17 March 2017

The Hon Jane Prentice MP, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services, will today launch the NDIA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and Rural and Remote Strategy in Cairns.

These Strategies outline how the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will be delivered to all eligible Australians regardless of where they live and in a culturally respectful manner.

Developed collaboratively with representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, including those who have lived or worked in rural and remote communities, the Strategies outline how the Agency will engage with communities to understand their strengths as well as the disability support needs of individuals who access the Scheme.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has assigned priority areas for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability; including cultural competency for their staff and the staff of their Partners in the Community as well as cultural leadership, local solutions, participant-focussed design and strong culturally appropriate communication.

Mrs Prentice said now was the right time to outline the pathway to delivering the NDIS to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

“Whether you are in North Queensland, Darwin, Sydney or Melbourne the NDIS will be there for you should you ever need it,” she said.

The NDIS is being phased in across Australia over three years based on geographic areas and age groups as part of the agreement between the States, Territories and Federal Government.

“We are pleased to launch these Strategies in Cairns as the NDIS has started working with communities as we prepare to introduce the Scheme on 1 July 2018,” Mrs Prentice said.

“The arrival of the NDIS is an historic moment for all Australians.

“This is the first time there will be reasonable and necessary support for eligible people living with a permanent and significant disability across the country, regardless of location,” she said.

Mrs Prentice said the new Strategies were a road map to helping all Australians with disability and creating jobs in local communities.

“The core aim of the Strategies is to work with local communities, identify and utilise local skills and experience and generate jobs in local communities,” she said.

“Tens of thousands of new jobs will be generated across Australia as a result of this significant increase in funding for disability services.”

Information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy and the Rural and Remote Strategy is available on the NDIS website.

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