8 November 2021

The Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC, released the Quarterly Report to disability ministers Q1 2021-22 today.

The Quarterly Report is a detailed report on Scheme performance from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.

It contains a wide range of NDIS data, and provides commentary about the Scheme's progress, successes and challenges.

It also meets the requirements under Section 174 of the National Disability Insurance Act 2013 to provide public information about the progress of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Support through the COVID-19 pandemic

You can read about the ways we have worked across governments to support participants, providers, staff and partners this quarter during the COVID-19 pandemic from page 5. This has included supporting participants and disability workers to get vaccinated, and work to ensure participants continue to receive essential services.

Progress on improving our engagement

There is an update on our engagement work to strengthen relationships and build trust with the disability sector from page 8. The Independent Advisory Council (Council) and other key disability community stakeholders participated in two virtual workshops in September 2021 to discuss co-design and other priority issues.

Our commitment to financial transparency

The Agency continues to release more information about the financial challenges facing the Scheme. The NDIA Board released the 30 June 2021 Annual Financial Sustainability Report (AFSR) on our website on 8 October 2021. Section 5 (from page 93) of this report discusses financial sustainability in more detail.

Participant Experiences and Outcomes

Participants continue to have positive outcomes the longer they are in the Scheme. Results and insights from participants who have been in the Scheme for at least 2, 3, 4 or 5 years are included from page 27.

Progress Against the Participant Service Charter and Service Improvement Plan

Last year the NDIA introduced a Participant Service Charter to explain what participants can expect when they deal with the NDIA, as well as the Participant Service Improvement Plan that outlines all the improvements the NDIA will make. From page 44 you can track our progress against these commitments to improve our service.

Read stories about participants all over Australia

There are six stories in this Quarterly Report that show how participants are achieving their goals with NDIS support. The stories include:

- Toddler Willow (page 13) who lives with many conditions relating to her premature birth and is learning new ways to communicate with NDIS support.
- Alberto (page 26), who recently competed at the Tokyo Paralympics and is enjoying learning different skills now he's living independently.
- Matthew (page 43), who has lived through many changes and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic but has also enjoyed more one-on-one activities and grown in confidence.
- Dwayne (page 63), who uses carbon fibre prosthetic legs and runs an online business helping young people with disability develop their social skills whilst using the computer game Dungeons and Dragons.
- Gerry (page 92), who is enjoying his love for retail and building on his job skills at Mosaic Support Services social enterprise, Made By Mosaic.
- Shelley (page 106), who recently travelled to Rockhampton for her first trip away without family support.

Data highlights from the latest Quarterly Report

- At 30 September 2021, 484,700 participants were receiving NDIS support
- 74,840 of these participants were children aged younger than 7 (15%)
- 20,482 new participants received an approved plan this quarter, a 4% increase from last quarter.
    - We are continuing to see a high proportion of children aged younger than 7 years entering the Scheme with 7,761 children this quarter (37.9% of new participants this quarter and 34.8% in the June 2021 quarter)
    - Consistent with these high numbers of children entering, a relatively higher proportion of participants with Developmental Delay entered the Scheme again this

quarter (23.7% this quarter and 21.7% in the June 2021 quarter).
    - 12.7% of participants who received a plan in the quarter had a Psychosocial Disability, compared to 10.4% in the previous quarters combined.
    - 8.8% identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
    - 9.7% identified as from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community
    - 1.8% were Australians living in remote and very remote areas
- The Scheme continues to work hard to reduce the amount of participants living in residential aged care:
    - The number of people in residential aged care under the age of 65 years, including those who are not participants of the Scheme, has decreased in recent quarters from 6,123 at 31 March 2018 to 3,900 at 30 June 2021 (a 36% decrease).
    - Fewer people under the age of 65 years are entering residential aged care – 495 people under the age of 65 years entered in the March 2018 quarter, compared with 156 in the June 2021 quarter (a 68% decrease).
- Section 5 of this quarter's report (from page 94) continues the focus on financial sustainability, including information on the Annual Financial Sustainability Report, participant costs and projections, average and median payment trends and average plan budget trends.
    - Trends in average and median payments per participant between 1 October 2017 and 30 September 2021 show that average payments have increased by 11.7% per annum, and median payments have increased by 20.1% per annum.
    - Ongoing significant growth in average participant costs will continue to place substantial pressure on Scheme sustainability and long-term affordability. The NDIA is committed to working with the disability sector and governments on this issue so the Scheme remains affordable now and into the future.
    - Figures 67-69 in the report (pages 100-101) show that there has been a slight decrease in average plan budgets in the last year. The mix of participants (shifting to a higher proportion of low cost participants, especially children, and fewer participants in SIL as a proportion of participants overall) affects the extent to which average plan budgets change. This is one driver of the decrease in the last year. While plans have decreased marginally on average in the last year, plan budgets are still well above plan budgets from two and three years ago.
    - The report also includes charts that show the variation in plans at the individual level. In the 12 months to 30 September 2021:
        - 38% of plans increased at review by more than 5%
        - 38% decreased by more than 5%
        - 24% stayed within 5%.
    - While 38% of plans increased by more than 5% in the 12 months to 30 September 2021, and 38% decreased by more than 5% in the same period, a much higher proportion of plans increased by more than 5% in the prior two years (55% in the 12

months to 30 September 2020, and 56% in the 12 months to 30 September 2019).
- Plan reviews result in plan budgets varying from plan to plan for a variety of reasons – for example, one-off capital items in one plan and not the next. The NDIA has published an updated Operational Guideline (OG) on Plan Reviews which details the reasons why a new plan could be different to a current plan. This report also includes further detail on variation in SIL plans at review (see page 105).

More NDIS data

The Agency launched an accessible interactive data tool in December 2020. The tool lets you apply multiple drop-down filters to each data set.

If you are interested in NDIS data, sign up for the Data and Insights newsletter and be the first to know about Quarterly Reports, data releases and relevant events.

If you have any questions about the Quarterly Report, please contact the National Contact Centre on 1800 800 110 or email your questions to Scheme.Actuary@ndis.gov.au.

Related articles

See how the Scheme is growing in the latest Quarterly Report

Date
9 August 2021

See the NDIS in action in the latest Quarterly Report

Date
21 May 2021

More than 484,000 Australians now supported by the NDIS

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8 November 2021
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