is important we get it right and that is why it is being trialled across Australia,” she said

“The Barkly community has been really supportive and we look forward to continuing this learning journey with them.”

From 1 July, NDIS trail sites also commence in the ACT and Perth Hills. These sites now join four existing sites in the Hunter (NSW), Barwon (VIC), South Australia (for children under six years of age), and Tasmania (for young people, aged 15 to 24 years).

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