27 March 2024

Today the Australian Government will introduce to Parliament changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) that will deliver for those who need it most and will contribute towards the NDIS once again being delivered in line with its original intent.

By tabling the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No. 1) Bill 2024 today, this Government is keeping its promise to legislate in the first half of 2024, as agreed at National Cabinet in December 2023.

The Bill will usher in a new era of NDIS reforms that ensure the Scheme can continue to provide life-changing outcomes for future generation of Australians with disability and to make sure every dollar in the Scheme gets to the participants for whom the Scheme was designed.

It will also bolster the powers of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission to protect participants from illegal and unethical conduct.

This legislation follows the jointly commissioned Independent Review of the NDIS (the Review), its final report and extensive consultations with states and territories at the Disability Reform Ministerial Council.

The Bill addresses priority recommendations from the Review and represents the first tranche of amendments to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 to improve participant experience.

Priority reform for Government in this Bill is focused on access, plans and budget settings, and quality and safety.

Minister for the NDIS Bill Shorten MP highlighted to participants and the disability sector that reforms would not happen overnight.

“Review recommendations will take years to implement. Today is the next step in the journey. For the past three months, I have travelled around Australia talking to people with disability and the sector. In just over 12 weeks, I hosted a national tour of 8 townhalls, where thousands of Australians heard, discussed and asked questions about the Review’s proposed reforms and what needs to happen next.” Minister Shorten said.

“There will be a significant piece of work to collaborate with people with disability the reforms and we are seeking the lived experience of the disability community as we continue to strengthen the Scheme together.

“We have released this bill to be transparent.

“The legislation will boost the NDIS watchdog’s ability to take compliance action, building on the comprehensive reforms we have already made to crack down on fraud and safeguard the

Scheme for participants.”

Many improvements cannot take effect until NDIS Rules, which are made with the states and territories, and legislative instruments are updated or made which will outline the detailed operation of the Scheme. Following the introduction of the Bill, the Government will engage in a co-design and consultation process with the disability community to design, make and update NDIS Rules and legislative instruments.

In December 2023, as part of an initial response to the NDIS Review, National Cabinet agreed to introduce legislation in the first half of 2024, with rule changes phased in following consultation.

This Bill is a significant step towards implementing the agreement of National Cabinet to return the NDIS to its original intent and create a thriving ecosystem of disability supports across Australia.

Minister Shorten said this legislation builds on the $130 million the Australian Government has invested this year to support co-design and consultation and there remains an enormous amount of work to do to implement the reforms together.

“This Bill being presented today is the next part of our journey towards an improved NDIS, Minister Shorten said.

“This Bill paves the way for future improvements that will put participants back at the heart of the NDIS and ensure every NDIS dollar is put towards those who the Scheme was originally intended to support.

“This legislation will also work towards Scheme sustainability and ensure the Scheme is equipped to support participants for generations to come.”

The Australian Government is committed to engaging and consulting with people with disability, their families, carers, representative organisations, service providers, unions, and the broader community and inform Government decision making on various reforms.

“These legislation and rule changes are the key to unlocking a trustworthy and sustainable NDIS and will enable the Government to drive change,” said Minister Shorten.

“This legislation and rule changes will be transformative to the lives of current and future NDIS participants, and the perspectives of people with disability must be centre stage as we deliver these reforms.

There has been continuous consultation with the disability community and this will continue as we pursue our reforms.

For more information on the bill, visit the NDIS reforms page . More information about the NDIS Review is available on the Department of Social Services website.

Subscribe for our updates about coming engagement opportunities at the disability and carers page .

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