

Pave the Way Newsletter

August 2016

A Fundamental Shift

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a significant social and economic reform and one that should make a hugely positive difference to people with disability and their families. It also represents a huge structural change for the whole disability sector. It is interesting times!

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An important aspect of the NDIS is that it is seeking to redress the disadvantage that many Australians living with disability experience and ensure that they will have the necessary support to participate more fully in social and economic life.

The Productivity Commission's report on Disability Care and Support in Australia concluded that the current disability system is unfair, fragmented, underfunded and inefficient. It has been a lottery of who has received funding and who hasn't. People have had very little flexibility, choice and control over the support they received.

Bruce Bonyhady, chairman of the NDIA, noted that in the current system many people with disabilities have been 'passive recipients of a mass-market, one-size-fits-all welfare approach'. This welfare model discouraged many people from participating in social and economic life. Many parents, who wanted or needed to work, couldn't, because they were required to provide full time care for a family member. Many people with disabilities couldn't work because they didn't have adequate support to pursue work or other meaningful participation in their communities.

This is set to change.

The NDIS represents a fundamental shift about the purpose of funding from a welfare model to one of entitlement and rights; it is an insurance model, not unlike Medicare. Every working Australian is paying into the scheme, so every Australian can draw from the scheme if needed. The insurance approach is central to the sustainability of the scheme.

In this new model the question is not only related to what support do you need to manage your disability, or to ensure carers are given a break, but what support do you also need to achieve your hopes and aspirations. Essentially the social and economic reform component is about INVESTING in people with disabilities by encouraging their social and economic participation as well as that of their families and carers. This is a key objective of the scheme and with this in mind it's important that people take full advantage of this opportunity.

- Julie van Oosten



1 July 2016 marked a historic day in Australian disability support as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was officially launched across the nation.

To celebrate the milestone, the Mamre community came together to share lunch and the excitement of this significant day in history.



The Emerging Revolution in Assistive Technology

A fundamental component of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is investment in innovation and research towards economically and socially viable outcomes. This is a time when people with disabilities and their families can genuinely have a voice in shaping their future. It is also a time when technology is developing exponentially. Assistive Technology solutions for people with disabilities are already evolving in previously unimagined ways and with funding for innovation this will continue.

“Technology will offer many varied ways to increase independence, study, training and employment opportunities, social inclusion and daily living solutions for people with disability, while simultaneously fulfilling the fundamental NDIS principle of significant social and economic benefit.”

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined by the World Health Organisation as “any device or system that allows individuals to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do or increases the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed”¹.

In 2015 the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) released an Assistive Technology strategy. The vision of this strategy is to shape an empowering, viable and stable format for NDIS participants. Scheme members will be informed about options and advances, have timely, funded access to allied health advice, choice in mainstream and individualised solutions and effective methods to purchase, as well as to trial and review, products. The NDIA recognises that this new marketplace will “work best when people with disabilities and their families are engaged in the innovation process and when market information is underpinned by real examples and lived experience”¹. Further information on what isn't included under Assistive Technology in the NDIS can be found on the NDIS website under [Assistive Technology](#).

NDIA Chairman Bruce Bonyhady, gave a speech in June this year entitled “[When Disability Becomes Normality: The Boundless Potential of Technology](#)”, in which he spoke of opportunity. The NDIS will invest \$1billion a year in technological supports and devices. The already established database will aggregate information to give greater understanding of society and disability. Technology will offer many varied ways to increase independence, study, training and employment opportunities, social inclusion and daily living solutions for people with disability, while simultaneously fulfilling the fundamental NDIS principle of significant social and economic benefit.

Wheelchairs that convert smoothly to a standing position were virtually unheard of a few short years ago; now many options are available. New Eyegaze software is allowing individuals who cannot click a mouse or tap a screen, to operate a computer, increasing independence and communication options in all life areas. 3D printing is replacing standardised aids with bespoke solutions to suit each unique need and capacity. Wherever there are functional difficulties, technological solutions are being researched offering people with disabilities genuine solutions to increase capacity and move towards their goals and vision for their own good life.

¹ NDIA, *Assistive Technology Strategy*, p. 4 - 12 (October 2015).

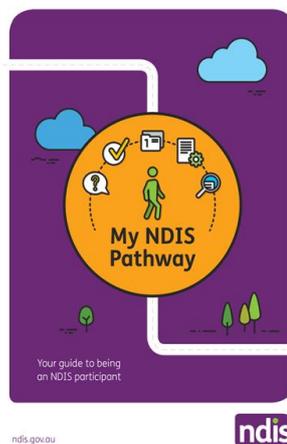
NDIS Resources

The NDIS is a new way of providing disability support in Australia and officially began on 1 July, 2016. It's been in trial for the past 3 years but has now started and will be rolled out across Australia until 2019. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has the responsibility to deliver and develop the new scheme. To help people understand and navigate the scheme, the NDIA has released a number of new resources. If you are viewing this newsletter electronically, simply click on the below images to view them.

My NDIS Pathway

This resource is a booklet and video that is a guide to being an NDIS participant and contains information about how the NDIS will work and whether you are eligible to participate. The booklet and video talk about:

- What is the NDIS?
- Can I access the NDIS?
- My first plan
- Starting my plan
- Reviewing my plan



Have you recently changed your details?

Send your updated contact information to pavetheway@pavetheway.org.au or phone our office on (07) 3291 5800 to ensure you are receiving all of our latest information and resources.

Getting Ready for the NDIS

The NDIA has also released a video called 'Getting ready for the NDIS'. This video outlines five simple steps that participants can take to prepare for the NDIS.



Reasonable and Necessary supports

This video explains what the NDIS defines as reasonable and necessary supports, and what it means by permanent and significant disability.



If you can't access the NDIS website to download a copy of 'My NDIS Pathway', you can either call our office on 1300 554 402 or call the NDIA on 1800 800 110 and ask to have one sent to you by mail.

The NDIS is an exciting step forward in disability support in Australia. You can find the roll out plan for Queensland and when it will be starting in your area at:

<http://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/our-sites/qld>

Pave the Way

Pave the Way is funded by the Department of Communities' (Disability Service) to deliver Participant Readiness activities. This aspect of Pave the Way's work will assist Queenslanders with disabilities, their families and carers in the North Coast, North Queensland and Far North Queensland regions to prepare for the roll out in July 2016 of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We will continue to assist families throughout Queensland to clarify their vision for their family member with a disability and to plan to implement that vision. We encourage planning which is vision driven, 'whole of life', developmental, outside service planning and which safeguards family members in the long-term.

Contact Us

Please contact us if you would like to be on our mailing list, or if you would like information about planning for the future and preparing for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

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www.pavetheway.org.au

Upcoming Events

Paving the Way to the NDIS

Samford	26 July
Pormona	17 August
Maleny	18 August
Cairns	TBC
Mareeba	TBC
Mossman	TBC
Yarrabah	TBC

Conversations

Samford	26 July
Pormona	17 August
Maleny	18 August
Cairns	TBC
Mareeba	TBC
Mossman	TBC
Yarrabah	TBC

For any information on our upcoming events, please visit our website events page:

<http://www.pavetheway.org.au/events>

Please note that sometimes the dates of events may change, due to unexpected circumstances. Event flyers are sent to those on our mailing list closer to time.