10 April 2018

Mental Health Sector April 2018

> "This reference group is an important national mechanism for the NDIA to hear from key stakeholders about the issues, opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability.' said Gerry Naughtin, Strategic Advisor, Mental Health who recently took over the role of chair of this Reference Group.

National consultations on the experience of the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability

Meeting received reports from Scott McNaughton, General Manager Pathway Design and Josh Fear, Director Policy and Projects, Mental Health Australia on the twelve consultations that have taken place across the country from January to April this year.

These consultations involved 106 participants and families and carers, 119 service providers; 57 representatives of peak and advocacy organisations, 26 government officials and 35 NDIS officers.

Their purpose was to hear feedback from participants with psychosocial disability, family and carers and service providers. The National Mental Health Sector Reference Group also held a special meeting in 17 February 2018 to provide input into these consultations.

Main themes raised included access and planning processes and criteria are difficult to understand as they are different to the processes they have experienced using other services; families would like to be more included in the planning and review processes; the Agency needs more staff with psychosocial competency and experience; GP's and health practitioners are seeking more guidance regarding NDIS access processes; plans need to have flexibility to meet the fluctuating needs of psychosocial disability; many questions that were asked during planning were not relevant to the person with psychosocial disability; face-to-face meetings in a comfortable environment are generally preferred; people with psychosocial disability often need support to implement and coordinate their plan.

The consultations provided NDIA with the opportunity to hear and listen to what the Scheme is getting right for participants with psychosocial disability and what we need to do to improve. This was an important national conversation and this feedback is helping to shape improvements to our access, planning and plan review processes. Our sincere thanks to all involved for their contributions.

Government response Joint Standing Committee on NDIS and Mental Health

The group received a briefing on the Government's response to the recommendations of the JSC. It heard that that Government and NDIA were supportive of the majority of the recommendations, but did not support the JSC recommendation to not require the permanency criteria to apply to participants with psychosocial disability.

Implications of the Independent Pricing Review for the mental health sector

Members were briefed on the implications of the NDIA Board's acceptance of the recommendations of the McKinsey review of pricing. The briefing noted the potentially positive implications for psychosocial disability service providers. The recommendations of the IPR, if they were applied to attendant care for participants with complex care needs due their psychosocial disability, would result in price increases between 7.5% and 12.5% per hour of attendant care for the 2018/19 financial year. Work is being undertaken on the definition of complexity for psychosocial and how this will be applied.

Employment for people with psychosocial disability

Members discussed the importance of employment and meaningful participation in employment-like activities in increasing confidence and community participation for people with psychosocial disability.

The meeting agreed that employment will be the key focus topic of the August 2018 meeting.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

The Reference Group received a report from Eliza Strapp from DSS on the new NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, and the commencement of its role in NSW and South Australia from 1 July, 2018. Discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring that the approach being developed reflected the Mental Health Standards and other standard setting mechanisms for mental health services. It included the suggestion that the new Commission needs to consider how it will deal with recovery as a performance criteria.

Reference Group members considered that this is an important issue and sought more information on this matter and added it to the agenda it for its August meeting.

Key Data on Psychosocial Disability and the NDIS – as at 31 December 2017

The Scheme Actuary, Sarah Johnson reported to the meeting on the quarterly data for the Scheme. Key points from this presentation are available in the Key Data attachment.

Key Links

The reimagine.today website is a joint project of the NDIA and MHCC NSW. It helps adults under 65 years of age living with a mental health condition to better understand the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and what supports and services it can offer.

NDIA has a dedicated webpage for communication, updates and resources on psychosocial disability and the NDIS.

The Information, Linkages, and Capacity Building (ILC) Grants Rounds 1 and 2 funded 16 projects with a focus on people with psychosocial disability. Funding of $6.7 m was provided for psychosocial disability projects in Round 2.

Attendees at the thirteenth meeting of the National Mental Health Sector Reference Group

- Dr Gerry Naughtin, NDIA Strategic Advisor (Mental Health) and Chair;
- Mr Evan Bichara, Consumer Representative;
- Mr Michael Burge OAM, Consumer Representative;
- Mr Patrick Hardwick, Carer Representative;
- Ms Bernadette Shanahan, Community Mental Health Australia (for Ms Amanda Bresnan);
- Dr Anthony Millgate, Department of Health;
- Ms Eliza Strapp, Department of Social Services;
- Ms Julie Skilbeck, Mental Health Principal Committee (for Ms Charlotte Frew);
- Mr Ivan Frkovic, Mental Health Commissions;
- Ms Sarah Johnson, NDIA Scheme Actuary;
- Mr Scott McNaughton, NDIA General Manager (Participant Pathway Design);
- Mr David Coyne, NDIA Regional Manager, Sydney (for Ms Marita Walker).

Project Managers and Guests

- Mr Josh Fear, Mental Health Australia;
- Ms Joanne Llewellyn, Department of Social Services;
- Ms Paula Zylstra, Department of Health;

- Ms Deborah Roberts, NDIA Mental Health Section;
- Ms Elspeth Jordan, NDIA Mental Health Section;
- Ms Aisling Blackmore, NDIA Mental Health Section;
- Ms Belinda Wilson, NDIA Mental Health Section;
- Ms Emma Coughlan, Mental Health Australia

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