31 March 2014

On Saturday 29 March articles about the NDIS and its economic effects appeared in the Australian newspaper. The articles used early figures from the NDIS first quarterly report (now six months old) as the evidence base to comment on current Scheme costs and operations and to incorrectly extrapolate those early numbers to make claims that do not stand up to examination about the cost-benefit analysis of the NDIS at full scheme when it supports up to 460,000 individuals. In response to the factual inaccuracies in the articles the Chairman of the NDIA Board took the unusual step of writing to the newspaper to ask that more rigorous reporting of NDIS facts be used as the basis for the analysis of the NDIS now and into the future. The Chair's letter is reproduced below.

Letter to the Editor of The Australian Newspaper

The key numbers used in Dennis Shanahan's and Sid Maher's articles on Saturday 29 March about the NDIS are out of date, muddled and do not provide the basis for any meaningful analysis of the Scheme's future performance.

Neither journalist contacted the Agency to check their facts or figures.

The facts are that the first entrants to the Scheme, in the September quarter last year, were not selected to match the eligible population and so could never be extrapolated to estimate full Scheme costs, a point I made at the time and which was reported in your paper.

Since then average package costs have trended down and, even more importantly, total costs, which are the product of average costs and the numbers entering the Scheme, are tracking in line with the projected full Scheme costs.

As you would expect, the Board is monitoring all the facts, figures and roll out very carefully. There is still an enormous task ahead, but there is no cost blowout.

In the future, there will be much to be analysed and discussed about the NDIS and the positive contribution it will make to all Australians, not just those with disabilities. As that conversation develops, I hope that everyone will join it on the basis of evidence which is accurate, up to date and verifiable.

Bruce Bonyhady AM
Chair
National Disability Insurance Agency

Related articles

Quarterly Report: NDIS on track and on budget

Date
18 August 2014

45,000 Australians with disability getting support for the first time under the NDIS

Date
29 May 2018

140,000 Australians now benefiting from the NDIS: latest data released

Date
22 February 2018
Read more news