Media release from the Minister - A decade of transformation for people with disability

1 July 2023

On this day ten years ago, 1 July, four trial sites across Australia opened their doors and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) started to deliver its work.

There are now almost 600,000 NDIS participants who have reported increased freedom and control over their lives to go out in their community, to work, make friends and spend their time as they choose.

Minister for the NDIS, the Hon. Bill Shorten, says being the Minister responsible for delivering this Scheme is one of the proudest moments of his career.

“The introduction of NDIS has seen a fundamental shift in the way we support people with disability,” Minister Shorten said.

“The NDIS is a life-changing piece of economic and social policy, and it is our duty to make sure it’s here for generations to come.

“Today’s anniversary is only possible because of the grassroots movement of the disability community and Every Australian Counts who galvanised thousands and called for the NDIS. Only a Labor Government was able to deliver change.

I truly believe that the NDIS is the best change politics has delivered in the 21st century.

“The Scheme has reached its 10th birthday so let’s make the saying, another year older, another year wiser, true – we need to use what we’ve learned to make the Scheme better.

“Together, we need to make sure the NDIS reflects our vision – an NDIS that works for all participants.

“Serving as the Minister for the NDIS is to serve where my passion beats. I know there is nothing I will ever do that is more important than securing the future of the Scheme.

“In the next ten years, I want us to be able to say, together, we made the Scheme better and who knows, by then we might be the blueprint for other countries wanting to change how they support their citizens with disability.”

For a timeline of the NDIS - Bringing a Vision to Life, please see History of the NDIS.

Quotes from participants and families and carers on 10 years of the NDIS

- John Domandl, 62, has retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic eye condition causing vision loss and lives in Newcastle, NSW.
    - John says the NDIS has been wonderful for him, particularly for his physical and mental health.

- “The NDIS has been wonderful for me, particularly for my physical and mental health. As a person with vision loss, it can be very isolating, but now we can actually have people come pick us up and take us out. It’s opened up a whole new world for me.”

- Adam McCoughtry, 12, has Down Syndrome. Please see below quotes from his mum Julie, from Drysdale, Victoria
  - “For Adam, the NDIS came in at the right time. He has had support at all the right stages, and it is that continuity of support that has made all the difference.”
  - “The early intervention and the continuity of support the NDIS provides, that whole life-long financial commitment to support Adam, and us as parents, has been priceless.
  - “We are forever grateful of the impact the NDIS has had and continues to have on enriching Adams’ life opportunities.”
- The Coyle Family, Bridget who has chromosomal deletion, Riley who is autistic. Please see below quotes from their Dad John from Hobart, Tasmania
  - John said it wasn’t until the NDIS came along life got better for his family and future projections became more positive.
  - “As a parent, it has been hard to learn to trust alternative sources of support, especially when your children are extremely vulnerable, but being part of the NDIS and having that choice and control has definitely helped to make those decisions easier, and I am certainly more confident about the future long-term care and support of my very vulnerable children.”

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Opening statement to JSC

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