9 August 2021

The latest National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) quarterly report shows the world first scheme is continuing to grow at a record rate.

Minister for the NDIS Minister Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said today's report shows we have much to celebrate as a nation.

"It is an extraordinary achievement for the NDIS to now be supporting 466,000 Australians – with almost a quarter of a million people receiving support for the very first time," Minister Reynolds said.

"Since becoming Minister for the NDIS, I have heard very clearly in my consultations with the disability sector and with colleagues that they want greater data to better understand the problems facing the Scheme and to be part of developing solutions.

"We can't shy away from the Scheme's challenges and the need to keep improving participant experience. Issues identified in this report include inconsistent access and planning decisions and inequalities in packages based on socio-economic status.

"In an insurance scheme, where you live or your socioeconomic circumstances should not matter.

"Another issue addressed in significant detail is the reporting of apparent systematic decreases in functional ability for participants.

"This important report contains the most detailed data on the NDIS publicly released on Scheme costs and assumptions.

"It shows that without mitigation, projected costs are higher than both the 2021 Portfolio Budget Statements and the 2017 Productivity Commission projections.

"The average payment per participant has continued to increase at 11.8 per cent per annum in the three years to 30 June 2021.

"Total participant costs increased to $6.6 billion in the last quarter of 2020-21 - a 33 per cent increase in total participant costs from the same period last year.

"In July 2021, I publicly released the NDIA Board Annual Financial Sustainability Report Summary (AFSR). This provided significant detail on the pressures now facing the Scheme.

"Today's report goes even further. It provides the AFSR projections from 2018 onwards across every measure - total participant numbers, total participant costs and average payments and actual and assumed rates of inflation, compared to actual and estimated Scheme costs. Never before have we had such a clear picture of the true state of play.

“A key outcome of the July Disability Minister’s Meeting was a collective agreement to better understand these challenges. I shared this report with Ministers on Friday in preparation for the next Disability Reform Ministers Meeting.

“As a Scheme of our Federation, Australian Governments have responsibility to make sure that the Scheme remains affordable over the long-term and continually improves participant experience and outcomes,” Minister Reynolds said.

Other key statistics from the quarter include:

- 35 per cent of participants who received plans were children aged 0-6 years.
- 33 per cent decrease in the number of people under the age of 65 entering residential aged care.
- 14 per cent increase in the number of young adults reporting that the NDIS has helped with their daily living activities.
- 12 per cent increase in the number of participants reporting that the NDIS has helped improve their health and wellbeing.

The report also shows that the NDIA continues to improve on its Participant Service Guarantee, with the latest report showing:

- 100 per cent of access decisions were made within 21 days in the June 2021 quarter.
- 91 per cent of first plans were approved within 90 days for participants aged 0-6.
- 94 per cent of internal reviews of a reviewable decisions were completed within 90 days.

Read the latest quarterly report.

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