19 May 2015

The National Disability Insurance Agency welcomes the release of the Citizen's Jury Report, and thanks the jurors and witnesses for their commitment to improve the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

The NDIA funded the Citizen's Jury as a part of its commitment to listen to people with disabilities about their experience with the NDIS, so the Scheme is the best it can be.

The Jury sat for four days in February in Sydney, and heard from participant and advocate witnesses from every trial site except the Northern Territory.

A spokesperson for the Agency said that the Citizens' Jury was one of many formal and informal feedback mechanisms used to gather information and learn lessons from those at the heart of the NDIS – people with disability.

"This process was seen as an innovative way in which people with disability could be empowered to provide valuable feedback as the Agency is in trial phase and building the NDIS towards full scheme.

"It is heartening that the jury found the Scheme is supporting quality of life outcomes for people with disability which are otherwise unobtainable," the spokesperson said.

"However the true value of this process was a range of challenges facing the Agency as we move towards full scheme, commencing in July 2016.

"Many of the concerns raised by the witnesses are issues that the Agency has already taken steps to address such as staff training and market development. These concerns are being investigated by the Agency.

"It is worth noting that the jury and witnesses were unaware of some of the internal processes already under development in the Agency, particularly around staff training, quality control, market development, assurance and audit.

"This in no way diminishes the worth of the input, and indeed reinforces the importance of this work. We thank everyone involved in the Citizens' Jury process for their commitment to help us improve and learn.

"Like the jury, the Agency is keenly aware of the importance of our front line staff in helping people with disability achieve a normal life and we are committing resources in training and supporting these officers.

"As an Agency we are working hard to develop an internal culture supporting individual and innovative approaches towards helping people with disabilities achieve their goals," the spokesperson said.

The Agency will be supporting a round table for the sector to ensure that the information gathered will help people in the NDIS and future clients, their families and staff.

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