

Senate Select Committee on Autism – Inquiry into: the services, support and life outcomes for autistic people in Australia and the associated need for a National Autism Strategy.

Public Hearing

Monday, 27 July 2020, Time 3.00pm – 4.15pm

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1. Key Points

a. Access to the NDIS and eligibility

○



b. Utilisation

c. Early Childhood Early Intervention and Autism

d. What is the NDIA doing to improve understanding and awareness of Autism among planners, ECEI partners and LACs?

-

e. Mainstream Interface

Employment

Justice

Education

-

f. Supported Independent Living and Specialist Disability Accommodation

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g. Key Points from Public Submissions

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s47E(d) - certain operations of agencies





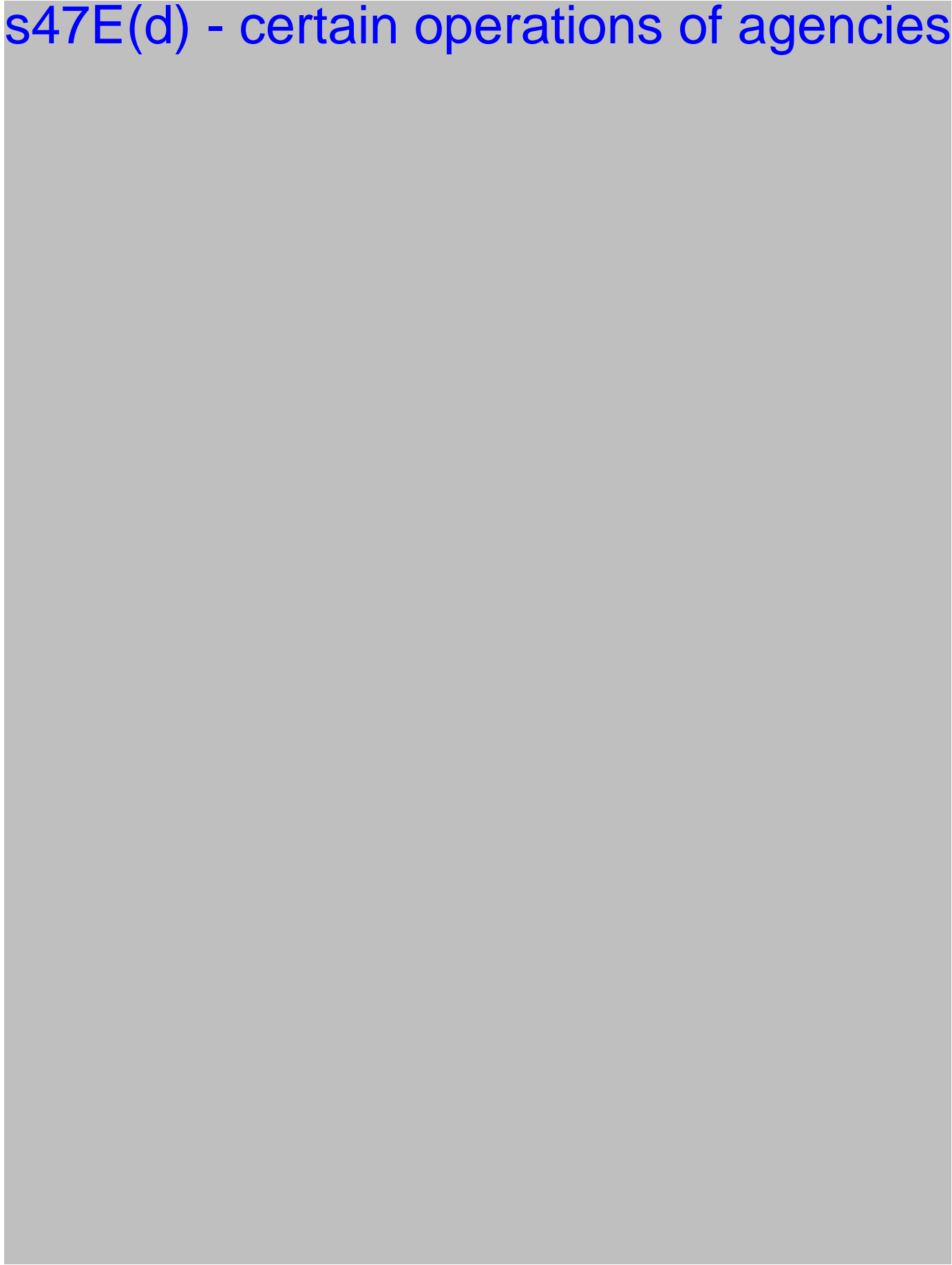
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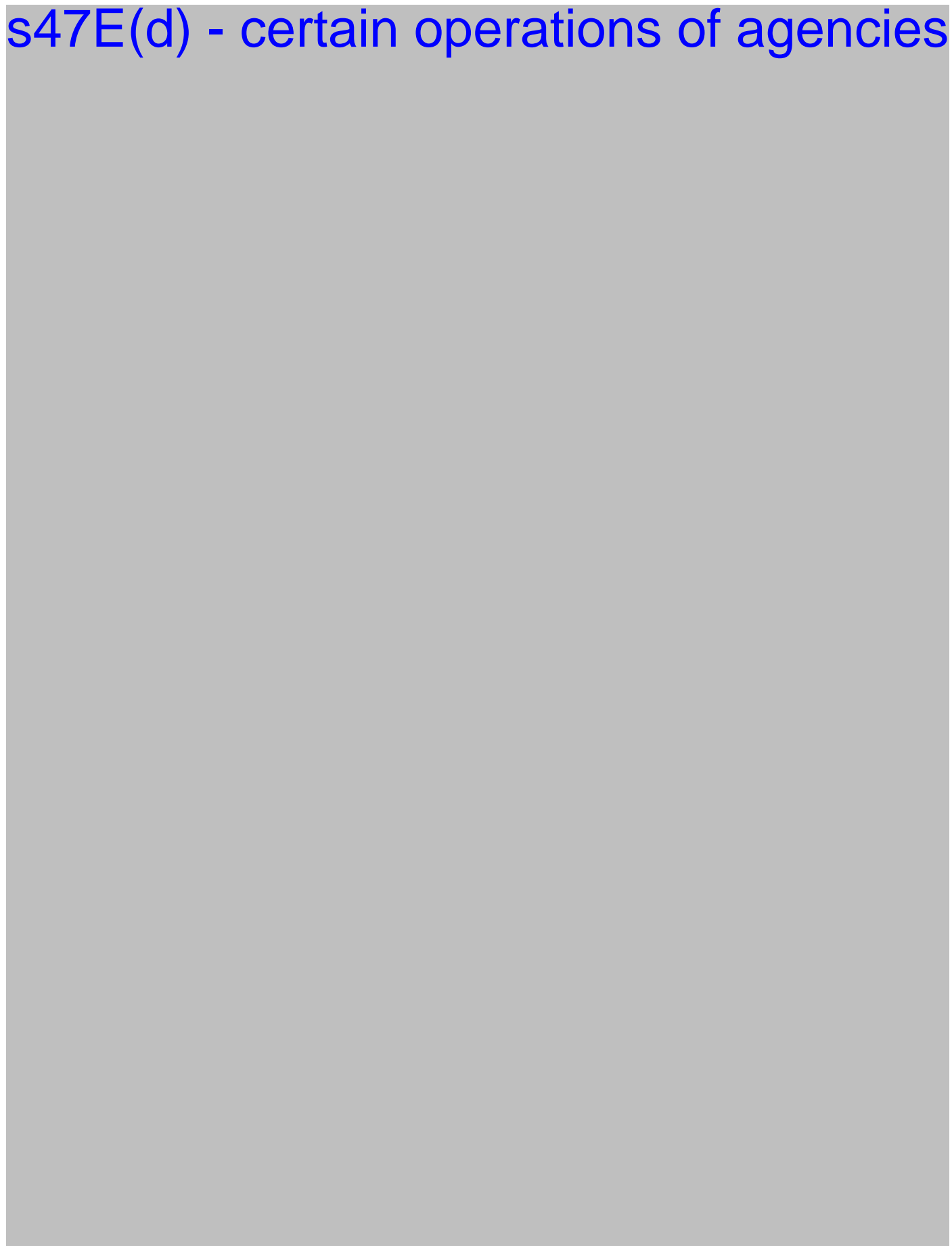


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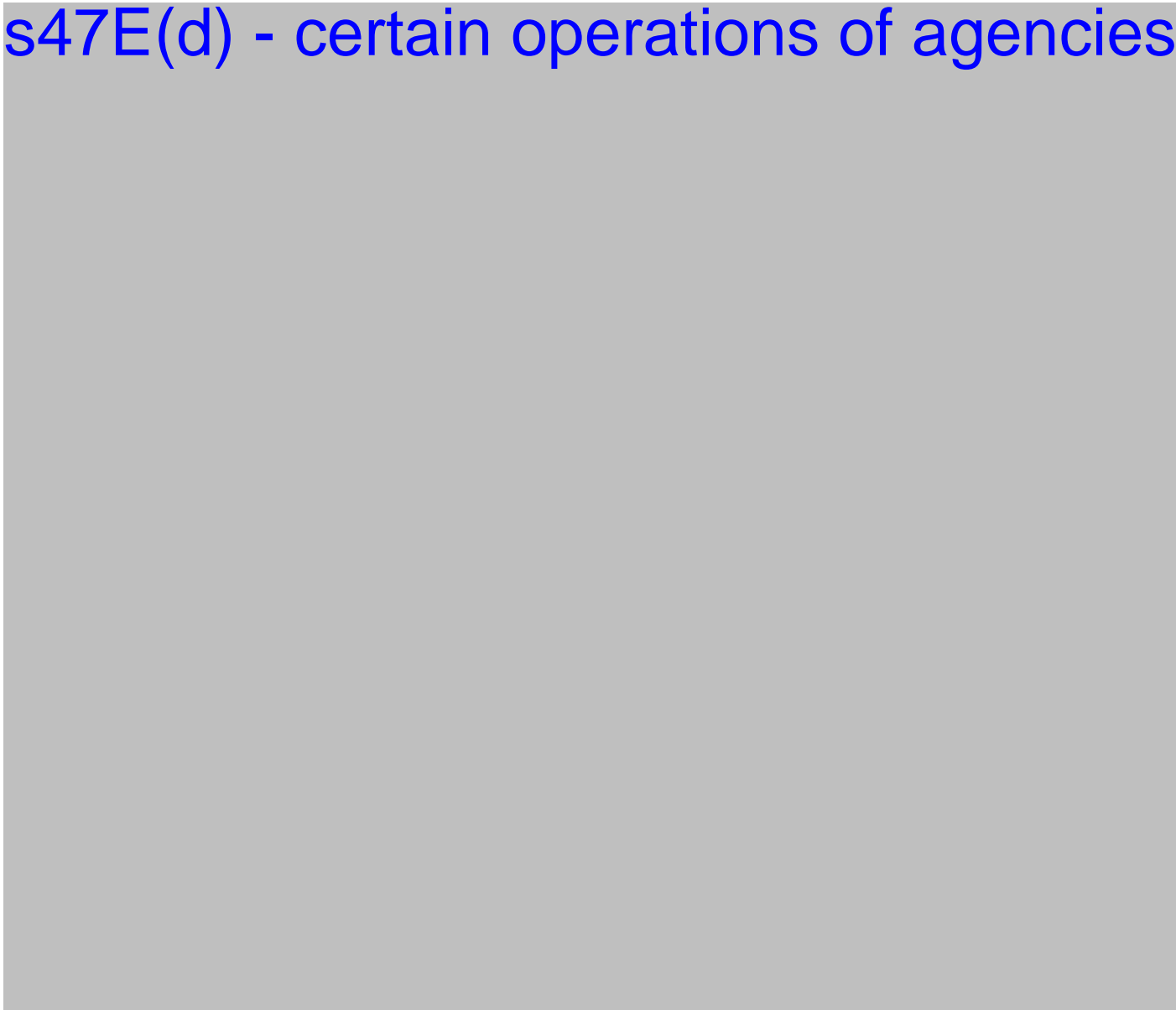


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4. Background

5. Senate Select Committee on Autism

Terms of Reference

- a. current approaches and barriers to consistent, timely and best practice autism diagnosis;
- b. the prevalence of autism in Australia;
- c. misdiagnosis and under representation of females in autism data, and gender bias in autism assessment and support services;
- d. international best practice with regards to diagnosis, support services and education, effectiveness, cost and required intensity;
- e. the demand for and adequacy of Commonwealth, state and local government services to meet the needs of autistic people at all life stages;
- f. the interaction between services provided by the Commonwealth, state and local governments, including:
 - i. health and mental health,
 - ii. education,
 - iii. employment,
 - iv. justice, and
 - v. housing;
- g. the social and economic cost of failing to provide adequate and appropriate services, including to support key life stage transitions of autistic people;
- h. the adequacy and efficacy of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for autistic people, including:
 - i. autism understanding within the NDIS,
 - ii. the utility of the Early Childhood Early Intervention Pathway for autistic children,
 - iii. the ability of the NDIS to support autistic people with complex needs, including those transitioning from prison settings, and
 - iii. the adequacy and appropriateness of supports to empower autistic people to participate in the NDIS planning process, and exercise self-determination through choice and control over their support services;
- i. the development of a National Autism Strategy and its interaction with the next phase of the National Disability Strategy;
- j. the adequacy of funding for research into autism;
- k. the social inclusion and participation of autistic people within the economy and community;
- l. the capacity and sustainability of advocacy, self-advocacy and self-determination supports for autistic people, including mechanisms to self-represent to government as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- m. any bill that relates to matters within the scope of this inquiry that is referred to this committee; and
- n. any other related matters.

Committee Members



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Attachment A –

Attachment B -



Australian Government

National Autism Strategy

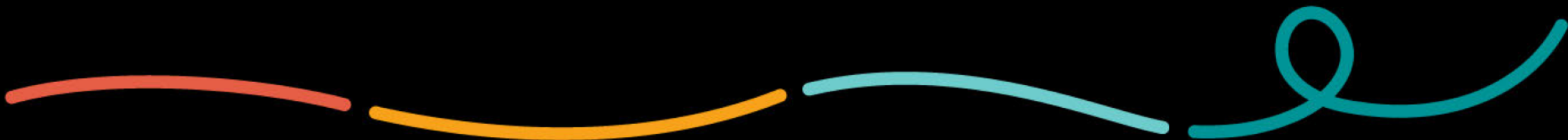


Help shape the change.

Engagement Update

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.

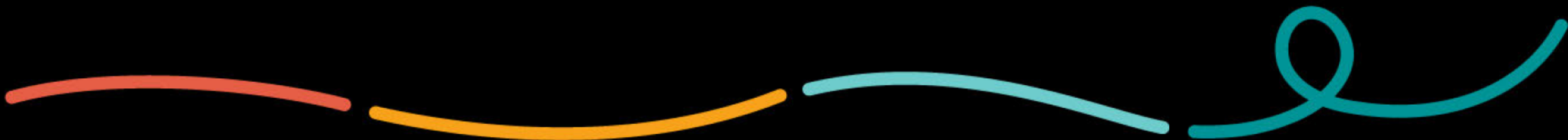


Agenda

1. How are we consulting with the Autistic Community?
2. Early Key Findings
3. Next Steps
4. How can you be involved?
5. Questions and Answers



How are we consulting with the Autistic Community?



Targeted Activities

- Autistic First Nations peoples
- Autistic people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Autistic women and girls
- Autistic people with additional and/or complex support needs
- Older Autistic people
- Autistic people with common co-occurring neurotypes
- Young Autistic people

National Public Consultation Activities

Discussion
Paper

Online Ideas
Wall

Online
Workshops

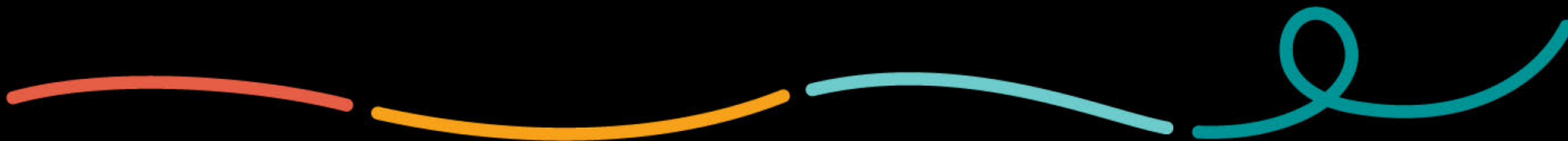
Public
Community
Consultations

Targeted
Focus Groups

Small
Stakeholder
Workshops

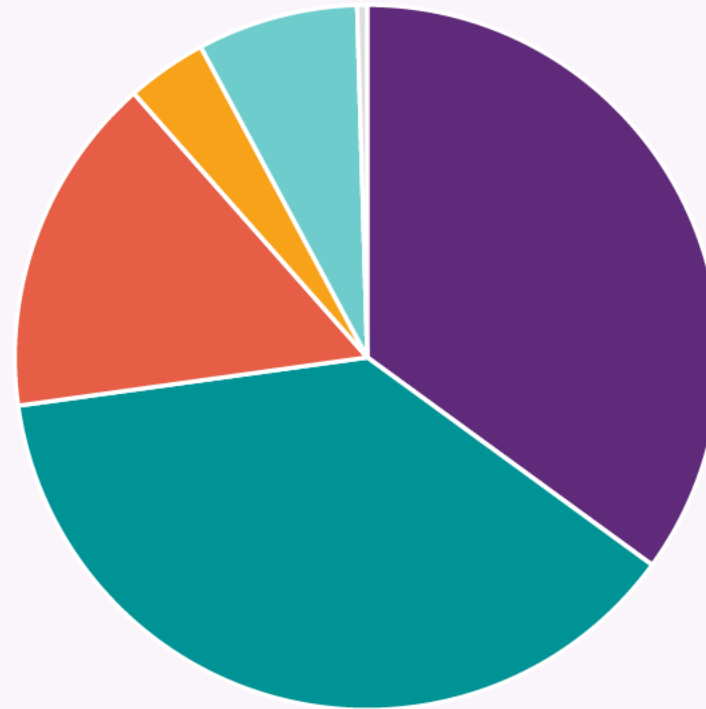
Early Key Findings

From guided questionnaire and submission responses
(as of 20 September 2023)



Who has had their say?

- I am an Autistic person
- I am a family member of an Autistic person
- I am an informal carer of an Autistic person
- I am completing this as a carer/trusted friend of someone with profound or high support needs
- I am looking into whether I might be Autistic
- I am looking into whether someone in my care might be Autistic



What does a National Autism Strategy need to achieve?

Raising awareness and understanding of Autism and the lived experience of Autistic people

Improved and more accessible services and supports for Autistic people

Improved diagnosis processes and outcomes for Autistic people

Improved support in workplaces and in the employment sector for Autistic people

Better outcomes in general which will improve the lives of Autistic people

Clear outcomes, implementation and accountability as a result of the strategy

How can the Strategy support the rights, autonomy and diversity of the Autistic community?

Person-centred and individualised approach.

Raising awareness and understanding among the wider community.

Improved educational outcomes for young Autistic people.

Better support and understanding among employers and in workplaces.

What needs to improve so Autistic people are better supported across their whole life?

Improved support and funding to ensure Autistic people are better supported across their whole life.

Improved access to support services.

Improvements to **housing, employment and financial outcomes** for Autistic people.

Better education and training of a range of professions who engage with and support people with disability.

Awareness of autism and inclusion of Autistic people in all aspects of society.

Processes and outcomes for diagnosis of autism.

What can be done to better support Autistic people from diverse population groups?

A person-centred and individualised approach to ensuring there is better support for autistic people.

Funding and support for Autistic people from different population groups.

Training and education for a wide range of services and workers who are supporting Autistic people.

Improved support from health services that is responsive to the specific needs of Autistic people from diverse population groups.

Better support for Autistic children within school settings

Awareness, education and public promotion of autism and the lived experience of diverse population groups.

What might help to improve people's understanding of Autism?

Awareness-raising and public education to improve people's understanding of Autism

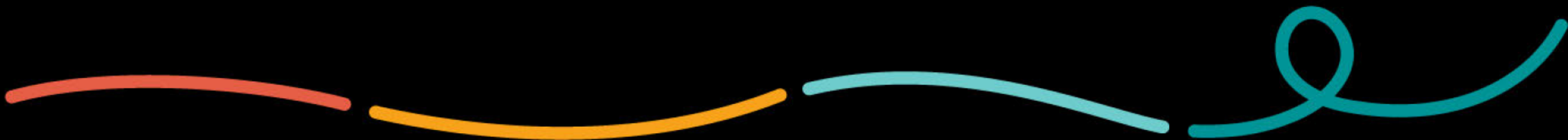
Improve understanding and of autism among **teachers, educators and health workers and services**

Show the diversity and individual experiences of Autistic people throughout **all awareness-raising activities** and initiatives

Improve awareness of autism in workplaces and among employers

Facilitate increased social and community inclusion for all Autistic people.

How can you be involved?



Have your say

Visit the [website](#) to find a range of ways you can get involved.

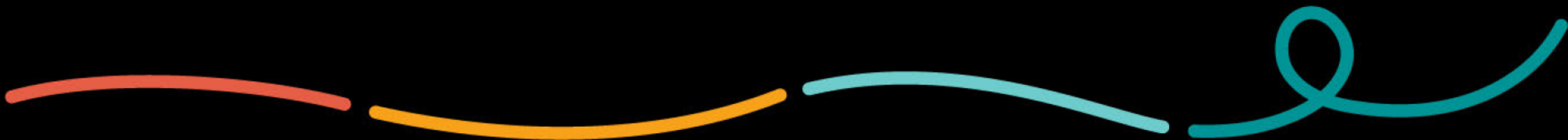
Within the consultation period, 4 September – 30 October 2023 you can:

- Contribute by providing a [submission](#)
- Share your experiences through an [online ideas wall](#)
- [Register](#) your interest to participate in a community consultation in person in one of 15 locations around Australia.
- [Register](#) to attend an online workshop.



Visit dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy to find out more.

Questions and Answers



Next Steps

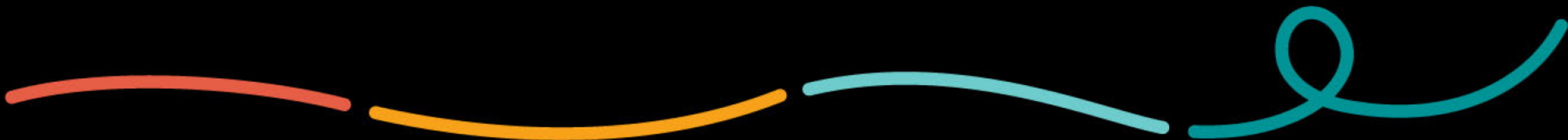


Thank you

To stay updated visit:
www.dss.gov.au/national-autism-strategy

or

Contact:
AutismPolicy@dss.gov.au.



Meeting agenda

Meeting	National Autism Strategy Oversight Council	Location	Department of Social Services, 71 Athllon Drive, Greenway ACT Please contact the secretariat if you require Microsoft Teams meeting details)
Date	Wednesday 16 August 2023	Time	10 am – 5.40 pm (AEST)
Co-chairs	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - personal privacy Note: s22(1)(a)(i) - info and s47F - personal lead in all agenda items	Minutes	To be advised

Legend:

- Terms of Reference (ToRs)
- National Autism Strategy (NAS)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)

Stakeholders:

Any one of or combined: NAS Oversight Council; DSS; Australian Government; Minister for Social Services; state and territory government(s), Autistic and Autism Community; Working Groups, National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People Working Group.

Pre-reading in order of priority to read as necessary for agenda and when sent (date, from who and title of email):

1. What to expect from the Oversight Council 16 August meeting guide (*to be sent by the NAS Secretariat to Oversight Council members in the updated meeting 16 August meeting invite on Friday 11 August*).

The following documents were sent to Oversight Council members by the NAS Secretariat in the updated 16 August meeting invite on 10 August 2023:

2. Social Inclusion; Economic Inclusion; and Diagnosis Supports and Services Working Groups matrix of membership – agenda item 6.
3. Oversight Council 3 July meeting minutes – agenda item 8.

Additional documents provided to support Agenda Item 2 and 3 CAN BE read for the meeting BUT DO NOT have to:

4. National Autism Strategy co-design process flowchart (draft) – agenda item 2 (*to be sent by the NAS Secretariat to Oversight Council members in the updated meeting 16 August meeting invite on Friday 11 August*).

The following documents were sent to Oversight Council members by the NAS Secretariat in the updated 16 August meeting invite on 10 August 2023:

5. Draft 2023–24 Oversight Council Work Program – agenda item 3.
6. Proposed 2023–24 Oversight Council meeting schedule – agenda item 3.

Additional documents provided to support Agenda Item 5 and 7 CAN BE read for the meeting BUT DO NOT have to

7. Summary of Autism CRC research and community engagement reports – agenda item 5.
8. Summary of disability research reports – agenda item 7.

Additional documents provided but NOT to be read for the meeting:

1. Oversight Council 3 July meeting action items status report – agenda item 8.

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of Oversight Council • Meeting frequency and format • Membership 	<p>Agenda item 1: Welcome and meeting overview</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Acknowledgement of Country b) Welcome and apologies c) Meeting overview 	10–10:15 am	15 minutes	<p>Co-chairs:</p> <p>s47f - personal privacy</p> <p>s47f - personal privacy</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	Members to note	Verbal	—

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
	<p>Agenda item 2: Setting the context for common understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Government’s driver that have resulted in a four-month timeframe being proposed for the development of a National Autism Strategy (NAS): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Federal Budget driver ii. What is needed as input to Federal Budget (May 2024) needed by end February 2024 regarding the NAS iii. What phases and period of time is the Federal Budget input to cover iv. Is there an extension of time to be proposed similar to National Health and Mental Health Roadmap? • What does a NAS look like from DSS’s perspective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Options DSS has considered? ○ How the various papers and advice provided to date, particularly regarding co-design and community engagement will be taken into consideration? Are there any gaps that DSS have identified? • Where the working groups have a role in the context of what was originally proposed. 	10:15–11:00am	45 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - persona	Members to discuss and action	Draft NAS co-design process flowchart	<p>Common understanding of drivers, impact, risks and advice from Oversight Council members</p> <p>Agreed approach of next steps</p>

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting frequency and format Timeframe of the Council Priorities and work program Phased development of the Strategy 	<p>Agenda item 3: NAS timeline and 2023 Oversight Council meeting schedule and Work Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAS timeline 2023 Oversight Council Work Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aligned to NAS development stages and Terms of Reference Council’s inputs and outputs, response timeframes, verification loops effort to enable timely and effective responses. 	11–11.40 am	40 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - persona	Members to discuss and endorse	Verbal and draft 2023 Meeting Schedule and Work Program sent to Council members on 10 August 2023	<p>A detailed timeline for Strategy development phases, including inputs and outputs of key stakeholders</p> <p>Endorse 2023–24 Oversight Council meeting schedule and work for development phase</p>
–	Morning tea break	11:40 am – 12 pm	20 minutes	–	–	–	–
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of the Council Phased development of the Strategy Priorities and work program 	<p>Agenda item 4: Presentation on the development of the New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A brief overview of autism policy and guideline work. Sharing insights and learnings on developing the guideline with a focus on the potential in developing the NAS. 	12–1 pm	60 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - persona s47F - personal privacy – Ministry of Disabled People, New Zealand Government	Members to note and discuss	Verbal	Identification of elements relevant to NAS process

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of the Council Phased development of the Strategy Priorities and work program 	<p>Agenda item 5: Autism CRC research and community engagement reports</p> <p>Discussion on the findings of the Autism CRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence-based environmental scan and findings from the community attitudes survey report autistic community insights and co-design report on the work undertaken by Autism CRC on insights and co-design of the approach to the national consultation. 	1– 1:40pm	40 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47E(d) - oirta [redacted]	Members to note and discuss	<p>Verbal and final Autism CRC research and community insights and co-design reports sent to Council members on 24 July 2023</p> <p>Summary of reports sent to Council members on 10 August 2023</p>	Assessment of incorporation into NAS process and timelines and approach to address any gaps
–	Lunch	1:40– 2:40pm	60 minutes	Note: Community (non-government) representatives access to breakout room for discussion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of the Council 	Continuation of any discussions, if needed	2:40–3 pm	20 minutes	s47F - personal privacy [redacted]	Members to discuss	Verbal	To raise any further issues

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of the Council • Phased development of the Strategy • Priorities and work program • Working groups 	<p>Agenda item 6: Working groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse the working group membership matrix with Council members' representation on their preferred working groups • Next steps to establish the three working groups: social inclusion; economic inclusion; and diagnosis, supports and services 	3–3:50pm	50 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - persona	Members to discuss and endorse	Verbal and working group membership matrix sent to Council members on 10 August 2023	<p>Clear working group membership, role and input within the NAS process and timeline</p> <p>Outline of communication</p> <p>Strategy required to manage community expectations</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phased development of the Strategy • Priorities and work program 	<p>Agenda item 7: Disability research project papers/report findings</p> <p>Discussion of disability representative organisation research papers to inform development of the Strategy and the national consultation process. These papers focus on the unique experiences and challenges faced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autistic First Nations people • autistic women and girls • autistic people who also have an intellectual disability, and lessons learnt for a National Autism Strategy. 	3:50–4:35 pm	45 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - persona	Members to discuss and note	<p>Verbal and research papers sent to Council members on 27 July 2023</p> <p>Summary of reports sent to Council members on 10 August 2023</p>	<p>Identification of Elements relevant to NAS and incorporation into NAS process and timelines</p>
–	Afternoon tea break	4:35–4:50 pm	15 minutes		–		

Aligned to Terms of Reference item	Agenda item	Time	Duration	Lead	Action	Verbal/paper	Purpose/ Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting frequency and format • Working with children and vulnerable people • National Autism Strategy Oversight Council Secretariat 	<p>Agenda item 8: Actions and outcomes of 3 July and 24 July meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from 3 July and 24 July meetings • Endorse 3 July meeting minutes • Progress of action items • Ratified Terms of Reference were sent to Council members on 27 July 2023 	4:50–5:10pm	20 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - personal	<p>Members to note and endorse</p> <p>Members to discuss</p>	Draft minutes and progress report on action items sent to Oversight Council members on 10 August 2023	—
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting frequency and format • Priorities and work program • Phased development of the Strategy • NAS Secretariat 	<p>Agenda item 9: Other business and meeting closure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members to raise other business – Review: reflections of lessons to date and any, adjustments that need to be made • Summary of actions and next meeting 	5:10–5:40 pm	30 minutes	s47F - personal privacy and s47F - personal	Members to note/raise other business	Verbal	—

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NDIS Sector Update – May 2024

Hi all,

As part of our focus on safeguarding the integrity of the NDIS, we are supporting participants to have access to high-quality, safe supports delivered by providers who are ethical, honest, and compliant with Australian laws.

The NDIA is working alongside the disability community and across government to ensure every dollar allocated to our participants reaches them.

NDIS Support Coordinators and Plan Managers play a significant role supporting participants to spend their plan appropriately and enable participants to use their supports in the most efficient and effective manner.

While most Support Coordinators and Plan Managers do the right thing, we know some do not.

We have written to all Support Coordinators and Plan Managers to remind them of their responsibilities and obligations. More information is provided below, at Safeguarding the integrity of the NDIS.

In March the Australian Government introduced proposed legislative changes to the NDIS Act into Parliament. The proposed legislation is the Government's first step, post the NDIS Review, to put in place the scaffolding needed to start making the NDIS stronger and to improve outcomes for NDIS participants.

More information about the proposed legislative changes is included in Minister Shorten's media release, found below, and is available on the [Department of Social Services website](#).

In other news, Minister Shorten recently announced the release of the [NDIS Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Strategy 2024 – 2028 \(the Strategy\) and Action Plan](#).

This work is part of our plan to strengthen the NDIS to better support people from all cultural and language backgrounds. The CALD Strategy and Action Plan have 6 key priorities and 28 actions to:

- support CALD communities to better access and use the NDIS
- improve NDIS plans to reflect the needs of CALD participants.

We co-designed the CALD Strategy and Action Plan with more than 800 people from CALD communities including participants, families and carers. We've also translated these resources in 17 languages, including Auslan. We will continue to work closely with the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) and an External Advisory Group (EAG) who represent 32 disability organisations from CALD communities to make sure we are meeting the needs of CALD communities – now, and into the future.

We will publish regular reports to track our progress.

Aaron

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OFFICIAL**Aaron Verlin**

General Manager, Co-design and Engagement
National Disability Insurance Agency
Email xxxxx.xxxxxx@xxxx.xxx.xx

Media releases from the Minister

- [Getting the NDIS back on track](#)
- [CALD community co-design new NDIS CALD Strategy](#)
- [Participant Employment Strategy 2024-2026](#)
- [Decorated cop to oversee NDIS watchdog](#)
- [Fair Price Taskforce to protect participants from being overcharged](#)
- [Tip-offs helping to catch NDIS fraudsters](#)
- [New multi-million dollar technology protecting the NDIS](#)

News from the NDIA

Safeguarding the integrity of the NDIS

We have written to all Support Coordinators and Plan Managers to remind them of their responsibilities and obligations.

The NDIS letter tells them they must:

- meet their record keeping, conflict-of-interest, and Commonwealth obligations, and
- not engage in practices which facilitate NDIS funds misuse.

We want participants to receive the best support possible and that every dollar we have goes towards delivering services that make a difference.

If you have concerns about the practices of other NDIS providers (including Plan Managers, health professionals or Support Coordinators) or participants we encourage you to:

- complete a [NDIA Fraud Reporting Form | NDIS](#), or
- make a complaint to the [NDIS Commission](#).

NDIS Reform for Outcomes co-design update

Over the last quarter, co-design working groups have focused on shorter term initiatives that the NDIA can implement ahead of the Government's response to the NDIS Review and Disability Royal Commission recommendations for broader reforms.

A quick snapshot across the groups follows.

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The **Better Planning** working group has:

- Reviewed resources and information available to participants to help them manage their plans.
- Continued to work and provide advice on ways to improve the check-in process.
- Discussed ways the NDIA and our partners can better support participants to manage their plan funding within their approved plan budget and duration.

The **Integrity** working group has:

- Collaborated with the Fraud Fusion Taskforce on the stories, words and information to be used in a communications campaign targeting providers.
- Developed examples of good and bad provider behaviour against a 'fraud scale'.
- Provided feedback on principles used in the Ethics and Human Oversight Framework.
- Created a preliminary fraud reporting pathway to establish a secure and fair procedure for individuals wishing to report instances of fraud.
- At the March 2024 meeting, the Fraud Working Group members agreed to change the name of their initiative to 'Integrity'.

The **Workforce Capability** working group has:

- Created a skills matrix and list of key mindsets for frontline staff, to improve the experience NDIS participants and people with disability have with NDIA team members.
- Provided feedback on planner recruitment, including looking at position description and improvements the NDIA can make to better attract people with disability to work at the Agency.
- Develop recommendations for improvement to the Participant Satisfaction Survey.
- Explored the topic of 'person centred practice' with the staff and developed 'mindsets' for staff while working with participants and their families.

The **Plan Flexibility** working group has:

- Considered and drafted improvements to eligibility reassessment processes including updates to guidelines, participant letters and information and resources available when transition from the Scheme.
- Drafted and reviewed a new early intervention eligibility requirements fact sheet.
- Reviewed new parent resources on selecting a safe provider.
- Held initial discussions regarding Early Intervention definition, principles and outcomes.

The **Home and Living** working group has:

- Reviewed the current home and living decision process to streamline and improve communications for participants, including development of new checklist, minimum evidence required and factsheets.
- Made recommendations to improve the home and living information on the NDIS website.

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The **Evidence Based Supports** working group met in May to discuss preferred provider arrangements and improvements to support coordination materials, and will meet again in July to discuss proposed plan management improvements.

Public updates on co-design progress are published to the [NDIS website](#).

In April an evaluation of co-design processes commenced. The objective of this evaluation project is to facilitate learning and improvement, acknowledging that the NDIA is in its early stages of co-design implementation and there is an opportunity to develop an effective approach based on stakeholder feedback.

In May the NDIA is also host two workshops with members from across all working groups to discuss how the Agency can better support participants to identify and manage provider conflict of interests, and ways we can improve the check-in process.

This quarter the NDIA also started consulting with Disability Representative and Carer Organisations, the Independent Advisory Council and Participant Reference Group on the next phase of co-design – including priority topics and approach to how we deliver co-design, consultation and engagement activities.

PACE Update

We are now 6 months into the gradual rollout of our new computer system and processes across Australia.

Recently, the number of people contacting the NDIA has been higher than usual. This means it is taking us longer than normal to get back to everyone.

Our NDIA staff and NDIS partners are working hard to prioritise applicant and participant requests – starting with the most urgent cases.

People waiting for us to assess their application to join the NDIS can talk to their NDIS partner about community and mainstream services available to them.

Participants who have asked for a change to their plan, can use their core support budget of their existing plan flexibly to access the required disability related supports.

Applicants and participants who are waiting to hear from us can find more information on our [support budgets webpage](#).

Supporting applicants and participants to transition to the new system

Applicants, participants and their supporters can find information and resources about the next step in their NDIS journey on our [dedicated website](#). Resources include:

- A [participant journey map](#) to help people understand the changes our new computer system and processes will bring.
- A range of [factsheets](#) to support the new participant journey and process.
- Videos for participants to learn more about how to use [the my NDIS participant portal](#).

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Information sessions are also being run on how we are improving the NDIS experience. For more details on session locations and topics, please [visit our events page](#).

Ongoing system improvements

We continue to make changes and improvements to our new system and our new ways of working, based on feedback from participants, the disability community, providers and our staff and partners.

In early May, we introduced a system fix so participants and nominees of participants who have recently turned 18 can use the my NDIS participant portal to update their bank account details.

We are also starting to call families of participants nearing their 18th birthday. This helps us to make sure our new system's information is up to date when the participant turns 18.

By making continued improvements like these, we are making sure the system works as expected and that we are delivering an improved experience for participants and everyone who interacts with the NDIS.

News from the disability community**Draft National Autism Strategy**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is working with the Autistic and autism community to create a National Autism Strategy that will support Autistic people across Australia to live the lives they want and deserve.

DSS has worked alongside the National Autism Strategy Oversight Council to develop the [Draft National Autism Strategy](#). The Oversight Council is made up of 10 Autistic members and also includes six (6) government representatives from across social services, education, health, NDIA, Prime Minister and Cabinet and employment.

Consultation on the draft Strategy is now open and people can provide feedback at [DSS engagement website](#).

To read more about the development of the Nation Autism Strategy, please visit [Developing the National Autism Strategy](#).

OFFICIAL

SPEAKER:

Can everyone hear me? OK, we might get started. Alright, I think that is everyone, so firstly I should introduce myself. Aaron Verlin, I am the general manager of codesign and engagement in the NDIA and I am thrilled to meet everyone here in person and also we have got quite a few virtually on Teams meetings.

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. We are in Melbourne and I pay my respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

I would like to extend that to any Aboriginal or Torres straight Islander people in the room or online today. I would also like to pay my respects to any people with disability who are the reason why the NDIS was built.

We have quite a long list of housekeeping so apologies. As you can understand, this is a hybrid meeting where we have a mixture of people in the room and also on Teams. For those on the Teams call, thank you for taking down video and being on mute to make sure we continue to have stability with our IT system.

We have got a lot of NDIS folk here that will be monitoring the Teams chat, and make sure we give you the appropriate time to be able to ask questions or add to the discussion. In the room we have got quite confronting microphones, but I will move on from that. But what we are doing is we have a hands up arrangement. I know that seems quite useful but it is around pointing a camera so people on the Teams call know who is talking, so if you have a question or want to add, simply raise your hand and we will be able to direct the discussion and camera to you.

The next thing to talk about, as I said because it is a hybrid, we want to give equal space to those in the room but also to those on the Teams call, so as I said, we will monitor that. For those in the room, toilets are outside towards the lift, and male and female are on either side of the lift. In the case of an emergency, I am going to follow our CEO Rebecca because she will know where to go. There are five stairs at the end of the room.

If at any stage anyone has any questions, queries, concerns, please join our NDIS folk, ask them questions. We are here to help you to ensure this is a successful meeting.

A couple of apologies, David Murray from Deaf Blind Australia, Jane from Carers Australia, Bronwyn Walker from younger people in nursing homes alliance, and Carolyn from mental health Australia. I would like to welcome Ben from Deaf, blind Australia, Courtney, Young nursing home alliance and Ingrid for representing their organisations.

We have captioning and interpreters so please be mindful of the speed in which we are talking. Often we get racing with a passionate conversation, so let's please be respectful to both of those means.

Again, I just want to touch on the actions from the previous meeting. We have just a did the

action log and I want to make sure everyone had an opportunity to review those actions and if there were any questions or concerns coming from those. No? Fantastic.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking, do we want to do a quick run through of some of the actions that have been actioned just since our last meeting. For the benefit of the group, I think we had a couple of conversations out of session that mightâ€¦

SPEAKER:

Great, absolutely fine. Happy to do that. Let's do the action log to see those that have been closed. One of them was around sharing an update on the agency's current work on local area is, clearly I understand there has been a number of conversations in between, since the last DRCO forum about LACs where it is going, clearly the work of the NDIS review will also have a clear view around the future role of our LACs.

The next one was to book a deep dive into the Royal Commission findings after 29 September. We did not hold that one because the Department of Social Services held two forums over two sessions and it was more appropriate than DSS lead those discussions around the recommendations.

NDIA to share the quarterly report data, provided out of session. NDIA to provide clarifying response as to why the decline in agency managed plans. A response was provided in November clearly as part of this pre-material briefing.

Rebecca to meet with a four and Inclusion Australia around quarterly report results. David Gifford is attending a briefing today but he has also met with a couple of DRCO representatives and provided a briefing.

NDIA to raise issues regarding accessible information and resources, including easy read with the NDIS commission and other Australian government departments. Rebecca has spoken with her counterparts, so that has closed.

Corri to meet with Skye to discuss the report disappointment and discrimination. CYDA are surveys of learning experiences of children and people with learning disability 2022 and 22 and three. Given a thumbs up, fantastic, that was close.

NDIA to share the outcome of the August disability ministers meeting of DRCO's. I understand there was no communique from the August disability meeting but the link to the most recent November meeting has been provided with the prereading.

Australian autism alliance and (unknown term) to meet to discuss the approach to connecting the proposed DRCO forum model and other work being undertaken by the sector representatives including the reform for outcomes.

SPEAKER:

They both provided feedback.

SPEAKER:

They both provided feedback for those who didn't hear that. That has been closed. NDIA to

redraft the forum proposal based on the feedback from the input, that has been provided and circulated for pre-reading. Carrie to consult with deaf blind Australia on the CALD strategy. Consultation occurred in August with ongoing engagement with Deaf Blind Australia.

Corri to speak with Robin Williams about the eye Policy update, she met with Robbie and Darryl on 11 October. NDIA to schedule an out of session DRCO meeting about Pace and that occurred on nine October. And I am on the last page, Corri to make NDIS access and identity processes accessible with Inclusion Australia and Blind Citizens Australia and Corri met with those organisations on 26 September. NDIA to circulateâ€¦ sorry, Catherine?

SPEAKER:

I was just wondering what (inaudible)

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I have got met 26 September.

SPEAKER:

Has David got a representative here or as Deaf Blind Australia not represented? I am not aware of that meeting happening. There have been a flurry of meetings but I don't think that has been happening.

SPEAKER:

Jen speaking the first, can everyone turn their nametags around, and also say your name who is speaking because it is very hard for the interpreters and myself to follow along.

SPEAKER:

The last two to circulate how disabilities are circulated in the Pace system, response was provided in August with a follow-up email. In the last one is the end JA to hold a NDIA at pace demonstration and that occurred on five September. I will take those actions as read.

SPEAKER:

Catherine speaking. Darryl, did the other meeting happen about the identityâ€¦ isn't that the meetingâ€¦ no, it is not.

SPEAKER:

(inaudible)

SPEAKER:

I thought there was another one. Sorry. It doesn't sayâ€¦ yes, that meeting did not happen but it also doesn't includeâ€¦ sorry. It is supposed to includeâ€¦ there was an action that was for Deafblind Australia.

SPEAKER:

(inaudible)

SPEAKER:

Sorry.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Ben.

SPEAKER:

Ben speaking, just to qualify action items is going to be found sadly lacking.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking, can I suggest that we will do two things? It will keep that open because it has not happened but we will also go back and confirm what the meeting was as well, and we might just circulate it to the group because there might also be other DRCO's who want to attend that conversation. So, just make sure.

SPEAKER:

That conversation was particularly about the fact that the NDIA is sharpening up its, in terms of planning reviews, the identity documents that people need, and that is articulately problematic for people who do not have licenses, so that is the particular groups, people in disability, other groups, that subgroup.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking. Can we just do a bit of logistics because I think it is going to make everyone's day easier. I am looking to the crew to my left. I think that you guys need somebody to raise their hands if possible when you are speaking so they can turn the mic on. That is what is causing us issues at the moment. So apologies, just to clarify how today is working.

SPEAKER:

So, it is a different mic system. It used to be a mic system.

SPEAKER:

Eileen speaking. I wouldn't presume that only certain groups would represent people who do not have there are many with psychosocial disability or disabilities that could be represented by a variety of (inaudible) that don't have that identification. Or because there are other reasons. I think it would be good if that was circulated and everyone could give feedback from their representative perspective. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Happy to capture that as part of the action. Thank you. Alright, so, let's move to the agenda for today. Clearly we have got a jam-packed agenda as always. Firstly, we will hear from the NDIA CEO, Rebecca Falkingham, then we will have Corri that will talk about the DRCO forum operating model for 2024. And talk about our codesign approach we will take following the release of the NDIS review.

After lunch, we have two external presentations that will be done virtually. The first one is from Dave Gifford which is really talking about NDIS data, and I know for a long period of time DRCO presented its have been asking about how do I more easily access data so it is great we have an outcome, but we will also hear from the (unknown term). Then we have Matt who is our Chief Counsel who will discuss our dispute resolution, what is the status and what other next steps from an agency perspective which I know is of interest to DRCO members. Then we will aim to finish at 3:30 PM today.

I did want to raise on an earlier version of the agenda we had an item on Auslan interpreters

and comms guide issues with Penelope McKay. That has been removed. It is more appropriate to bring DSS into the conversation, so we will arrange that separate to this conversation. We are certainly actioning that agenda item.

If people are comfortable with that layout for the day and everyone online can hear me at OK, I am rapped that we have our CEO here today.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking for some I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we are meeting today and their continuing connection to land sea and community. For us that is Wurundjeri people but I also pay my respects to all those various lands for people online but I pay my respects to elders past present and emergent. I would like to extend that to any Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander people with us today.

Good morning, everyone. I do feel a bit like it is open mic night. I feel a fair bit of tension in the room given how much is ahead of us. So I will start with a joke because my nine-year-old last night was speaking to a whole range of (unknown term) people in the community. I hope she got the same last that she got. What you call a lazy kangaroo? A pouch potato. I just wanted to lighten the mood a little bit because we have a lot to get through today.

For me the most important thing we can take from today is how we are going to work together over the next 12 months. I have a long presentation that I am trying to keep short because to me the most important thing you can walk away from today is how this group is going to work to implement the reforms both of the DRC and the NDIS review, and I think it is important to put on the table the anxiety that I know many people in this room feel, I feel, in relation to the snippets of information coming out that is not in the context of understanding or how we will approach the review. My commitment to everyone in this room is we are going to take our time and absolutely have conversations on every aspect of the review and how we would approach the implementation of those recommendations.

It is fair to say that that will take us quite a while and that is OK, and that is the conversation that I had with the Minister every single day, that at our 10 year mark we don't get another go now in terms of getting the scheme rightful stop it is really important to me that everyone feels that we are operating in a really safe environment, speak openly about concerns, anxiety and how we are going to go about together implementing the reviews recommendations which I know is hard because no one has seen those yet. But my plan today is to go through my presentation. I was going to share some updates in relation to our approach to the disability royal commission recommendations and NDIS review recommendations. The reform for outcomes and co-design. Sorry?

SPEAKER:

You are too fast for the captioner.

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I will slow down. Sorry, Carolyn you have your hand up?

SPEAKER:

Good morning, everyone. It is Carolyn from women with disabilities Australia, the CEO and I apologise Rebecca. I put my hand up before you started but I was just hoping that somewhere

in your presentation this morning you would be able to address some of the stuff that is circulating on social media this morning in relation to the joint standing committee report to say that the NDIA has been operating unlawfully in relation to primary and secondary diagnoses. So, which I understand was the key recommendation from that report that came out recently.

I was just wondering if you would be able to, or if not now, come back to it? The other thing I wanted to quickly raise in relation to what was spoken about before in relation to identity documents, we are also seeing very major issues for people with disability and elderly people as well in relation to tele-health appointments with GPs, which Medicare now requires the person has to be emailed a document to sign to say that they agree to be able to pay for the telehealth appointments, as a lot of people with disability don't necessarily have email, so that is another issue that is becoming a major issue.

Sorry, I didn't know when to put my hand up, but I have never followed rules, sorry!

SPEAKER:

That's OK. You don't have to follow rules. Let's take a line on the identity issue. I haven't seen the social media today. I have read the report so I will try to come back to that over the course of today. That is my commitment.

So, as I said there are four things that I am going to cover. The first is the Agency approach to the DRC and the NDIS recommendations. The reform for outcomes and a codesign update. An update on the Children's Taskforce. And on PACE. So, just article with DRC and the NDIS review recommendations.

In our previous meetings we have focused on the Disability Royal Commission report's explication of people with disability. Since the disability we have been reviewing recommendations and is gathering further details on its impact. As we continue to review the recommendations, the board and I recently met the DRC Commissioner to discuss the key outcomes and reflections on the Royal commission process. Also since the DRC report was tabled, the NDIS review was presented to disability reform, meeting a fortnight ago.

The ministers heard from the co-chairs Bruce Bonyhady and Lisa Paul for top the ministers at the meeting committed that people with disability will continue to be at the heart of the review into the future. With a final report with the review now in both federal and state governments, they will work closely and collaborate with participants and support the community once those outcomes are released.

We envisage the report will be released on the day of national cabinet which is the first week of December or the day after, but we will make sure that everyone else is on those distribution lists and we get it to everyone as quickly as possible. We are deeply committed, we have been waiting 12 months, to ensure that the reports they need to live a fulfilling life. One with dignity and respect and safety. It is also important to focus on the vision of the future which has been described by people with disability to the Royal Commission.

The report leased to a future where people with disability live free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Human rights are protected and individuals are (inaudible). The agency continues its commitment to improving outcomes

SPEAKER:

Can you speak up? It makes hearing very difficult.

SPEAKER:

The agency has also as we develop our approach to both reports I will keep you updated on our progress. So, now an update on the reform for outcomes and on the codesign.

Earlier this year, as you are all aware, the Minister for the NDIS outlines a range of reforms to deliver better outcomes for people with disability and help secure the sustainability of the scheme. To support the delivery of the scheme, 720 million over four years

Going back to Carolyn

's earlier point, a lot of that investment was actually predicated on what we knew was coming out of that joint Parliamentary committee in relation to improvements across the agency in the scheme. To deliver and design these reforms, the agency has established a program called reforms for outcomes. A key feature is that we are working in partnership with disability community. We know there is a shared desire to see that NDIS succeed in line with disability communities original vision. Many of the ideas on how to improve the scheme has come from the disability community.

Since the budget announcement in May we have been working closely with the DRCO members to design our codesign approach. We have annexed all of you in this room (inaudible). Seeking agreement on how we would work together, designing the right approach, establishing working groups and agreed ways of working, setting up work plans. In the final stage which is informed, consult and coproduce, identify solutions, test, refine and deliver.

Within the reform for outcome program, the agency is leading the design and implementation of six key (inaudible). The initiative aims to invest in workforce capacity and capability to support greater consistency and equity in planning decisions and improved training tools for partners. It aims to provide additional supports for participants to manage their plan within budget, longer term plans that are flexible and sustainable and our focus on sustaining high-quality plans that lead to outcomes for participants. Flexibility aims to implementation lifetime approach to planning entering plans are transparent and flexible.

The initiative aims to (inaudible) and ensure they are in line with the best interests of the participants and families. The Evidence-based supports initiative aims to reach evidence base. Finally, our fraud and non-compliance initiative, is focused on better detecting, detecting and responding on fraud and compliance.

The Agency's Children's Taskforce continues to build on the early childhood approach, supporting young children and families in an integrated ecosystem. The past 18 months has been a significant change across the agencies in preparation for these reforms. Among the challenges are the scheme predictions currently indicate that more than half of the increase in numbers between June 2022 and June 2027 will be for children with autism and developmental delay. Despite substantial investment, children aged zero to 14, improvements and outcomes are not reflected in budget levels which continue to increase year-on-year. We have seen lower rates of children transitioning into the community than originally anticipated.

Many children and their families including CALD and lower socio-economic groups are not being supported appropriately. This month marks three years since we started the work of improving the way we support children and families under the early childhood early intervention approach. We have made significant improvements, some of the latest being

SPEAKER:
(Inaudible)

SPEAKER:
Inaudible ... Entering the new computer system Pace continues and considers the need for children and families and supports early childhood partners to assist families find the support they need to support outcomes. Working closely with other federal departments, DSS to better support families of children with developmental delay or disability, ongoing research to better understand the effectiveness of early supports, developing and piloting an NDIA early childhood specialised planner workforce in Tasmania, which has had significant positive feedback from families and staff. Working with remote communities to develop clear information to help children and families access the support that they need.

The reset we believe has provided a strong foundation for further but developing the early childhood approach under the NDIS. Moving down to our Pace rollout. We had commenced a month ago the national rollout and improved ways of working. Pace is now live across Australia thanks to dedication and expertise of many teams including staff, partners and providers who all work together to achieve this milestone. The rollout of this new computer system has been monumental in its undertaking.

We now have 9716 participants and plans within the new system. We expect the rollout to take up to 18 months and as we move into the cutover period, staff, partners and providers will be working across our old and new systems. I would like to recognise and thank our staff and partners for the important work every one has done to help us meet this significant milestone.

I just want to finish by reiterating my commitment and the agency's commitment to working together to achieve the goal of making ongoing improvements to the scheme. As always, thank you for taking the time today to talk to us about all aspects on the scheme and agency. We look forward to working with this group to obtain important input. I am very happy to take any questions as we conclude this session.

SPEAKER:
Alright, just before â€œ Aaron speaking â€œ just if we go to the floor, just wanted comment on the chat along the way. Which we will follow-up because we can't see the chat on the screen. It was a question from Bob Buckley about, a Pace question. The Pace team promised the DRCO forum that the new system would record more disability types, not just primary and secondary disability type, despite our questions a four cannot see how this is being implement it. What is going on? I would just call that out that we would get an answer to that and come back to that today. I just wanted to capture that one.

In the room I will go to Ben first. Ben?

SPEAKER:
Anchor, it is Ben from Deafblind Australia for that I just had a question about the Royal

commission responses. It is great we had a chat. Given the degree of dissent amongst commissioners across the various areas of the recommendations, is there anything in the works to meet with former commissioners, perhaps those that have opposing views? Just curious.

SPEAKER:

It is a very good question but stopped we do have those plans for the New Year to both individually meet with commissioners but also to meet with them as a group. After four and half years, many of them were keen to get on aeroplanes and have holidays. But we have, and our board in particular is keen to have a joint meeting with them and their panel thought of it is a really good question.

SPEAKER:

Arrente speaking, I think we have got Robbie next.

SPEAKER:

Hi bus stop Rebecca, I thought it was really helpful would be talked about, given the uncertainties of these times, it is important in this space (inaudible). By contrast, your (unknown term) felt cautious. I hope this space feels safe so I am keen to ask you given what you have just talked about, what are you most wrestlers about? What is causing the sleeplessness? I didn't get enough insight.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking. I could have a copout answer and tell you I am an insomniac but I won't do that. What keeps me up at night is the system wide architecture changes because I think that when you are a reviewer or Royal Commission, you have the luxury of the thing at issue in silos or as kinds of individual themes or issues, but I do not have that luxury. I have to look at what the systemwide changes will do, not just to participants but the workforce in terms of their ability to absorb and respond to change. It has been through significant change as you know over many years. So, the starting point for me is I think we have absolutely the right foundations to get on with the work of both the DRC and the review, but I think convincing government of the need to take time to get it right is what I do fret about a little bit, that obviously why we wanted to do the reform for outcomes work is to get government onto a trajectory in relation to financial sustainability to buy us time to do what I see as much more complex reform changes in a slower way. And to do them properly within codesign.

As I said, I don't get a chance to make any mistakes when it comes to getting the Scheme settings right this time around. Obviously my old colleagues in the States and, Territories will have a lot to say over the coming months, and blocking some of that white noise that comes from the Commonwealth state relations debate is very important. We are focused on the heads down so to speak and getting on with all the work that we have been wanting to do for 12 months while the Review has been playing out, and some of those things were obviously in the joint Parliamentary enquiry, but there is nowhere were things I would have changed to a month ago, but it was really important that we allowed the Review to do its work. To go back to where we started, my biggest concern is the amount of change and timeframe we have to do it in.

SPEAKER:

Alright, Aaron speaking. I think we have got Eileen and Jen. I will go in that order and then continue.

SPEAKER:

Eileen speaking. I am curious, and you may not have an answer yet, Rebecca, with the PACE roll out, I am aware that from our working group there are terminology changes that we are recommending and already using. And the NDIS team that, our working group has been dealing with has agreed to the change and terminology, but Pace still has the other terminology. I am wondering what mechanisms are in to ensure the systems are across terminology because language makes a difference.

SPEAKER:

It is Corri speaking. Thank you for the question. Are you referring to assistive technology in particular?

SPEAKER:

Sorry, this is saying you are inaudible.

SPEAKER:

Are you referring to assistive technology particularly?

SPEAKER:

No.

SPEAKER:

I think we can follow up on the specific terminology.

SPEAKER:

An example would be using provider list and set of referred provider, nuanced things like that.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. I can follow up specifically on those changes in terminology. It is probably worth, and particularly ahead of the next couple of years, worth just talking about it takes some time for changes to flow through the Agency and the systems. And that is particularly because, particularly with Pace, it involves technical changes even when it is just to terminology, so we need to sequence that, and then there are also a lot of other materials on the intranet, printed materials, all those things, that we need to flow through, so there is a lag time between making a decision to change and seeing those changes flow through.

It is worth us taking some time to do that to avoid having a loss of confusing contradictory terms being used at the same time. So, if there is a lag time in change, but I will take it as an action, Eileen, to follow-up on the specific changes that you are talking about in the working group. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking, I think will go to Jen and then Caroline.

SPEAKER:

Jen speaking, two things. The interpreters have advised they can't hear over the construction noise. Secondly, one of the comments you said, Rebecca was that you had identified that there is not enough people transitioning into mainstream support in the community and the budget is increasing. I may have missed something before or after that. I think the disability cohort would

have their own theories on why we are not seeing that transition, but what is the NGO doing about that “ what are the plans, your theory, the next steps because for example within the deaf community that I represent, there is a lot of reasons why they would not be participating in mainstream community things. It is very clever stop but for the NDIA to make a decision that could affect them adversely.

SPEAKER:

Jen speaking. I apologise for the room. We will see during the room if we can do anything about that. But I provided that statistic not with any view whether that is good or bad but just to point out the similarity between what the productivity commission thought would happen versus what we are seeing today because in my experience, speaking to so many participants every day, it varies from state to state, from disability to disability, depending what part of the mainstream sector you are engaging with and interfacing with.

Our starting point is better understanding, not just through data but through talking to people directly about their experience. There is always often anxiety about just relying on the mainstream, not knowing whether things will change from day today. If you were to exit the NDIS and rely upon those supports, whether they would still be there in a months time. So we are trying to understand everything that sits behind that. I apologise that I am so sorry “ I apologise if it came across in that way. My intention was to call out that there are things that we see within the scheme where governments have been briefed historically on what they thought would happen, that have not eventuated. It is our job to actually brief and advise government on whether there are improvements that could be made that are not just mainstream in terms of the navigation of those pathways. One of the things in terms of the reviews thinking is having the agency play a much stronger role in navigating some of those mainstream supports with participants, so that people are not being bounced across systems because I think that is a big part of what is playing out as well. Often, participants can't have that initial conversation with the right part of the mainstream and I have a strong view that the public service should be the glue between the two systems.

That is a lot of the changes we are looking at in relation to planning practice, in terms of what's good proper case management looks like in the future. Participants who would like us to do that.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. Jen speaking. Just briefly, a brief comment, apologies if it may sound abstract but it is always interesting to see how people without disabilities always want to mainstream us with people with disability into the mainstream. People with disability including deaf, we need the barriers removed so we can make the choice to go into the mainstream setting when we want whenever we want rather than being told we have to be part of the world and being forced into mainstream. It is just another aspect of life and I want to make that comment. It is also interesting to see the expectation from the government as you said that you highlighted, their perspective to see that the NDIS would provide things once the barriers are removed but then we have to immediately transition across “ very interesting because in 10 years we know how slowly everything is moving “ that is just comment I wanted to make. If we can take this opportunity, we will just change seats. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Just as we will allow that swapping, apologies for that. As Rebecca said we will work in the break to make sure we can reduce that noise. I think will go to Carolyn next and then

I am going to read a question from Alan on the chat and then Jenny after that.

SPEAKER:

Carolyn speaking. From people with disability Australia. A couple of points, Rebecca. Just with regard to the LACs and partners, I just want to state that the discussions that we are having in reforms for outcomes groups, the one that I have been in anyway, seem to sort of conflate the activities of those partners, so it is hard to understand sometimes how those partners support people who don't have plans and people who do have plans. I guess I would like to put that there that while that is not clear or managed in any significant way, the goal is to support people who don't have the plan might be included because the contract is focused in on NDIS participants with their individual plan. What I think would happen is if they are working with people without plans, maybe that is a buildup towards supporting people who do have plans.

I think there needs to be some consideration about that. I will just raise one other point, and I know this is not particularly 100% in your remit but I want to take the ecosystem approach that I think we are all going to be in very soon, if not already.

Recently we had a presentation on (unknown term) reforms, closing the loophole built. They talked about the platform providers and deactivation of those providers when an issue arose. One of the things that we raised in that meeting that was of concern is if a provider, or an individual was deactivated from one of the platforms, they did not seem to be any system for linking the other platforms so that that person could be removed from other platforms and prevented from joining another platform.

Because we are in a situation around abuse and neglect, we really want to make sure that the ecosystem is working so that anything new that comes into our remit joins up with everything else so there is a protective safeguard. Given you are having conversations with the minister regularly, that that might be something that I wanted you to be aware of. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

It is Catherine from Inclusion Australia speaking. I just wanted to add to that that we have concerns around safeguarding in general and what decision-making might look like in that scenario as well. There is some talk about an amendment around the impact of a person on the, in terms of the platforming, deactivation, the deactivation. It needs to take into consideration the impact on a person with disability and we have two concerns in tension with each other. One is the impact on the person with disability could be used as an excuse to not deactivate, an appendectomy used as a reason not to. We are concerned about that. We are also concerned about the impact on a person with disability, so what Carolyn just said platform to platform but it is platform to other supports more generally as well.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking. Probably got the expert sitting to my left on our LACs but I will give it my best effort. As we'll know, the LAC role is completely inconsistent across the country, and in some parts of the country you do see better work with individuals who don't yet have a plan or will have never have a plan. The work of the review will go to a lot of detail in relation to their view about the future work. The LACs and how they relate back into the agency. We see it has critical to, on a whole range of fronts to reform the.. that we are changing the role of LACs at the moment anyway. So, the workaround, and I went to this point earlier, around what I have anxiety about, which is how much workforce change there will be in the next 12 to 18 months.

We are going to have to manage it really carefully. Some of the existing LACs will actually make better planners inside the agency and vice versa. We are going to manage that really carefully. Also, from a participant perspective, resetting the roles of the LACs at the front-end of the scheme will be critical to our recommissioning in the middle of next year, we have two recommissioning all of those services which will look very different to what they do today. We look forward to talking to you about that.

We also have a view that potentially you would have more specialisation around supporting people who don't have a plan. So that would be a specific area of reform coming out of the next three weeks.

In relation to the really important issue of the deactivation, this is an issue for us not just in relation to platform providers, I started in the agency when it comes to fraud how often there is reluctance to have zero tolerance around immediate changes or actions you would take in and the other scenario or that participants would get the support they needed. So we are very live in our conversations with the review in relation to Scott McNaughton has a team that when we become aware of these issues, immediately wrapped around almost like the provider of last resort in some of the conversations we are having around being able to altogether developing the case team quickly. What their transition pathways looks like in those instances as well. Again, I have to be circumspect but there are a lot of recommendations in the review that go to this issue around platform providers more generally deactivation and what the commission should have into the future, what laws need to change to give them the power to do what they would like to do in terms of their thinking. So we will be talking more about that in the next months.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. I'm going to be quite disciplined with our time. Apologies. I will be the one question from Alan, if that is OK, I will just read from the chat.

"Are there any structures in place with other Commonwealth agencies, other the NDS as, to prepare for work on the DRC or the NDIS Review?"

So I am assuming Rebecca you're OK to answer that one.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. Alan it's a good question. At this point, I think you are aware that DSS is setting up a task force located in DSS, and that is currently focused on the Disability Royal Commission. And that draws in across Commonwealth government agency work. The other important forum for both pieces of work is disability reform ministers. And I know you have seen the communiqué, because obviously it is not just the Commonwealth's, and I know you have seen the communiqué from the last meeting but a big focus of that forward work program is both the NDIS Review and the Disability Royal Commission, and explicitly how they relate to each other as well.

So, the primary focus of the whole of Commonwealth government works it's in DSS in the task force, but that has another of other agencies involved and governance bodies around it as well.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. We have one last question. Jenny I will hand over to you for the last question.

SPEAKER:

Maybe not a question, more a comment. We have been talking, Jen had talked about inclusion and mainstream and what that looks like, and you had commented about we believe this, and we see this, and then we talked about LACs as wellâ€¦ so I'm going to put them all together and say, just as an obvious thing, can we put that on a parking bay. Because we have talked about later what the things are that the group could work on, what are those kinds of things. I am going to say the obvious but mainstream inclusions, segregation, what really disability community are thinking about, seems to have missed the mark with some of those recommendations. And some of the solutions the majority of us, the majority of us have already written solutions and what needs to happen, it is about getting the group mobilised so we can be inputting in because, this is what I'm thinking, people know to make mainstream work, but no-one wants to go down a path of trying more of the same. And the lens needs to change. And a lot of the people who are driving things, next levels of government, drink more of the same. I think all of us, from experience, would be thinking we know what would have not only maximum impact, but what needs to happen in a sequential way to get that success. Because often there is some grassroot changes and root building and off you go, dotted I know I'm stating the obvious.

And you mention fraud, which I wasn't originally going to comment on. For fraud, as part of that discussion, will quality and safeguards be changing some of that remit about building up supply to meet demand without that market stewardship. Because we all comment about, we need the market stewardship because we are actually creating more trauma and it is hard to catch that, the smaller fraud that keeps growing because we know people are thinking it is the high end of town that NDIA and the Safeguard commission will focus on. And everything else is just, in order of magnitude, those lower thingsâ€¦ it doesn't help when we have (inaudible) practices or qualifications behind it. So, again I am stating the obvious.

SPEAKER:

Thanks. Rebecca speaking I think it is a good idea. Let's pocket as part of the work plan discussion, that entire piece around LACs and mainstream is because I think that will be a significant part of the review's recommendations.

In relation to the quality and safeguards commission, we not only have significant recommendations for change in the Disability Royal Commission, but equally significant change will be outlined in the NDIS Review. So it would be good again to think about that as part of the work program, and how it is a unique opportunity to reset. Both of these things.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Thank you to the questions from the floor, and also from the chat. Also thank you Rebecca for the openness, not just from your opening remarks, but also commentary in that session.

We will now move to the next agenda item, which I will ask Corey to lead. That is on the CEO Forum operating model discussion. I won't interrupt Corey. We will then go straight into the NDIS Review and our proposed codesign approach as well. I will just like, we will have Shannon Reez join a general manager of communications will join the second part, and also provide some update around communication elements.

So, I will hand over to Corrie.

SPEAKER:

Thanks. Corri speaking. So, I will just provide a bit of background and context for the proposed operating model that we have circulated today. And then I will leave the floor for discussion among the group. We raise this first at the beginning of the year, and really in response to concerns that have been expressed over a period of time and that we are very sympathetic to, about the way in which this group is able to work and particularly about the importance of this group being able to share the agenda setting and focus of discussions.

We are very conscious that it feels, at times, I would like to see it has felt, but I think that would be going too far, that we, and when I say we I mean the Agency, set up an agenda of all of the things that we want to tell you and then we'll go home at the end of that. That is not the way we would like to work going forward. I am very clear it is not the way you would like to work going forward, and I respect that. I think, as Rebecca said, we are already in a period of significant change and reform, and the opportunity for the agency and each of the organisations represented around this table to work on the key priorities facing the disability community going forward, is really, is absolutely critical to its success.

So, I think from a Agency perspective, we see getting the settings right on this forum as being a really, really important part of that. The previous conversations the group has had about this also reflected on how much content there is, how much is going on, and to try to cram everything into the relatively large group discussion on a quarterly basis is ambitious, if not silly.

So, we had also previously discussed the importance of this forum being a clearinghouse for understanding the intersection of issues, identifying emerging priorities and tasking work outside of sessions in order to continue to progress and explore in detail some of the really critical questions for the agency and the scheme, and for our communities.

So, the pathway to hear is that we had initially discussed a proposal that had been developed some time ago within the DRCO group, and in I think it was February, we talked about that perhaps not reflecting the shared approach we want to take but that we wanted to build on those ideas.

We had a further conversation about this when we had our last meeting online in possibly August, and at that meeting we showed a draft and we undertook as an action in that conversation to do some further work, particularly with Robbie and with Jeff and Jenny, who had some particular suggestions about how we could seek to improve their proposal.

So, since August we have done that. And thank you Robbie and Jenny and Jeff for your engagement and input to that. The version that we have circulated for discussion with the papers today is the product of that. Not just the most recent effort, but that cumulative effort from those conversations.

My sense with all terms of reference always, is that everyone would be well served by maintaining a degree of self reflection and open-mindedness about how you can continue to improve operations. So, I would propose that it is really important that we have a grounding document for this group and that we have articulated that the way we intend to work, but very open to continuing to refine that as we move forward, as sensible and constructive groups

should.

Probably a couple of things, just to provide an overview to stop the conversation, really the intention that we have talked about is re-establishing this forum as a central hub to oversee and drive the codesign and collaboration between the National Disability Insurance Agency and disability community representatives.

We have proposed a secretariat function to give weight to the partnership. And so that would be reflected in cochairing arrangements but would also be reflected in having support for the DRCO group to be enabled, not reliant for administration on the National Disability Insurance Agency.

We have proposed, and we talked about this in August as well, DANA is performing that secretary at function on the basis that DANA doesn't represent a particular disability community. But also that Dana is providing that function for DSS in relation to the peaks. So there was an opportunity for some complimentary work there perhaps. The role of that secretariat function we propose would be about supporting the disability representative organisations to develop and maintain the partnership, if you like, so that that is not falling to individuals - particularly CEOs of agencies - that are significantly under resourced and constraint pressure.

We are also proposing continuing with... sorry, the secretariat function would also support drafting papers, collating perspectives from the DRCOs in continuing to iterate that work, so providing that kind of administrative coordination and support. And particularly noting that there is a diversity of sizes of organisation in the room. So particularly for smaller organisations making sure that they are able to participate as well.

We are proposing continuing with quarterly forums where all of the group comes together. And enabling working groups, workshops, work to happen in between on some of those key issues in that clearinghouse model.

Probably the other thing I quickly want callout is about membership of the DRCO forum. Historically think there is been a broad principle, but I don't think that has been particularly well-defined. So I think making sure there is a clear process confirming membership of the forum is really important for transparency to the broader disability community, going forward. So the first time we would suggest a process for that. It is important.

Finally, the proposed terms of reference suggests some key principles for the way in which we work. So, importantly, leadership by the DRCO so it is not an NDIA forum. Good governance, so we are progressing work collectively, not just the agency and not just a single organisation. That we are committed to collaboration. To working to identify issues of common interest and concern, and then collaborate through working groups and other mechanisms.

Policy development. So to develop policy decisions on key issues of concern in the sector in relation to the agency and the scheme, to ensure that we still have an ongoing forum and platform for information sharing so that we can make sure there is consistent information being shared between this group of people, and with a focus on broad reach - so wanting to make sure this isn't a closed door room where everything that happens in the room stays in the room. But we use this forum for a platform to reaching far beyond and to your memberships and the much broader disability community as well.

Likewise that same commitment echoed by the agency, in that this is not a form for talking to Rebecca alone, or to my group or division, or the engagement team alone. You can always talk to the engagement team, but this is really a forum to the whole agency. The whole Agency is able to engage here.

I should just... the other thing before I opened to the group that I wanted to touch on is, over the period of time that this group has been thinking about the future operating model for this forum, we in the Agency have also been thinking about our internal operating model and the approach that we take. Particularly to questions of change in the organisation. And really with a view to doing two things.

The first is complementing this conversation, particularly around early problem identification and issue exploration and making sure that that is both not immediately jumping to a solution, but also not keeping the problem entirely in the Agency, in the bowels of our dungeons in Richmond or Geelong. But more that there is actually a real opportunity to test and explore some of those issues and concerns and inputs, specifically and including from the sector. And that that forms part of our thinking about how the agency does change. That is really important.

The second really big focus of our thinking about how the agency works and about change, is also about the translation of policy into real and tangible front line practice. I think we have all experienced that can be patchy. Eileen, you were talking before about what we say, where we land in a codesign or policy group is sometimes really hard to see how that has manifested practically on the ground. That that has been a really big focus of thinking for us, is about how do we implement change, and again to do that in partnership and with transparency.

I just thought that was useful contact for this conversation. That this conversation for us is not just or discreetly about the work of this forum, but more that the work of this forum is also a key driver of change that is able to be continued and implemented through the Agency.

I will leave it there.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Before we go to the floor, Jeff has his hand up online. So, it is appropriate we go to Jeff first, and then we will stop the floor and the questions. So, Geoff I will hand over to you.

SPEAKER:

Thanks so much. My apologies that I cannot be there in person. I have been meeting with members of government in Tasmania and am currently coming to you from Hobart and will take my opportunities to pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. This meeting is the only thing standing between me and being on a short period of leave.

I just wanted to start the conversation because obviously I think I then want to step back because of DANA's role in this, but I obviously support that we in conjunction with other organisations suggest changesâ€¦ some time back actually.

The only comment I would make over and above what I said before, is partly to reiterate what Rebecca was saying around the need to work together and collaboratively, but even more

broadly. We are at a moment in time. This is a generational opportunity. That is a more positive aspect of this.. or a general challenge is perhaps the more realistic view of what is ahead of us. And I do think that is a sector we need to be more active in a space. We need to develop and bring forward policy work and change at the forum in a way that has already been identified in past discussions about this and by Corri today. So a much more active forum, a lot more work that is done outside of this framework, a lot more proactive engagement. I think it is really exciting. But we are going to really need to get our skates on to engage in all of these issues. And I do think it is absolutely crucial that we change it up and that we do adopt this new approach, based on these principles where people with disability are much more involved and at the centre of these changes.

So, I will just leave it there for the moment. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Thank you Jeff. We will go to Carolyn on the call next.

SPEAKER:

Hello, it's Carolyn from Women with Disabilities Australia. I like the idea of watching Aaron work the room, whatever that looks like.

(Laughter)

I wanted to quickly say something about the quarterly meetings. I want to stick up a bit for the people who come to these meetings online, because when we are talking about accessibility and reasonable adjustments and accommodations, it is very difficult to spend an entire day looking at a screen. And usually evidence shows that people tend to lose concentration after about one hour on these types of meetings.

So, I just wanted to raise that point and ask that it be... I know people can step out at any time if they need to, but then there is a risk that you miss information. So, I just hope that moving forward there is more opportunities for breaks, or short breaks, because it is very difficult for us online. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Great feedback, Carolyn. We will make sure we factor that into not just the quarterly meetings but also our working group sessions, so we will capture that. Thank you.

Let's go to Catherine and then Darryl in the room.

SPEAKER:

Hi Catherine from Inclusion Australia speaking. I have two questions. One is, this is now presented as the top place for codesign. What are you thinking around the existing structures, such as the RFO implementation group and the (unknown term). That is one question. Are we going to talk about the terms of reference separately? This is the terms of reference?

It is just to say specificallyâ€¦ I am guilty of not having been able to identify the workload, at 4.4 where it worked about changing existing membership would be reviewed by certain organisations, and you talked about transparency of membership, is to say that I think probably in addition there needs to be some sort of high-level transparency of what that membership

requirements should be.

Because there is a diversity of organisations in terms of governance models that maybe needs to be considered.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. It's Corri speaking. Our really good points. I agree with you about transparency. Without wanting to get bogged down, but for the purposes of a transparency, I think it is also valuable maybe for that group subject to agree with this approach that we articulate that that group, a focus of our work is actually articulating that. Because they think it is really important and has not been done historically.

In relation to codesign and all of its friends, collaborators and coproducers, rather than specifically codesign, the thinking is that this does not in any way supplant the other roles of either CAG or IAG. As a clearinghouse, the intention is that this group, are air traffic control for that work rather than having the total lens of work on codesign.

Codesign advisory group and the ISC, the Implementation Steering Committee for reform, as having separate and distinct purposes as well. Codesign advisory group provides a really important advisory function on how we do codesign. And I think that is a really important input to the role of this group as a clearinghouse for what we are working on together.

As you know, Catherine, codesign advisory group is pausing to think about what that looks like going forward. Particularly in light of Reform for Outcomes. But I guess that there is absolutely, this does not presuppose an outcome to that discussion. There would comfortably and importantly be an ongoing role for advice about how we codesigned together.

Implementation Steering Committee again has a discrete function, which I think is complimentary to this approach, which is really about considering the intersection of each of the Reform for Outcomes work streams and programs, and how those are all working together.

So, I would see that continuing as a oversight function for those working groups, but recognising that this group will consider a much broader scope of work and areas that are not only in those reform program and work streams.

SPEAKER:

Catherine speaking. Can I ask for follow-up clarification. One of the discussions in the CAG has been the inability for the sector to have those conversations without the Agency. So am I correct in saying that part of this design is that DANA will do that, so this is designed to resolve the issue of the resources, in particular, but also the mechanism by which the sector will have its own conversations before we come back to you. So, those.. that role will not be taken by any organisation in the context of the Implementation Steering Committee or the CAG but it will be done here.

SPEAKER:

Yes. I would not propose to duplicate that function.

SPEAKER:

I'm just wanting to clarify.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. I will probably only allow two or three more questions for time. Let's go to Daryl and then Eileen, Skye and then Alan will finish up.

Daryl

SPEAKER:

Daryl speaking from Down syndrome Australia. I completely agree with the comments made around membership. It just give some extra transparency. And I think taking a step back, this is exactly what we need to be doing is getting some of this structure in place. I think with the secretariat, it will be important to have the distinction between Dana's role as secretariat as opposed to Dana's role as member. In terms of reference there is some good detail in the covering paper. And whether the terms of reference or somewhere else is the best place to do this. There needs to be better articulation of how much of this outer section of the working group is part of the core contract we have versus at what level does it then have to look at how it is funded differently, or whatever.

I think just at the last part of the terms of reference, where it talks about viewing the terms of reference, there is (inaudible) about reviewing whether the group is working. The success of the group, the success of the members within the group, and reflecting on that in a 12 monthly basis as well. Great terms of reference, but if you are not actually delivering, the work is not happening, that needs to be just make an effective process.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking.

SPEAKER:

Darryl, when you do that can you copy all of us in.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. That was Catherine just asking for some comments back on the terms of reference. We will make sure that that is shared with everyone so they can see those.

Eileen, we will go to you next. But I am conscious of as a comment

SPEAKER:

Eileen speaking. I have a couple of questions about the terms of reference. You don't have to answer them now, but let me know when that can happen.

I think it would strengthen the terms of reference, I don't see it here or in any of the other papers, and at the original meeting in June or July, I asked for this, and actual working definition of what is meant by codesign. The word codesign is the word that is being used, and it means a lot of different things in a lot of different sectors.

I think it will be essential that if you use acronyms, that all of the acronyms are defined 1st. I don't find a description for what DANA stands for, I can only assume it stands for one of the groups that is in the list, but I had to figure that out. So, maybe when you are listing the membership groups, you put the acronym next to them in brackets, and then if you are using it

in the rest of the talkingâ€¦

I am curious why, in 4.4, those particular groups are the ones to make the decisions if this is a collaborative thing. So, we do need a clear membership criteria. Is it just the organisations that are only funded to do the reform work? Or just funded for this? Or that or the other? Et cetera.

Under.. am I going to fast? Under 4.6, not all organisations operate without model. Not all organisations have a CEO or deputy CEO. I agree, yes at the senior leadership level, it would strengthen the definition to say.. at the end where it says... I don't see why it says 'invited at the request of the chair'. That's not clear. It should be 'at the request of the organisation'. I know the organisation I am in felt that our executive team did not have this expertise to bring - I am selected at this stage, but it could be someone else in the future, to be present during this. And the continuity sake, decided that should be part of the processes.

So, I think to be fair to the whole of the disability sector and NDIS sector, et cetera, we have to use terminology here that allows for them to recognise that they send the right person for this.

In some organisations, if the CEO was too busy, it might be the person with the role in that organisation, great big organisation, the role that deals with the kind of things that we are dealing with and brings that ability. So, I just encourage you to maybe think a bit more around 4.6.

The other area I may have missed the trees for the forest here, but although it says we're going to review the terms of reference, there is nothing in here to show how we are going to evaluate. So, unless evaluation is a continuous process for improvement, it is like when my kids are in the carâ€¦'are we there yet?' How do you know? So, I think we have to somehow think about how we know if we are functioning according to this, and if according to this is working well.

Those are my questions. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Eileen. It's Corri speaking. Thank you for all of that feedback. It was very very helpful. I have noted it all down, but I might respond to a couple of these things, if that is helpful.

Couple of links to flag - you are absolutely right about the definition of codesign. I think what we have done in the terms of reference is link to the document, which I can't remember the name of, that sets out theâ€¦ the one that CAG did comment that sets out the NDIA's approach to codesign and collaboration and engagement... and I think, Eileen, the reason for that, rather than including a specific definition, is that I think one of the things the Agency would like to do is update the definition. That is admitting that we squibbed it. And one of the pieces of work I would like us to do over the next year as we are evaluating your point, that both the historic codesign work and the developmental evaluation of reform outcomes, is actually update that document and definition.

I will take a lot ofâ€¦ the other thing I wanted to pick up on is I very much agree with you about having some clear criteria for membership. I think that is really important. The reason for suggesting that small-group was really just that I think it is hard to do some of those very detailed conversations and a large group. And we had suggested only that small-group because they are sort of peak peaks, if you like. The smaller group. But open to suggestions there.

And on CEO and Deputy CEO, I do think that is an interesting question for this group. I absolutely take the point that not all organisations operate in the same way, or are represented in the same way. So, I would certainly be supportive of a change around CEO or deputy CEO, or equivalent, or something like that.

I do think one of the strengths of this group is the continuity of senior executive leadership of disability organisations. And I know historically it has been quite consciously thinking about executive leadership, rather than broad leadership as well. And I think there is a real value in the continuity of executive engagement within the Agency and DRCOs.

So wanted to raise to test that.

SPEAKER:

No, I was not disputing that. Eileen speaking. In addition to labelling that is the level, I agree with that. But to recognise those organisations. And if we are looking at this in terms of future as well, and recognising that across disability in Australia there are innovative and emerging models of running organisations into the future that may of course use different terminology, and a existing now we already have that. So, perhaps the word senior may be more appropriate than executive. Right? So, as you just said, for example, instead of CEO or senior level, that recognises the senior expertise in an organisation matter what their organisational model is. And I think this would be better interpreted by organisations. Does that kind of help?

SPEAKER:

Yes, thank you.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. I am doing badly at chairing because we are running over. Can I request that if there are specific comments about the actual documentation, we will take those ones out of session.

I think I was next, then Simon, then Bob, the then we will move to the next item.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking from Children and Young People with Disability Australia. Thank you for the work that went into this document. I can see that it was really well considered before is brought to us. My comments relate to the changing environment we are all in, and in particular, there are I will be a few of us that look a little wide eyed at the moment because of grant applications coming up and the significant impact those grant applications will have on our organisations and teams. So I suggest we may need to revisit the (inaudible) the Agency is placing on us until we know the outcome.

The other thing is a reference to the roles, I saw that and I asked if that was an NDIA funded role within DANA?

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. We were proposing those two roles are the secretariat in the DRCO secretariat, and then we suggested that DANA performed that role.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. It made me wonder whether there would be appetite within the agency to sick on staff to DROs to support the work so that agency staff could get a feel for the work was like. The sorts of things we have from our members, and obviously other DROs would have views on that, but if that is not on the table whether or not the agency could look at the funding providing more certainty to DROs about let the funding. As we have all pointed out, there are massive and they are systemic and they deserve really a dedicated attention. But at the moment the short-term contracts make it really hard to sufficiently resource that.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. Thanks Skye. We are mindful of the challenges and you will all recall when we did the Reform for Outcomes funding, the thinking about that was very explicitly about trying to make sure that everyone had across the engagements with the agency, the option of hiring a person. I know the \$30,000 does not get there at all, but together the kind of cumulative impact is intended to support that. That is a separate question from the length and term contracts. I absolutely hear you on length and term of contract. And we are working now to try to confirm that we have the funding to give some longevity. But our intention is to try to make sure that those contracts are as long as we can make them, and that you have as clear a runway as possible because we do, as we talked about a lot today already, that there is a big runway of reform. So, I think it is in our collective interest to make sure that for each of you there is as much funding certainty about those existing contract streams as possible so that you can make important decisions particularly. Very conscious of that.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Simon?

SPEAKER:

Simon speaking. Straight off the get go, I want to say that I am quite concerned that this operating model will be approved after this meeting and that will be yet because I have real concerns about the secretariat function. I could stand here for 10 minutes and list them, and try to avoid having any rant about each of them. Things like expectation management, style policing, operation of a siloed database, that kind of thing really gets me. I really don't want to see anything like this in the operating model and I have concerns about why a secretariat model is even needed at all. It's important for us to have open channels of communication with the various aspects of the policy with each codesign team is working on.

I do not like the way it has been done with DSS and I don't want to see it again.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. Thank you Simon for being so open with your feedback. I appreciate that. We have included the secretariat as a proposed approach with the very best of intention to enable and empower so that it is more equal, other than to try to streamline.

And I am very, I feel very strongly that your point about making sure that individual DROs continue direct engagement with the Agency across absolutely the co-design work, but equally outside the co-design work, with the Agency in your own right. And I am very concerned to maintain that. As you know, the engagement team, through the engagement model, that currently. And we would definitely not propose any change to that.

SPEAKER:

Simon speaking. I think the engagement team do a really good job especially regarding getting communications out when they have them, for organising and supporting meetings, and all that sort of stuff. So I would like to see the agency retain a function and not handed off in any way.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Simon. I will take that as a compliment. I appreciate it. And you have my categorical statement that we are, in fact, definitely maintaining that model but currently doing a lot of work. Aaron, Matt and the team, Nathan and Phil, to boost that model. And one of the things you are conscious with that model is making sure that.. I know you have fantastic relationships with the engagement team, and that they do an amazing job of facilitating engagement with the broader Agency but we really want the rest of the agency to lean into the work that they do. So that has been a big focus of the work as well.

But parking the secretariat question for the second, I think it would be valuable.. I have given my commitment, but people come and go.. but if the group is amenable, why don't we also include continuation and maintenance of the stakeholder engagement model, and work with DROs in the terms of reference. Because I think it is a really important feature and I would... it is not intended to replace that in any way.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. I will just read out the comment from Bob to finalise the session.

So 'the comment from Bob was 'the proposed approach is that we seem to be too focused on process and improving outcomes for NDIS participants seems to have been diminished or even disappeared from the agenda'. I'll hand over to Corri to finalise that comment.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Bob. I appreciate that comment. It's an exceptional one. Everyone has the risk of diving into the process and the detail, and forgetting to restate the purpose. And I think it is a really important point. Can I suggest we have another go at being very clear in the terms of reference about the 'why', which is incredibly important and a very good call out Bob. And is very valuable to include in the terms of reference.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. OK, so next steps for this item is the Agency will go away and provide revised, based on the commentary today. I also note that Darryl is going to be providing some commentary and we will make sure that is captured by everyone so that we have good visibility of that. But I am also mindful around getting these in place, so we can start the work of this group.

SPEAKER:

Simon speaking. Can you possibly send out a consultation. So we can all get our feedback in before that.

SPEAKER:

Great comment, Simon. We will make sure we do that and circulate that and allow a consultation period for that. I am really conscious of the time. It is two minutes to our first break. Can I suggest the NDIS codesign approach is an important topic. Matt Swainson, that is going

to be providing an update on dispute resolution, it needs to leave at 3 o'clock that the hard close and gives us an extra half an hour at the end of the meeting. We will just pick up that item and talk about the codesign this afternoon, rather than try to chop and change. So, we will work that in the break. Why don't we now pause for the lunch break. I think here in Victoria we are back at 12:45 PM. Thank you.

(Break until 12:45pm AEST)

SPEAKER:

We might get started. We have just got two people just waiting for coffee. (inaudible).

Alright, it is Aaron speaking. On time (echo) (inaudible). I hope our representatives that have joined via Teams are all back. For those in the room on our screen, I would like to introduce David Gifford, the agencies scheme actuary, and as I said at the opening of the session, I know for a significant period of time DRCO representatives have been seeking clarity around ways in which they can engage with the actuary to understand data and get data. So, I thought it would be appropriate to have David join the session today.

I am going to hand over to you, David, to kickstart the last couple of people join the room.

SPEAKER:

Wonderful! Good afternoon, everyone. It is David speaking. Apologies may be if there is anyone on the call and it is still morning. If I could ruefully acknowledge that I am coming to you from the lands of the Geelong people, and extend my respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the call today.

Thank you for having me along to speak to you about our data and getting access to our data. I think it is a really important topic. I know I have had some conversations individually with various colleagues on the line about this topic, but I think it is helpful to be able to talk to everyone as a group.

I guess I wanted to start by, to share the sort of a€ the perspective or posture that myself and my team bring to this, and I wanted to do this by reiterating a point that Rebecca I remember as CEO made back in I think April. It was a DRCO/NIAC combined event. My team with all of our data people and actuaries and so forth, you should routes guard us as your team. In a sense we are here to support and help you do the best you can.

That perspective that we are here to support you anywhere we can is a really important one. I wanted to make sure I started with that message. I acknowledge it probably hasn't always felt like that for some way acknowledge that is an easy thing to say and a harder thing to do, but to the extent that that is not the case and there are times when you feel it is harder than it should be, well, I am trying to give you the strong message that I would like to hear about that, and I would like to hear what we can do differently.

So that was just how I wanted to start by positioning this. What I thought I would do is spend may be about 10 or 15 minutes going through a bit of the data that we do make available on our data.gov sorry does data.NDIS.gov.au. It is a good little refresher in any case. That is the data available for extraction. I am also happy to take any questions or feedback about the source of data you would like to be made available, and all the sorts of ways you would like to be able to

work with me and my team.

I hope it sounds like a useful way to spend this time. I am happy to take feedback. What might stop by doing is share my screen. I acknowledge that is not

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking, I apologise for interjecting. Just a brief reminder we have got interpreters in the room and some captioning, so if you could slow down just a little bit that would be fantastic thank you.

SPEAKER:

Apologies. I know sometimes I am guilty of speaking a little quickly so I do apologise for that. Thank you for that little reminder, Aaron. I appreciate that.

I will share my screen pulled up I recognise that is not completely accessible for everyone but I will attempt to at least describe what is on the screen for everyone's benefit.

OK. So, if everyone could, if someone, Aaron, maybe if you could put your thumb up there to say you could see my screen. Great. So, this is the data.NDIS.gov.au website. As I said I imagine a number of you are familiar with this but I thought I would go over briefly each of the main sections of the website and talk about what is available already, because there might be some parts of it that you are not familiar with.

SPEAKER:

Sorry to cut in. I apologise or stop is there anyway you could just ring up your screen a bit more so we could have a look at the text, please?

SPEAKER:

Sure. I just will do a zoom there. How is that? (Sings) I am getting a few nods, so that is good. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

OK. Alright. As I said, probably was, what I was probably just trying to do today was give a broad overview. I was going to offer this later on but I am happy to acknowledge now that if anyone would like to have a more detailed walk-through of the available data on the website with myself or my team outside of this session, very happy to do that as well.

To the extent there is anything on the screen that you don't quite catch, at least you hear about those main parts, as I said, very happy to have a conversation about later on.

So, I had just moved down here to the landing page of the website which is where we see the main sections. So, what we have is explored us, which is the interactive part of the website, where you can look at charts and tables, can go through and make some selections there to see certain types of data. I will show a couple of examples of that.

We have got some data downloads, so that is some prepackaged sets of data that are sitting there available for download that may help. There is some existing reports and analyses that we link to on the website.

One of the newer components that some of you may not have seen is our participant dashboards, and we have got a range of dashboards that are organised currently, the main organisation is by primary disability, by participant, but we have got a range of further dashboards that are planned and will be available fairly shortly.

We have our public data sharing policy and then we have the ability to request data. So they are the main sections. I will just spend a few minutes talking through each of those. Recognising that in a session today I am not going to go through all the detail but at least it gives a little taste.

Probably one more contextual comment I should have made before getting into this. We have got this website that makes a range of data available at your fingertips, where you don't need to come along and make a request. That obviously will meet some of your needs, but it will never meet every one of your needs. There are always specific questions that people have and we can never anticipate everyone of those. The way I always think about this is we try to take an 80/20 approach where you put in 20% of the effort to answer 80% of the questions because if we try to answer every question it is a lot of work. We try and answer 80% of the questions in a way and make it available so you don't have to come and ask. For those trickier 20% of questions that is where we have the requested data. I don't know for sure if we get it exactly at that level and I'm very happy to take feedback from yourselves whether you think that we do. Just to let you know, that's the way I think about.

Just to keep giving me feedback Aaron if things aren't clear or if I'm going a little bit fast. I thought I might start by showing one of the participant dashboards to illustrate those. I have moved to the participant dashboards tab and I'm paging down, I will open the intellectual disability... We have a PDF version, we have a word version and actually have an Excel spreadsheet that has some of the data that sits behind the documents. I am opening the PDF document, I will zoom in a little bit there so everyone can see it all a bit more easily.

It's a dashboard that has a range of headline statistics. And pieces of data in relation to participant's with a primary disability of intellectual disability.

The dashboard is nine pages, I am not going to go through everything in it but I thought I would mention a few of the key pieces of data. 15% of participants in the NDIS of a primary disability of intellectual disability. 47% are aged under 25 years and 57% are male. Becky was a headline snapshot. In the last 12 months we have spent about the scheme has spent about 8 1/2 billion dollars supporting participants with intellectual disability. An average payment for that of that period per participant was \$98,000.

45% of families and carers of participants with intellectual disability were employed at the latest plan reassessment date, and 70%, the average satisfaction rate for participants with an intellectual disability with the pathway gathered from either themselves or their representatives was 70%.

Carolyn sorry, I will throw to you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you David, it's Carolyn from Women With Disabilities Australia I'm sorry I have a brain that works a little bit far ahead sometimes. My apologies if you're going to cover this. Obviously,

I want some clarification. Because obviously, those categories of primary disability are essentially a Medical Model.

And, thereafter so for our members, for example, there are many many that have intersecting impairments. So I'm wondering, how you actually collate and present data when you might have somebody who has three or four of those impairment conditions or however they are categorised. My other question, is at what level, what level of disaggregation does this data go to? Obviously gender is incredibly important to us. But how far and how much of it is disaggregated and what level?

Are those sensible questions?

SPEAKER:

I think they are sensible questions Carolyn.

The important question and I would say one that comes up in a range of different forums, I have heard. I think I absolutely acknowledge that when we talk about, when you look at participants through a lens of primary disability, we are simplifying things. There is a risk that we are very much, I hate, I want to make sure I use appropriate language, categorising things in a way that best is oversimplifying and it was at times can be even misleading.

A comment I would make is, our data, the quality of our data in relation to the sort of intersectionality that our participants bring to us, quality is mixed. In some cases it's quite good, and in other cases it's not. I would say yes, but completely moving away from acknowledging primary disability by bringing a more nuanced at rounds view to this topic is one of our big data challenges and opportunities over the next year or two.

I acknowledge, I think without... I acknowledge that as it happens, the joint standing committee has recently reported on the capability and culture of the agency has actually made a recommendation to that effect. It's something certainly, I'm not downplaying the point, I'm noting it's the first time we have heard that.

I would like to think in acknowledging that there is still can be value in understanding, there was a way we can use information, acknowledging the shortcomings, they still can give us a lens into the Scheme and the participants. I think our challenge is to strike that balance.

That was your first question, on the second question, when it comes to disaggregation, one shown here are the dashboards. These dashboards is the primary disability, as I said we will be aiming to also provide dashboards that look at groups of participants in terms of age. We are planning to then also look at, I think little bit potentially doing dashboards, by state and territory for example.

When it comes to desegregating the data further, for example if you want to look at female participants in New South Wales, perhaps say over the age of 45 for example. I think it's unlikely you would do say a dashboard around the group because we would end up with a lot of dashboards. Some of the, and that's probably more the sort of question we would deal with more in a specific request rather than just having the data sitting available.

We have all of the data available, I guess our commitment is to try and make, to the extent that

disaggregation that we don't make available, to make those subject to privacy but to be able to make more specific groups available.

I hope that is at least somewhat of a response to the second part as well?

SPEAKER:

Yes thank you. I don't want to take up other people's time. Obviously I would see gender as a bespoke area, I said that in the context of the fact that the Australian Government is in the process of developing a gender equality strategy. So, we would want obviously to see very clear data around gender disaggregation as much as possible.

SPEAKER:

Just to be clear and apologies if I wasn't clear. I was talking about a group that had several characteristics, say looking at primary disability, gender and geography. That would be something that I would say as a bespoke group that we have available. I wouldn't say that looking at the Scheme by gender is a bespoke request. Apologies if I gave that impression.

SPEAKER:

When you finish your statement there is a question here in the room from Catherine as well.

SPEAKER:

Thanks David, Catherine from Inclusion Australia, not knowing how many people with Autism there are this has been a long-standing problem.

I was going to say you are using the example of disability are one of the problems we have, and I can understand why and as a member of the Down's Syndrome Committee Myself, I'm Expecting There to Be a Separate Dashboard for Down syndrome.

We can't find it and we can't find it because Down Syndrome isn't included in disability. Just say but even at the top level we can't even do a basic five minutes of work and go, "Let's find out this fact." We can't even do it.

SPEAKER:

Catherine, I would be very happy to if you would like, I will be very happy to have a short discussion with yourself, off-line or if you want to send me an email. The first piece about participants with an intellectual disability and Autism, I would be very happy for us to renew our pursuit of what you would like there. To the extent that we haven't been able to do that previously. Acknowledging or is it all about the quality of our data. This to be a certain degree of caution to sound around but it doesn't stop us doing it. On your second point, around the level of social disability at Down syndrome I'm very happy to chat with you, and I'm open to do something specific. Really what you're asking is to have that more readily available. I'm not saying something we can do overnight but I would be very happy to have a conversation with you to say we could plan to do fairly quickly. I appreciate you making those points.

I would move quickly through the rest of the dashboard to give a very high-level sense of what else it includes. On page-ing down, the dashboard notes, the trend in the active participants, it's noting statistics around access decisions, around gender, state and territory, age, and reported level of function.

Statistics around remoteness, and around SEIFA school which is the index of education and occupation. It no statistics around First Nations participants, around CALD participants. Around total payments, average payments, in supported living, some further detailed data about outcomes and satisfaction.

Noting that employment and family and carer employment, around choice and control, around education outcomes. Some more detailed data about participants satisfaction. About complaints, data around the number of providers that participants are accessing.

And then it contains some clarification around the definitions that are used. As I said to recap, this is a dashboard that is in acknowledging the comments that have been made, is attempting to give an overview of participants with a disability of intellectual disability.

It then allows understanding of the level of detail below that, what the future dashboards about planning is to give the overview of other ... to give them a deeper insight into those scripts. As I said, those ones are planned in the relatively near future.

I want out of the dashboard and move back to the landing page on the website. I will move briefly to the data downloads page to give a high-level overview of that. It includes participant datasets, provider and market datasets and then datasets about payments.

The participant datasets, sort of includes datasets... I will navigate to that page around numbers of participants and plan budgets. I am page-ing down and is a whole lot of different files here. Each different file shows data at different times. I won't actually open that up now because it is opening up a spreadsheet. I'm acknowledging there is some quite detailed data there about participant plans and budgets every quarter going back for about four or five years.

Data around plan utilisation, around participants using participant accounts, black management types, number of participants, data around participant goals, around First Nations and CALD participants. Participants numbers by service district, we have the data available around baseline outcomes as well as longitudinal outcomes. And then we show participants by various geographical breakups.

Biostatistical areas which is the way the Australian bureau of statistics look at the distribution of people in Australia, by electoral divisions, by local government areas.

Then we have data around Home and Living supports. To specialist disability accommodation, participant... And participants who accessed supported independent living. I moved quickly but is giving a sense that there is some detailed data available under each of those headings.

I think it unlikely that you would wish to use all of those. It is looking to answer as a start, maybe those 20/80 questions and it's where the question is more specific or it's a less straightforward one which is where a data request might be needed.

SPEAKER:

David Aaron here again, I'm sorry to interject. There's a whole lot of comments in the chart which I appreciate. We will try and capture the practice was speaking we don't, I'm giving a commitment that will follow-up to make sure we can answer those questions.

SPEAKER:

Sure, if that's the case with everyone, I'm happy to take any questions that anyone would like to ask now. But certainly a commitment to respond.

SPEAKER:

As soon as you said that we have a hand in the room. I will go to Bill first.

SPEAKER:

Hi David it's Bill from Community Health Australia, two days in a row, how lucky I am. There's a thousand detailed comments and questions, I put a question in the chat but want to give voice to a blue sky thinking and vision for data.

Data is king and when we go with this of course, could be pivotal on the success or otherwise of the scheme in my view. What's in my mind here is a vision for not only macro data in dealing with but also microdata.

When we try to go through a change in process and has lots of intersecting disciplines here at behaviour, economics and change et cetera but demonstrates that you can provide people with a set of data that no visible incremental changes plus reinforcement for those particular changes, then you can get change as well. It is to be individualised, moving towards employment, my first matter is getting out of the house more often and it was being a bit more active and then there was two or three or four or ... 20 steps towards the goal of being more prepared for employment.

But you need to capture those and you need to give feedback to know if you are on the right direction if we have lost individual, it helps the support was nowhere to go.

In three or four years, we might actually be there. You might already be playing with uploading or dried datasets, to pattern cognition and language models. I guess I see that essential as the Scheme, overlapping with some points outcomes. Probably the point at that.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Bill, I feel we could have a three-hour conversation based on what you said. But I guess to do the very brief response. I genuinely commit to democratising out data and making it is available and is owned by all about stakeholders. It doesn't just relate to the NDIA, but the government would generally, I see an opportunity to produce that asymmetry as much as we can. I think it goes to the availability of information that I think you touched on.

I think in terms of being able to see very small pieces of data that show progress towards longer-term outcomes, someone who sees data a lot and you are suppose has with data that goes to some very long-term objectives, the challenge will always face doing that sort of thing, is both the cost of collecting.

I suppose the risk and the fact that there needs to obviously be a really clear and incredibly strong acceptance of all of our stakeholders in doing that. I think striking the balance of showing the value of having regular information but making sure that is really well understood and accepted. I think that is a challenge but one I think that we can consider.

We shouldn't say it's too hard because have to work out how we strike that balance as much as we can. To make a point about AI we are not uploading our data, we are putting the data anywhere it shouldn't be.

Capabilities that are emerging to take large volumes of data, there is a lot going on there and I think we need to recognise those possibilities. But we need to do it in a way that is absolutely creating no risk to our participants. That's the most important principle regarding data. I really appreciate those points.

This sounds like the topic for a future forum that I'm very happy to talk about.

SPEAKER:

Can I make a quick response, it's Bill again, just a remark about the large language models. Some of us are in another professional development network, organisation, the IT fund that have downloaded their own, in a safe closing environment.

It's a tiny little program... You can contain that and play before the (inaudible) with no security issues.

SPEAKER:

I know there's a few members of my team Bill work quite keen to do those sorts of things, the point I want to make sure crystal clear is that anything we do that put the security, privacy and security of data, absolutely at the forefront. I am very keen to have a discussion with you about this possibilities. Maybe through to Carolyn now.

SPEAKER:

David, I have a statement and a question. The last lot of stuff you showed that you could click on plans, you actually scroll down and you had a category there for CALD people and a category for First Nations people. Again, no gender, that gender should absolutely be there. It is a requirement under article 6 under the rights of persons with a disability and also article 31 and obviously the NDIS Act itself, makes reference to six of the seven international human rights treaties to which we are a signatory.

That was a really good example by default, of where what I was trying to say clear about gender, is absolutely a requirement. That's my statement. Secondly, I have a question in the chat, which I think I probably already know the answer to, but do you collect data on how many participants are under public guardianship?

SPEAKER:

To very quickly responds to your statement first, I absolutely acknowledge what you say and I will commit to you that following the session, I will take up with my team the topic on both the dashboards and the downloads. In relation to gender. I will make that a priority for us and I do acknowledge that what we have got a present is not... As I think viewed through, it's unacceptable. Thank you for making that statement.

In terms of public guardianship, I... The answer is yes but I believe that is not data that we would report on systematically in a public sense. I would have to get back to you though to be honest about whether that is data that we capture in a structured way or we might, my feeling but please don't quote me on this, my fill I think we need to do what is sometimes referred to as

fuzzy logic to determine that because it isn't sitting in a single field I can commit to get back to you on that.

SPEAKER:

The reason I ask is does intersect with the Disability Royal Commission upon reports and what we have seen is a rise in the number of people in NDIS participants, being put under public guardianship orders by service providers as a way of shifting risk.

That night so I think would be extremely useful and we have raised this in a number of different forums. So yes, thank you for listening and answering my questions. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

That's what I'm here for college, I would like love to come along and, we are where we are but I think it's really important thing is the feedback we get is incredibly important. Thank you very much for providing that.

SPEAKER:

Dave it's Aaron, we have one more question here from Eileen and I will let you get going.

SPEAKER:

Eileen speaking, thank you for your presentation. I am curious if you can provide us with not at this second, with a list, of the data that is collected that isn't public facing. I'm curious about things like how many people don't use most of their plan or certain parts of their plan?

There's a lot of areas that I think we are all aware of, with NDIS plans, how many... Are doing reviews after reviews of the reviews? Things like that that impact on the lives of participants and their family, friends, kin and supporters.

I'm curious about how many disciplines have nominees.

I'm not talking about guardianship. Things like that but that would necessarily be public facing but for those of us from sector organisations would be valuable to know, and if they are aggregated by type of disability. And just a short answer would be fine, just a yes or no.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Eileen, to provide a list of all the data we don't make public this quite a lot of it in simple terms. I guess you would like... The answers to some questions just aren't available. Participants who don't use their plan, nominees... Our suggestion I have Aaron, open to work with this review, is to find a way to gather those most pressing questions you feel you have got. Where having the information available would be most useful publicly. The answer might not be yes to everyone of them but we can set you say what we can do. I'm acknowledging there are important questions and if you can find a way to gather from the most pressing questions that you have got. To get those answers. Each of those questions and I thank you Eileen, I can well understand our really important ones.

I'm very open to seeing what we can do to gather those and respond. OK I'm conscious of time Aaron so I might do the quickest of demos of the small data. Just to flash them up on the screen and maybe I will leave it there if that sounds OK timewise?

They explore data tool, I just navigated to that... It's an interactive tool and allows users to go in and interact with the data more than the other items on the website do. There is a point and click interface where you can select various filters, for example we can look at participants... I'm clicking here on my screen in New South Wales, I'm going to page down and see the number of participants in New South Wales. In the whole of Australia:there pop-ups that show the numbers. When you hover over the chart you can see the numbers. Again I acknowledge that that's not completely accessible, I apologise for that. We show participants by age group, the chart shows that for all of Australia and New South Wales.

Within New South Wales, active participants by primary disability, by level of function, by remoteness rating, by First Nations People studies, by CALD status. I acknowledge Carolyn, it doesn't break that down by gender and I will add that to the existing ...

SPEAKER:

I have said by piece.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, I'm not in any way (inaudible) following the points you have made. This export data section allows the average committed supports and the average payments. For each of those groups... I'm sorry now the average number of committed supports by age group, for Australia and for New South Wales. Currently, I am sure you graph of that data and it is possible to click over and see that in a table as well.

So, this explore data section, allows some filtering and selection, particularly the areas that then allows the data for those geographic areas to be displayed by a range of other characteristics. As I said, for participant numbers and committed supports and payments.

The last thing in the interest of time we share on the screen. If I could, I could reiterate my first point, we something which is not in the sense we can get right overnight. The next couple of years, would really like to sort of, a couple of years on an ongoing basis, but... A success measure from me in my role is that you representing your organisations and all about participants. That you feel you do your jobs better. Having the right answer is a part of that and I absolutely acknowledge that in every way would you feel that at the moment. I'm very happy to have of my conversations with any of you would like to to go through what I have shown today.. But on an ongoing basis so we can do everything we can to. Again, our team is your team. Thank you. I will leave it there.

SPEAKER:

Thanks David, Aaron speaking, an example of a good presentation has created a whole range of comments and questions. Thank you for that.

A couple of us, we did send an email out last Wednesday around the direct email to be able to request data rather than utilise the existing form. I will remind people about that positive reaction we have taken away is to capture the commentary in the chat and also we will push out an email post is meeting for any of the specific questions that you may have. A big thank you from me Dave for jumping on today.

SPEAKER:

All good, thank you for your time and I look forward to many ongoing conversations about data

with many of you.

SPEAKER:

We are back on track which is great, the next agenda item we have which Corri will lead is about priorities for 2024. If DRCO representatives are OK, Corri will spend a few minutes.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking, this is a little clunky because I think we had assumed in the agenda you would have talked about the codesign approach around review and Royal Commission. But, which will still do, I propose to summarise that in two sentences to take this conversation is also equally important.

You will recall when we were working together and including the Independent Advisory Council to work through our collaboration approach, our working together approach for implementation of the government's budget initiatives.

We were talking and very intentionally set up the program of work as a foundational one. That this reams of work, really reflected the things we could start work on ahead of the review and the Royal Commission. And the things that we would anticipate would be built on with the recommendations and government responses to both of those reviews.

So I think that is very very strongly our proposed approach to working on the actions arising from the review and the Royal Commission is to continue to build on that program of work. I think Melanie you mentioned earlier in the chat, a question about specifically ILC and tier 2 and while not specifically about that but I think there will be some areas where there aren't existing working groups and programs of work that will be anticipated by the broader Royal Commission and reviewed.

So we would expect there needs to be a bit of realignment and recalibration, but fundamentally the ambition is to keep the co-working approach and what we are currently doing in order to build out the bigger program of work.

From an Agency perspective, I think we are very concerned not have 15 different reform programs, we would like one different reform program. I'm going to take a stab in the dark and given our resourcing conversations today, I am in very good company making that statement, even resourcing aside, it's so important that the reform work holistically, is well-connected, well referenced, the dependencies are really clearly identified and understood and anticipated.

And so having coherence to the scope of work, is going to be I think incredibly important for us all. I say that by way of introduction, just to say that, we at the Agency and I'm sure all of you are anticipating a very significant program of work continuing reform for outcomes... And we anticipate at the program of work will consider the scope of some core fundamentals of the scheme and particularly things like, the planning process and workforce requirements and the way that the services are operate in the air quotes market.

Those issues, arrangements to support people living independently, all those big issues we anticipate to continue to be a core feature of the significant reform work. I think that is the kind of forward pathway which will take up a huge amount of our time and effort but I also think.

I think it's important to not lose focus of the streams of work, but it's important that were different organisations and communities are experiencing particular things, you wanted to make sure particularly I had a very big program of work next year they will collectively have, that we try to capture the other things on people's minds.

That you either A, really want to make sure we are focused on and doing some work on. That might fall outside that reform program. Or alternatively, very key issues within the reform program that you don't want to see lost in the course of the scale of reform.

Just to set the landscape that this is, in addition to the existing program of reform work that we anticipate to be working together. We don't want to lose an opportunity to make that an exclusive list. Are you going first do you questions about the principal?

SPEAKER:

Catherine from Inclusion Australia. The bigger question is talking about some of the work that has happened already, what does that mean for overall? And of course unsurprisingly I'm going to say specifically for Supported Decision Making Policy.

The deplatforming, and the supported decision-making. So there is a big issue around supported decision-making.

SPEAKER:

Catherine Corri speaking, thank you for that it is a very important callout. There are a number of pieces of work which we have done previously which need to continue implementation phase that part of the change change process that is reform. I would absolutely include supported decision-making in those.

We are absolute in the change program but I think we need to call out system and schemes settings are changing, we also need to make sure that we are reflecting on those policies to make sure they are appropriate to your arrangements as well. I think, let special base of the priority list because an prior to supported decision-making, self-management and safeguarding as well?

SPEAKER:

Catherine responding, that's the thing, is important there was a whole lot of work but wasn't fully... We need to do both, probably implement and reflect.

SPEAKER:

Aaron Speaking, I have a list of the organisations, I might run through the list to give everyone the opportunity for the one or two additional items. I'm conscious of the time, and want to make sure everyone gets an opportunity in the session.

Alphabetical list, the A for Autism. Bob you want to go next for the next two items?

SPEAKER:

No I don't have anything to say.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. AFTO, Ross, did you want to go next? Checking if you are there Ross? You might

be on mute? I'll keep going. Jenny?

SPEAKER:

Jenny Karavolos... If I can add the early childhood intervention path?

SPEAKER:

Fantastic, thank you Jenny. Deb from Blind Citizens Australia?

SPEAKER:

Hi everyone, thank you for that, you seem to be sideways on my screen (Laughs). One of our priorities as we come into the Australian summer is around emergency preparedness and access ability to support our cohort with alerts, evacuation and planning.

Another priority for us is around transport, accessibility whilst we have continued to advocate in relation to rideshare refusal.

SPEAKER:

Brain Injury Australia, Nick? Checking if you are on the line Nick? No? Carers, Courtney?

SPEAKER:

Courtney Ross speaking, Carers Australia. For us revolves around recognition. A big part of that will be how different systems are working together to make sure that less carers fall between the cracks and understand and recognise where they can get support and recognition. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Sky?

SPEAKER:

Sky from young children with disability Australia, we want to make sure there remains a focus on young people in the scheme. Young people... Important life events like graduating from school, have your first job, leaving home. The other thing is again that because systems piece about intersecting reforms and in particular changes that may come about as a result of the national school reform agreement. and the universities accord.

SPEAKER:

Bill... Outside of the scheme and inside. Particularly in the area of psychosocial support, is the additional import that the NDIS, NDIA can give to what is a national initiative, if it gets nudged a bit more, looks like it probably will happen. What that is is the integration of the opportunity for psycho support problems across the country outside the NDIS. Like everything in politics, things look like they are going to happen but they don't. From my point of view, sorry I would be too long, it's kind of like a chess game.

Labour says there is an unmet need for psychosocial support for people not NDIS, from the South Australia unmet needs analysis. 275,000 severe mental illness were getting no psychosocial support.

Without that program, the potential to blow out the NDIS is enormous. State governments will not reach into their pocket, there needs to be a 50-50 funding gesture from the Commonwealth. They will come if there is extra pressure from people like the NDIA, ministers to back their

generous offer. That will make.. That will get over the threshold. Without that it won't happen to be in trouble in five years time.

Inside the NDIS, is several efficacy. If I look at what now the employment outcomes, they suck. It is the problem that you're not capturing the measures, the scheme is much more effective than we think that is measuring it? Or is it that we need to be much more effective, in terms of the skills of the staff working out there?

Or is it both? We are not measuring what happening... We think about that because in five years time again, almost at the Scheme in terms of the anticipated investment. We need to focus on that for future sustainability disability of the Scheme.

SPEAKER:

Jan, PEDICAT Australia.

SPEAKER:

To work with the stakeholders within the sector, to encourage the government to create a task force, and national Auslan strategy. To ensure that children have access to language. We are seeing that tools are being used by Cochlear implants are failing because they are devices not language.

To ensure that over 55's, that the older population are able to reach their rights, they can have access to nursing homes and things to like accessing wills. There is a lot of elder abuse we are seeing and also delivery misleading them. It is a bit of an old life approach for us in the Deaf community we are focusing on those underneath. And if you don't have the funding, we will close

SPEAKER:

Is Ben here, we throw our support around the call for the National Auslan strategy and we support for you back 55. I think so many of you work with barriers that you from the community, are going to require every broad spectrum approaches to fix what would be called in a strategy such as what Jen is proposing. The other most important for our membership is digital citizenship and representation in data.

Our membership and ask an organisation are quite worried about what would call those compromised datasets used to drive decision-making. The other thing is digital citizenship, my ability to engage, not as that is what you want to give me but for you to access me in ways that are equitable. If you can access telehealth that is great, but that is not most people. Our community is a group that frankly is very used to being left off the agenda, is very used to not being on the radar even in specific sector discussions, so we think it is imperative with this move toward justifying decision-making with these large scale datasets that we lay the groundwork now to make sure this cohort is captured because in all sorts of design of policy, systems, services in the past, that hasn't happened and we are still trying to undo the damage.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Ben. Deafness Forum Australia.

SPEAKER:

It is probably my third day in the organisation, so I would say that the priorities that we have

identified are certainly around employment â€œ echoing the words of my colleague who came just before me in that sense. I guess we will also be very closely looking at the recommendations that come from the review of the NDIS and thinking about that is going to mean in terms of our membership. Workforce equity and inclusion is a priority for us â€œ universal Communications Accessibility is also. And Auslan teaching resources in educational environments.

SPEAKER:

Great. Thank you. Now I just saw Ross pop-up so I will go back to you, Ross, for two priorities.

SPEAKER:

Hi everybody. Sorry, PC issues. And I apologise before. I was on a call. Back now. We have quite a range of policy areas we need to work on. In the bigger context outside of NDIS obviously Australia's disability strategy â€œ continuing to make sure that is being implemented and keeping and monitoring that. Employment is a large one for our membership. Health issues never go away. Transport is another major one that we have concerns about. We continue to work working on that area. As part of the implement side we also look at social supports and benefits and what comes from that, so that is part of what we will be doing as well.

Then we have other main areas in looking at obviously we are continuing the work on the Disability Royal Commission and the recommendations that have come from that, and waiting on the governance response on what they are going to be putting in and doing. But we have taken a front foot lead on that. We will be having a major report released next week which we have been working on with all of our members, and it will be looking at a report card on the DRC recommendations and also stepping through a few other areas, and also a report that goes in unison with that, what the DRC recommendations missed. So, what we thought our key areas that have not been covered. Those two pieces will be coming up next week and we will be circulating goes to everybody at the NDIA and all the colleagues that aren't a part of that process, as part of our membership.

We are also waiting on the independent review panel for the NDIS and what is going to come from that. We did highlight, and you will see that in our report card next week, we did comment on the recommendations from the DRC on the NDIS, but obviously the overwrite we put on that was to say we also want to see what the review panel is coming out with, so we need to actually do that and we now know that is going to be early December.

Merry Christmas, everybody! A little bit more work to be done. Outside of that is putting the good work in finalising our membership. We have surveyed them, policy priorities, and we will be working on those over the next 12 months. With the NDIS we still want to work, we have our expert advisor, Mary, who is also a participant in the scheme, we utilise as well for bouncing things off. She is working with one of the groups looking at fraud on our behalf. We want to continue some good work with the agency in moving into the New Year. There is a fair bit on.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking, I am conscious we have about 10 minutes to get through the rest of the group. It is a gentle nudge for a couple of priorities if that is OK. Disability advocacy network, Jeff?

SPEAKER:

Happy to do so. I am happy to be very quick, if I can â€œ try to stop myself. Our priorities are

going to be set by the NDIS review. I am a big fan of doing proactive work but in the next four months that is where our priorities are going to be. Within that for us getting the states and territories on board is a huge problem and talent, making sure that people with disability are at the centre and what that looks like in operational terms.

Ensuring that we steer towards a sustainable path in a way that improves participant experience will top I know they are quite a high level but that is absolutely where we are going to be. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Jeff. Aaron speaking. Down syndrome Australia, Daryl?

SPEAKER:

Daryl speaking. So for us probably the two key areas intersecting systems, similar to Sky mentioned before, education, employment, and also the transition from early childhood approachable scheme. Also, for our cohort in particular, any of those transitions I come around from the ageing side of things, so our cohorts are living longer than before and that rings its own challenges in terms of some health challenges but also independent living, et cetera. The other one just to build on Catherine's point is supported decision making, the broader context of particular leaf or the NDIS but all disability support, making them accessible for people with Down syndrome.

Easy to understand communication so choice and control can be exercised.

SPEAKER:

Great, thank you Jeff. Sorry, Daryl pulls up every Australia accounts, Nick. You are on the line, Nick, I think.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. It is Nick speaking. We have a lot of priorities at the moment but to narrow it down, but not reiterate what people have said already, we are concerned with the importance of that non-registered providers and the implications of the changes in the NDIS review for regional and remote people. Also concerned with plot plan fix ability in Pace and are wide lines and simpler buying NGS processes. Those are the priorities at the moment. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Nick. Kelly, are you on the line?

SPEAKER:

I am, thank you. I will be able to keep it simple as well. It would be for us overarching our ongoing partnership with the agency, working on first aid nations engagement strategy, and included in that is appropriate resourcing to do that work. That is us.

SPEAKER:

Great. Thank you, the levels of Aaron speaking. Catherine I just wanted to check you are all fine for your previous comments?

SPEAKER:

Catherine from IA, the thing I would add to reiterate would be employment. It keeps getting lost

because it is proactive rather than reactive in terms of (inaudible).

SPEAKER:

Thank you for Robbie, did you want to go next forge AFA?

SPEAKER:

Thanks very much. 16 things we want to say but unfortunately we have a paper on each one of them over the next eight months or so. I have just posted them to the chat where you can find them. The agency will be able to see what we reflect is our priorities.

SPEAKER:

AQ, Robbie. Mental health Australia. Ingrid? Dwayne, would you like to go next?

SPEAKER:

How long is a piece of string? I think for us one of the important things, so much global conflict at the moment, we are concerned about refugees who might be a book for the scheme, that they have equal access to the scheme. The data with the actuary earlier, I had a shock when I saw the number for CALD which doesn't seem to have moved at all. It looks like it has gone backwards. That was a concern for me when I saw that. That is something I will need to talk about.

Our strategic plan for CALD is an amazing looking document and I have to preference this by saying my engagement with the agency on this has been incredible. The agency has been amazing, but my concern is how it is going to be lamented, and it is always about when the rubber hits the road, what happens then? We have this amazing document, it has been codesigned, the engagement has been fantastic, but for me it is about when it is ready to implement how we do that? When I look at that number but I saw, I just felt sick, after all the years of work we have done in that space, that number is still in single digits, and that is a concern.

One thing that has been raised recently by several people is the cost of repairs to equipment like electric wheelchairs. It is over a threshold, it does not get dealt with. I think the threshold is for \$300 and I have someone at the moment who needs a tear repaired and the box which has to come from America is \$1800. The issue is as soon as they hear NDIS there is a price gouge, this is a real concern for us. Recently we brought my president to Canberra, the opening of our office, and almost immediately the cost of everything went through the roof because it was an NDIS part. I think we really need to address this price gouging.

The overuse of apps that I am concerned we are still looking at using apps for people to engage and get information to chime in with, and the problem is for our consumers who don't have access, bandwidth and money and those things, it is a problem, and also the knowledge base to deal with it. And I am concerned about the resulting for the national peaks with regard to the review of the NDIS. There is going to be so much work to do in this space. For all of us to be a part of this to ensure that all of our voices are heard and that we work 100% with the NDIA to get this across the board, it is such a big body of work that is coming. I am really anxious about how we are going to fit into that space and I just see that the workload is going to really intensify around that. And at what cost?

I think that is a real concern about that. That is it from me. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Dwayne. Aaron speaking. I lean for national mental health consumer and carer forum?

SPEAKER:

Our role in this is psychosocial disability, particularly arising from mental ill-health, and we already know that the productivity commission estimates how many people that might be was way, way, ridiculously to locum head to the amount of people as Bill has already highlighted. And yet it is still exceptionally difficult for any of them to get access to the scheme. It was made impossible to the point that many were having to take, either go to the tribunal or the very process of trying to get in makes them very unwell, and it is traumatising.

So, there needs to be greater trauma informed processes across everything. Intersecting with that is that mental ill-health as we know from statistics across Australia, not just because of COVID, but I guess because of covert, we now have more data and statistics on the whole of the country has realised it can hit anyone at any time rather than just them. People with all kinds of disabilities experience severe mental ill-health.

Our hospital systems, our residential care facilities, do not know how to cope with that, nor do services. So, there needs to be prioritising recognising the intersection there. I don't know if data is even collected on that because if your primary disability is autism or Down syndrome, then no matter how severe or episodic your mental ill-health might be, a functional impact on day-to-day living, which is really what NDIS to be helping with, we find that the support providers will not help with that. The ones who are there more specifically for psychosocial disability blatantly say that they will only deal with the participant not for the participants.

So, to me that is utterly is respectful to all of our organisation. If you have somebody with MS and on Sundays they can do something, great, you do it with them. On other days, if they can't, you finish the dishes or do it for them, or whatever it might be, and yet there is this discrimination. I will call it what it is "discrimination. When it is psycho social disability for mental health and yet the agency funds these organisations and allows them to get away with doing only with a not for, and that includes a lot of gateway providers.

So, those would be two big ones, but we would like to stress a whole of person, whole of family approach, which we are not seeing. If you only look at someone through the lens of a diagnosis through a medical model, then you are not looking a person with disability, psychosocial disability who might be a carer. We need to look at the whole of their circumstances and what impact their life. Thank you for the

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Aaron speaking. Five more. People with disability Australia, just checking, Robbie, Karen is not there? OK. Physical disability Australia, Simon?

SPEAKER:

Thanks. I guess from the general perspective (inaudible) something for us, transport needs to be reviewed. It is not the outcome from the government, the outcome by the government by our perspective is good because extending timeframes or does not extending them. Health, education, all these sorts of things where there is not will be pushing on as we do each year.

The other one is the sustainability of the scheme. It might sound like I am working for the bad guys here, but I understand from our perspective that if we don't (inaudible) it then it is all going to go pear-shaped come revolution, which is maybe the next election of the one up to that. Working hard with a evidence-based, poorly named evidence based group to try to come up with some ideas that gets the cost down that doesn't impact on the sport that people need on a day-to-day basis. That is where I am at the moment, and preparing our members for the outcome of the review, which hehint hint, assessments, they are coming back â€“ I am pretty sure of that.

SPEAKER:

Melanie, you are on the line?

SPEAKER:

We are adjusted in getting support to self advocacy groups across the country. Again, in that position of wondering whether their excesses is going to continue. We are also interested in continuing with the reforms for the LACs and how they can better support people in the community.

SPEAKER:

Great. Thank you Melanie. Caroline, are you there, and with disability Australia?

SPEAKER:

Yes, she is still here. Visible my priority next year will be changing our name to something that starts with a so that we can go first because we always have to go last. But I will be quick. Obviously, we would like to see an NDIS gender strategy. We still have around only 37 or 38% women and girls with disability, and they have not changed since the schemes inception. (inaudible) hasn't improved in three decades, so employment is important to. I am going to talk about sex. I am just going to work the room area, but I am going to talk about sex, sorry. In NDIS sexuality and relationships policy. It is profoundly offensive to see Michael (unknown term) come out the other day referring to the Commonwealth government at the NDIS and not using taxpayers money to pay for prostitutes. That is profoundly offensive, we push back.

Just quickly, we ran a forum, advertise it once as part of the NDIS review, called sex and the NDIS. We advertise it once, captured 50 and had 150 people on the waiting list. We would really like to see an NDIS sexuality and relationships policy, and we have been, did a position paper in about 2020 with three other DPOs around exactly that. Again it will be for me seeing the outcome of the review as well because we would like obviously to see what sort of stuff comes out around review of the Aptos principles, which are pivotal.

Also, things like segregation, guardianship, but I would also like to see some moreâ€¦ get a better understanding of intersections between the agency and the Quality and Safeguards Commission. And how it is because some of us sit on the national consulting committee for the Quality and Safeguards Commission, and I am on a couple of their subcommittees, and I often find myself saying the same things on that forum that I do in this forum. Sorry, I will shut up, but our first priority is to change our name to Australia something women of disability. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

And Carolyn. Aaron speaking. Alan, young people in nursing homes national alliance. Are you

on the line, Alan?

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Aaron. Yes. It is good to go last in a sense to get a sense of where everyone else is that. We support the intersecting systems theme that the people have raised. The other issue for us is I am hoping, expecting the review, around market oversight and really shifting the balance of power between consumers and providers.

As we have said before in this forum, the NDS to date as really just change the point-of-purchase, it hasn't given consumers any more power. Structurally, this is an, administrative systems need to change, accountability, NDIA needs a greater oversight, an agreement or collaboration around the (inaudible) section 34 rather than it being used as a test, it can be used as a tool to help providers to account and negotiate what is an outcome. Ultimately, it is not a participant is money that is being spent.

We are aware of participants getting ripped off blind and they know it, but what else do they do? As well we are seeing people who are extremely powerless. I think we have reported before. A lot of people in aged care do not even see themselves as decision-makers, so asking them about where they want to lead, live, it is too hard, way down the track. I think we have to look at ways that we can invest heavily on the demand side of the scheme rather than just leaving it to hope. Giving people funding in a package is not enough. It does not guarantee the outcome. That is the other thing I would like to see, this group spending more time looking at the data and focusing on outcomes. Just so we can actually get a sense of the causal links and outcomes. NDIS measures the output. It is link to the market oversight, unless we can knuckle providers, and pull them into line, and really have some control over value for money and outcome stuff, it is lost. I am expecting a review " I think we need to have a look at the outcomes of.

The other thing that others may have noticed in 10 years on this group there is a lot of things that get brought to the group that are new, new addition live-in data, fraud, but we never hear the back end of these initiatives, partly because they change a lot, politically, new things are obviously more exciting, but it would be good to have an end to end. Let's commit to a smaller number of things and actually follow them through. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Alan. OK. Though, we have captured that very long list of other priority matters. What we will do is group them up as themes. There are a lot of common themes but we will make sure we put them back out as outcomes. I will hand back to Corri before a wrap up.

SPEAKER:

Thank you that. It is really useful to get a sense of where everyone is thinking is up to the as Aaron says, we can absolutely grouped those up into thematics for our work planning. But what we will also do which will be valuable is think about the " forgive me " the Venn diagram of that conversation was I think there is some things that are pure NDIA, which are really important.

There are some things that are NDIA and DSS that we need to work on the whole system together. And then there are also some things that are DSS, and I do not say that to flick an email to my colleagues in the department and never think about is again, but just conscious of the workload conversation and interconnection of what we are talking about. I think it will be

really valuable to make sure we are clear about that so we can try to work that together.

SPEAKER:

I think it is more than just DSS I think it is the whole of government.

SPEAKER:

True. That is a really good call, Simon. Thank you for the we might also try to think about what the vendor diagram is so that we can also make sure that we are pursuing some of these things in the most effective forum to pick up Carolyn's point. You are not in a situation where you have to go to everybody's different meetings and so the same thing over again. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Alright for the is Aaron speaking. I am proposing we have a shorter break now. I am conscious we have got Matt about to join. He has a hard stop of 3 PM our time for another engagement. I am proposing a five minute break, if that is OK with everyone. Five minute break and then we will jump back on to hear from Matt for the next session. Thanks, everyone, for your input.

(Five minute break)

SPEAKER:

Alright, were most get started. As I said, I am conscious of Matt's time for the next

Session. He does have a hard stop at 3 PM. I am just checking on the line, have we got people back online? I can see Matt's perfect, Matt. Beautiful. Can I formally introduce Matt Swainson who is our Chief Counsel for the agency. Some of you have probably already had engagement with Matt, but it is fantastic for him to make the time to give us an update on dispute resolution and next steps are. I will hand over to you to start the presentation.

SPEAKER:

Good afternoon everybody. Nice to be back with you all. It has been sometime since I have come to talk to this group about dispute resolution, so very nice to be back to everybody. I am in Canberra, so I pay my respects to the traditional owners and custodians of this place and also for those traditional owners all the places where you are all joining from.

What I thought I would do today is quickly run through some of the things that we have been doing at the agency in terms of improving dispute resolution. I joined a bit of the last conversation with you, discussion about outcomes, so I would like to give you some data and let you know where we are going with some of our activities. I have some information about what next, somewhat are some of the things we have planned, but from previous experience with this forum, I know I am anticipating a lot of questions so I have left a lot of time there. Thanks, Aaron, ballooning people know about the hard end.

The three major activities we have had owing on over the last period is our early assessment initiatives, intensive caseload reviews, and the big independent expert review trial. That has been a fair bit of effort from the agency perspective. I know there is activity online on this forum already, have had some involvement with that activity, particularly our expert review trial, through their engagement with the oversight committee.

I think it is a big thanks to those who have helped with those activities. If I just go to the next

slide, I guess this is the outcomes piece that I really wanted to talk to you about. I have given you some data as of 31 October. Since that time, back in June 2022, it was Robert Lee around July or August we have result over seven 1/2 thousand cases and we have reduced that active caseload by 35%. We had about four and half thousand cases in May 2022, and I think at that time there was a pretty strong acknowledgement by the agency that something had to change, that we couldn't have that high number of participants going through the AAT disputing and going through quite a traumatic experience.

There was a load of cases, AAT minister refers that to the legacy AAT load, and we have reduced those. There are not many of those left. What that is really reflecting is quite a significant drop in the actual term timeframes are people spending on AAT was those studied in the last 12 months, we have reduced the median weeks to close them to around 30 weeks in November 2022 to about 19 weeks. That is probably the most significant marker, as well as the overall average, the entire caseload, we have reduced the average from a peak of around 259 days in January 2023 down to about 172.

Everything we are doing in this program is trending in the right direction. I am quite conscious, and I think it was at this forum previously, Mary who kindly reminded me that it is not all about numbers, there are actually people involved in these cases. So, what I thought I would do, and I am going to de-identify this, but one of my case managers working on the early assessment program sent me an email recently that he got from the participants father.

I thought I would read about you to give you a flavour of what we are trying to do with that early assessment team. This is the father: I wanted to personally thank you for the way you have handles our interactions of with regard to the review. Most importantly you listen to what I had to say, and made the effort to understand what I was trying to say when I didn't have the right agency wording. You understood why I was stressed out by the situation, and took the time to work through it slowly. You didn't always say yes but when you said no you were willing and able to explain why and answer questions. You admitted that the agency got it wrong when you did in the process and to rectify. There are many things I am sure I am forgetting to thank you for but I would like to finish by saying that in all the years I have had to deal with the agency, of all the contacts I have had to make, you are the only one who tried to truly understand what life is like for my son, and you have made a positive difference.

For me and my case managers and staff that is what they are trying to do with this program. That is a bit more than just numbers. It is what we are trying to do with the changes we are making with dispute resolution.

SPEAKER:

It is Aaron. Sorry for interjecting. I should have said this at the start. We have got an interpreter and captioning in the room here and if you could slow down just a little bit they are trying to catch up. It would be fantastic to stop

SPEAKER:

Thank you for the reminder, Aaron. I am constantly reminded not to talk like a lawyer and it is a good reminder to speak more slowly so thank you.

I wanted to talk very briefly about an independent trial as well, which was a significant body of work we commenced. That trial has wrapped up. We are very very close to releasing a pretty

comprehensive valuation report from the trial. Anticipating that that will be released in the coming weeks.

I can say from that trial that we probably didn't get the numbers of people going through that we expected, and I think to the most part that was because of the sheer numbers of cases that we were resolving through our other initiatives. When we commenced that trial we were hoping to have around about 2000 participants go through.

What that really reflects is that trial was one of a number of initiatives we were progressing to get through that backlog, and pretty much everything else we were looking at was having a successful impact.

We are looking at a number of things to implement going forward. I think our early assessment model is quite heavily informed by the trial, and I think particularly, that method of really talking to the participant, and their families, and their carers, and trying to work through with them what is in dispute and how can we solve it. That is probably something we have really picked up from the trial and we are taking through our early assessment initiative.

The AAT, and the announcement by the Attorney General to reform the AAT really had a big impact on what was the next step out of that trial. So, you know, where there was a big refund that was going on with the Attorney-General's Department, it probably wasn't the right time for us to make significant changes to the reform or review process for the NDIS.

What we did do however was take a lot of the learnings and input from that trial, and fed them through to the Attorney-General's Department. We had people that were assisting us with the IR trial, namely Ron McCullum and Natalie Wade, who were quite heavily involved with the attorney general's department. Ron McCullum was one of our independent expert reviewers, appointed to the attorney general's expert advisory group. His experience with that trial has really helped shape where the AAT reform is going more broadly.

In terms of where that is up to, I think the government is hoping to introduce legislation this year, and then to have that new body commence its work later on in 2024. I do know recruitment is underway for new Tribunal members, and I know they have people with disability as representatives on those recruitment panels. So, you know, there is a real strong engagement from the work we have been doing here through the Attorney-General's Department, which I think is really good outcome.

Alright, what are we doing next? I think it is probably even more important in some ways. I might run through everything and then obviously take a bit of time for questions.

Next slide, please.

So, what are we doing from here? We have a broad capability uplift underway to continue driving these improvements. So a lot of what we heard through that Independent Expert Review trial, but also some of the recommendations to look at other programs, we are looking at how we can implement that through our review program or broadly. When I say a broader capability uplift, things like our early assessment program, we have found that to be really successful. That was something we had through the consultation process around developing the independent expert review. That early assessment program was something participants wanted

and advocacy organisations wanted. So we are looking at how we can really expand that with more staff and make sure it goes in the program much longer.

One of the other things that came through pretty loud and clear both before I took this role and after was that participants and advocacy organisations don't like dealing with the big law firms. So that is a pretty big message we got, and that cost us a lot of money, which we think would be best spent elsewhere.

There was a big piece of work we have got going on at the moment is to recruit lawyers to the agency, that we can train up, we can ensure they are much more aligned with the agency values. We have got a real push to employ more lawyers with a disability as part of that program, because we think that will really make sure that our dispute resolution program is aligned to disability needs. So that program is underway and I'm really quite excited about that piece.

We also did a piece of human centred design work, with participants and advocacy organisations to work out what the real pain-points are and what we can do about it. Particularly with the workforce and making so we have a much better and disability aware workforce working on our dispute resolution. That is something we have got coming through.

Alright, I have sort of gone on to the next slide but maybe we jump through the next one. We have talked a bit about the enhanced early assessment gateway, but we do know we have more to do. We have still got 2900 cases in the AAT. We do have cases continuing to come through, and in some ways, that is appropriate. People should always have a right to seek an external review of the agency decision, and it is for us to design our practices and our operations to make sure that they are participants centred.

So that is really what we are driving at the moment. I've talked a bit about our internal legal capability uplift, and that is for a very public service way to say we want more internal lawyers. We want to employ more lawyers with the agency and we want to employ more lawyers with a disability.

So, we are also currently out to market to set up a new panel of external lawyers. Now I did say we would like to get rid of all the external lawyers, we are not quite there yet but what we do want to do is establish a new panel with law firms that are much more disability aware and can demonstrate that they are A, employing people with disability, and B they are much more aware of some of the issues that are participants face.

Alright, that was a very quick fire rattle through what we have going on, I'm going to pause there to see if we have any questions. No doubt, there are.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Matt, this is Aaron speaking, I might start in the room with Jenny, then I will go to Simon.

SPEAKER:

This is Jenny Karavolos from the Australian Autism Alliance. It is great to see you acknowledge the pain-points, and that you are working with disability, it is open for people to be able to

contribute to, is one of the national peak bodies for autism, I'm wondering, we are bringing up issues from the community. Please don't take that wrong, but (inaudible).

SPEAKER:

Not at all, we have a lot more to do. The idea of me coming along was to give you all an update. That was quite a small research piece that we did. We got some assistance from the agency's internal resources. I can tell you who were consulted as part of that, there was obviously those independent experts who helped us with the trial. We consulted with Legal Aid New South Wales and Victoria. The Rights Information Advocacy Centre, disability advocacy and inclusion NSW and Queensland attributed, and with the assistance of our advocacy services.

Accessibility was quite a big deal, so we are working on our own documents and processes, and a lot of training for staff over the last few months we have done lots of accessibility training for our staff. We have also for those external law firms who are working for us still, still some are there. We have put them through accessibility training as well, and we appreciate that was a big pain point. Part of it requires us to work with the tribunal to get the tribunal's processes and documents to be accessible.

Some of the work has closed out but we will continue to work with advocacy organisations to receive their feedback on how we can improve.

SPEAKER:

Because I happened to run an advocacy organisation, so that would be great. Besides autism, and general advocacy. A great person to have in the room. So, one of the comments is given we have been going to market with NDIS Reviews, DRC recommendations and the national autism strategy, I hear you about employing more lawyers, and that is great, they will be culturally indoctrinated in the right way, but a lot of the comments we get is actually people say, "Wow, there are lawyers in the room, and if there are going to be lawyers in the room, who can find for us to have quality because they are still not on the same page."

And this is coming direct, this is not just my logic, this is what is coming from the community.

So there is still this thing about it is not just, it is much friendlier, I'm sure, and whatnot, but people understanding that terminology and being on the same page to get a great outcome. It is lawyered up on one side and it is individuals on the other. And I'm not saying that they are not doing a great job.

SPEAKER:

Can I ask whoever is doing the slides, if you can drop the slides away then I might be able to see who is in the room a bit better. Excellent. I could not work out if you are smiling or frowning with that question but that is much, much better.

I completely agree with everything you have said. Part of the program, particularly our early assessment and enhanced early assessment program is really to have staff available and trained up who are not lawyers who can run the process, particularly the mediation and negotiation that happens through the tribunal process who are not lawyers.

And I can talk about this, I am a lawyer and we can be a bit confronting and a bit scary. And part of the enhancing our workforce capability is to have the staff internally who are not lawyers, who

are the ones talking with participants. And we are doing a lot of at the moment, so those of you who have got people who you look after your in the tribunal would probably find you are talking to case managers a lot of the time, and I appreciate we would still have lawyers involved, but we would get our case managers and staff, not lawyers, as the main points of contact.

In terms of funding for advocacy that is probably more of a DSS than an agency question. But from our and we are trying to remove the lawyers from the process as much as we can.

SPEAKER:

Because what people are asking for, if we can't get general advocacy funded through Commonwealth, or state, that they get the opportunity that someone is finding through their package, a lawyer.

SPEAKER:

OK, I understand the question.

SPEAKER:

It would be better though, as a whole system, if the advocates, the independent advocacy organisations were funded to be doing more preventative, and getting people on the right path, and making that match so we can get the right outcomes. A lot of the time you are at the back and when everything has gone to the customer, and we are being a lot more upfront.

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I did not mean to cut you off. This is Aaron speaking, we have a lot of people who want to speak and Matt has 2 minutes before he has to drop off.

SPEAKER:

Good talking to you, Matt. A couple of points, I wondered if there was any kind of break up in terms of what a successful resolution looks like from your perspective. Like is it agreeing with the review decision, not anything else, being happy not to get anything else, is it a negotiated outcome or somewhere between those? Or is it for the participant getting everything they want? That kind of thing? And what kind of feedback is being given to the review team to stop them lodging an external review in the first instance?

SPEAKER:

Really good questions, Simon. I don't have that precise data in front of me, but from previous times I have sent the data it is around about 70% that we reach a joint agreement with the participant. So, they don't withdraw but we come to an agreement.

A high up portion of the 70%, I don't know that precise number, but total agreement, we agree with the total that has been requested, but sometimes it isn't everything. Sometimes the discussion is around duplication of supports, what has been requested, then we work with the participant to say there is a duplication there and maybe you don't need that support if we can agree on this one. That is part of the negotiation. A much lower proportion, the participant will withdraw, and often our case managers will work with them to get agreement on how they can better use the plan flexibly that they already have.

There is a range of things that. I can probably commit to coming back to this forum with some more granular data that is a bit more responsive to your question, Simon. In terms of feedback

, we have a range of feedback mechanisms to go back to service delivery, frontline, policy out of our AAT program. So there are feedback mechanisms.

SPEAKER:

Specifically interested in the review team. Not just an internal review, what can be done to inform them about the likely outcome of a lodge an external review, so the review team doesn't waive people through the external review, stopping it at that point there. Because the review team know that the AAT team is likely to give them that particular support they are asking for based on the circumstances. That information should go back to the review team so they can hand it over then, rather than having to come back through to you.

SPEAKER:

I understand the question, and partly for me to step up for the review team, they have got a much, much tighter timeframe than we do with the participant service guarantee. What my case managers often do is work with the participant to get them through the process, and they have more time to do that even though it might cut the timeframe significantly. The internal review team and a much tighter statutory timeframe to do their job.

SPEAKER:

Alright. Thank you, Aaron speaking. I'm not sure, Matt, if youâ€¦

SPEAKER:

Can probably give you a bit more time if you want, but I don't want to delay people if they have got flights.

SPEAKER:

I have smiling representatives here, if it's OK with you I might allow through my questions. Eileen, do you want to go next?

SPEAKER:

I am Eileen from the National Mental Health Care Reform Representing Psychosocial Disability. We know many cases where participants are afraid to put in appeals or they start the process, and they start the process and their whole well-being goes down the tube emotionally or physically. And part of that is the actual process.

So, I am wondering if you could include in whatever training is given to all staff you are dealing with participants, their family, friends, kin, carers who are supporting them in this, sufficient trauma informed training. I don't know if you are aware of the With You Project that has been launched by the Attorney General. It is a process from Legal Aid for First Nations people, it is an organisation to get an education training. It is geared for lawyers, but I having worked on it, know that it is suitable for the case managers, and even the front-line people who are responding to initial discussions before it is even handed to a case manager.

Living in a regional area, I am aware that people are afraid, and reluctant to bring complaints, and take them further, because the same people you see in the grocery store who are dealing with these providers, are the people change organisations in the same area, etc. The amount of people who become seriously unwell enough to be hospitalised, both their mental health and physical health, and indeed suicidal or suicide attempts. I don't know if data has been captured on that but we know from our work on national data, but there are people with emotional serious

issues, anyone who is going through that process would find it difficult, and trauma.

So I just wanted to recommend that, and wondered if people drop out, or they stop a process, are you capturing the data of why? So then that can be addressed. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Yes, I think there is no debate from anybody involved that dispute processes are traumatic for everybody involved. So my team do have trauma informed training as well, as part of it, but I haven't seen it with the new project, so I would definitely search that up after the session. I think any help we can get is necessary.

I guess part of it is we're doing everything we can on our end to reduce the adversarial nature of these processes. But there will always be an element of that, because of the nature of the process. But it is about how we can create an environment that is less traumatic. But we are not there yet. I want to acknowledge. I will have a look at that resource, thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Matt. To my questions. Dwayne.

SPEAKER:

Dwayne Cranfield, leader of the National Ethnic Disability Alliance. I just have a comment, something that came up in the recent PACE meeting, looking at the documentation going out to consumers around the new process, it wasn't very user-friendly. And that is one area, but what we keep hearing is across-the-board in your space is that for the CALD consumers, but not just for CALD consumers but for consumers in general is that the language is very difficult when engaging with people with disability and their consumers.

Not everybody has a bachelors degree and has gone off and done honours or masters in this space. It is problematic, the language does scare people and it is an adversarial process to begin with. So what we would like to see is the language be simplified in this space, and kind of a bit less dehumanised, and a bit more engaging and less adversarial. And especially with CALD people, the language can be so important in them even attempting to go through the process of finding out the other end.

I just wanted to raise that, I don't expect an answer because I know you are struggling to time but some other time, we could have that discussion. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you.

SPEAKER:

And one other question if we can fit it in, Matt, is Jen.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Jen from Deaf Australia. I would like to confirm what Jenny said earlier about the traumatic and awful environment but it is. Many Deaf people contact us for support through the AAT, because we are not funded to provide advocacy support but we do provide that the support and the AAT space. We know why Deaf people need support and why they end up in the AAT.

Deaf people want to be able to provide their responses, their statement of issues and the other in Auslan. They want to be able to provide in their primary language but they are often told no, they have to be presented in English and then they have to spend their own packages to get it translated from Auslan into English. And sometimes the reason why they are at the AAT is because they don't have enough funding in their package to pay for Auslan translation. So then they have to spend their own funds to make sure that the information they are presenting to the AAT is accessible. And then we have to rely on our own funding, and we are an under resourced organisation. So I wanted to make you aware about accepting submissions in other language because Auslan is the Australian Deaf community language. Because Auslan uses sign language, people would want to be able to submit in their own language, and same with CALD language speakers. You should really look at that, so that people can submit in other languages.

I signed that very fast.

(Laughter)

SPEAKER:

Look away at the AAT are part of government, and we need work with the AAT as a whole of government to provide a better and more accessible experience for people, both CALD and Deaf, and whatever impairment somebody has to access and to participate in the process. So, yes, I hear your comments and that is something we need to work on articulately with the AAT, to make it more accessible. I agree.

SPEAKER:

Alright, Aaron speaking, let's leave it there. Big thank you to Matt. There is also a lot of information in the chat, so thank you to those who have taken the time to provide information and commentary. We will take the time to gather that out of session and provide feedback and responses to the group. A big thank you to Matt for joining us.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, not a problem, my pleasure. Thank you to Aaron and everybody for having me.

SPEAKER:

Alright. Aaron speaking again. It feels a bit disjointed that we are going back to an item that was designed for the start of the day but I certainly wanted to make sure we had appropriate time to talk about the co-design approach following the release, not just of the review but the government response. I will now hand over to Corri.

As a did say we have Shannon Rees, the general manager of communications joining us as well but I will hand over to Corri now.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Aaron, Corri speaking. I don't think we should apologise are talking about this because I suspect will be talking about this for the next three years so we should put that right away.

Thanks everybody. I stole my own thunder earlier in the day, so I thank you all, and I think we have also in a number of forums and conversations talked about this, but I thought, we thought

it was really valuable to take the opportunity of this meeting today, to talk about the proposed approach, and to test that, and to make sure we have a common view about the proposed approach for the next stages of the NDIS review. And typically for the Disability Royal Commission, in relation to how we are going to work together in the design and implementation of those parts of the response that the agency will be responsible for.

I think important to just reiterate as Rebecca said, this morning, why that is important, and why we have asked Shannon to join us this afternoon too. I am really conscious of a couple of things, the first is that this community is exhausted. And I'm not being flippant about that in the slightest. It has been an enormous year, and we are at the end of the year, and it is likely that, very probable that we will have the NDIS Review's report released in December out of National cabinet, which means we will have a really big report, about really big reform, at the end of a really exhausting year, over summer. And I don't want to underestimate the emotional and mental load that that will place on the disability community, on people with disability in the country, and on each and every one of you.

I am also really conscious that in the scope of the recommendations and what we know from what the review panel has said to date publicly, that it will go to some really big questions for us all. And I guess the thing that is important, and that I feel like the agency can really have a conversation about now, is two things.

The first is that the review recommendations will be incredibly important, but we will need to be, the agency as an agency of government, will be driven predominantly by the government's response to the review recommendations. And I hope there is some quiet comfort in that over the next little while, which is that the release of the report doesn't mean we are getting straight onto doing all of the things, that there will actually be a period of time where we need to work on that.

Certainly from the agency's perspective, as I have said before and as we have talked about before, our proposed approach is very clearly unequivocally from the agency, our absolute commitment is to work from this group, with the IAC, as representatives from the disability community, but more broadly beyond the forums with the disability community and the detailed design and implementation of agency led recommendations and the government response.

We would propose to do that, building on the foundations of the work that we already have underway with Reform for Outcomes. I suspect that there will be some very clear areas where we already have work underway. Nick, I'm thinking particularly about the number of conversations in the better planning group. I'm very confident that will be a big focus of the reform work, and so I think there is a good opportunity to build on that Work Plan already and continue to work together in that current way. And so I think there is a period where we collectively need to map the work to our existing efforts, and then, you know, Melanie you made the point before about ILC, and tier two, and around the table there are a couple of areas that are not picked up in the current work streams but are likely to be anticipated in the reviews.

So I think it will be important for us to have a calibration session, so that we know where the work is being progressed through that we have the right structure and groups in place to be able to continue that work.

But really, the intention is that we work together to build out those work programs, and very

clearly, very clearly work very closely together and in partnership in the design and implementation of those recommendations. I think it is the only way we will be able to do them effectively. I think as Rebecca said earlier, it is important reform. And it is a really important opportunity to fix some of the challenges. We just had a conversation about the AAT, and a number of those questions in the AAT relate to our current policy settings, and so there is a really important opportunity to change some of the things that haven't worked well in the scheme. And that will be really important, but it will also be really important for us to be working really closely together for the broader disability community, because I am very conscious that a lot of those discussions, you know, Simon you talked about assessment before.

These things that are likely to be things that we need to talk about in the context of the review are very difficult conversations. And we need to do them respectfully, and together, and in a way that puts people with disability at the centre, and prioritises the experience of participants in the scheme, and their outcomes, and we will only be able to do that if we are working hand in glove.

So I think I just wanted to say two things, really, in summary of that. The first is a very explicit commitment to all of you. And I think secondly, subject to any disagreement, which I think we have all been working on this basis but please tell me if not, that our approach is really recalibrate and build on the work that is underway so that we can have a clear, measured Work Plan that we can progressively work through, so that we are not overwhelmed by the scope of reform, and commentary, but also that we have an opportunity to make sure that the right inputs and right voices are heard in that design, and that the streams of work have visibility and are complementary to each other and are not crossing over.

So I think I will leave it there, Catherine.

SPEAKER:

From Inclusion Australia. Can I ask about timeline? With the DRC, the government has actually said whether it will meet the March deadline, but there is the March deadline. In terms of, have you got any Intel on what the government response will be in terms of the way the timelines will be managed?

SPEAKER:

(inaudible) thanks, Catherine. Do you mean for the review?

SPEAKER:

Yes, you have got the DRC and there is a response time there, there is such an interplay between the two. What is the best way? Do you know if the government is working to a timeline in terms of the response to the review.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking. The government is working towards a timeline, the first critical milestone is a national cabinet discussion in the first week of December as I mentioned earlier. In relation to individual recommendation, there is two things that are probably really important for this group, as you will see once you receive the review that there are some areas where there is conflict between have got to obviously work with all to reconcile some of those. Particularly it won't be a surprise and areas of Home & Living that they might cut across each other.

In relation to the government's response probably we have to work with the states and

territories, because it is a DRM document, but what we are working towards providing government advice in relation to how you would co-design the implementation, and just in terms of the process we would embark upon.

And then obviously we have to align with the Commonwealth budget next year, and obviously state and territory budgets in the middle of the year. The Minister has made it very clear that he wants a tight turnaround in terms of the initial responses to the recommendations but that doesn't have a longer response to the recommendations, and we need co-design and more work it. With a March timeline is what we are working towards for both.

SPEAKER:

The March timeline is what we are working towards for DRC.

SPEAKER:

It is very tight. Aaron speaking, Darryl speaking than Bill.

SPEAKER:

Darryl speaking. A couple of points. Rebecca you touched on outcomes, and we have the recommendations that these other things that are going to be implemented. A concern that we are missing an opportunity between when the reports are released and when the recommendation happens that we as a group can help shape what are the recommendations that come through. I can see two phases there.

SPEAKER:

Anything with the agency is lead on, this is not meant to be cryptic but all I can speak on is what we lead on terms of the recommendations will be done with this group. As the government, we will not be doing things absent of this group. There will be opportunities, as I said before the meeting started, it is not ideal timing, getting the review so close to Christmas, obviously people have breaks. We see this as a time to reiterate the government's response, in terms of being that almost traffic light so to speak level, where we all think we can get on with things and move forward with implementation of versus things that when the legislation change that will need long, really thorough co-design.

So, it is probably that conversation that we need to have as early as possible in terms of once the review is released, it is getting that consent from all of you in terms of all the recommendations what falls into different categories.

SPEAKER:

Thanks. In the second question, I know we spoke about this from the steering committee about the Reform for Outcomes, we should not lose sight of those Reform for Outcomes to make sure we can still deliver them in addition timeline and they don't get lost in the NDIS Review.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking, in terms of my obligations in the 8%, and the reforms outcomes, we wanted to uplift the capability of the agency, start the work on improving the scheme, and that obviously is part of that, that we want to buy time, knowing that the review would hand out its findings towards the end of the year, so we would have enough in the bank so to speak in terms of reform and implementation we could take longer on the review recommendations.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. We will go to Bill, then Jenni, then I think we are at time.

SPEAKER:

Bill speaking. I wanted to make a bit of an appeal out to all of my fellow DRCO members. The announcement will come out around 9 December or thereabouts. Depending on the news cycle, there is a time that where it will be for a couple of days where it will be an issue. My appeal is if you consider to do a press release at the time, to focus on the positive. One of the dangers I can see coming is that the opposition may consider to politicise the NDIS in the next couple of years and like with the referendum could be seen to be some kind of a Labor thing. It could be seen to be a growing cancer, to the detriment of all.

I think we can be internally critical and focused and give the proper feedback there, and I'm not telling you what to write but I am giving this appeal. Try to be conscious of the positive, and sensitive to the criticism that you're putting up. This is not something that the NDIA can say to you but I am saying this to you, be mindful. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. Absolutely, in terms of the expected and appropriate discussion that will happen around the release of the review, just in terms of how we can continue to work together and communications, particularly around the process question.

I think in the absolutely anticipated public discourse, which is fine, I am concerned to make sure that we as much as possible are being very clear with people with disability, and their supporters and communities that we are really committed to working through the design, the detailed design and implementation with people with disability. It won't be happening overnight, but there is a process. And that will certainly be kind of focus of our communications. But also very concerned to make sure that if there is information on that that we can provide to you, for your communities to support that, please let us know, and really keen to make sure that in that we are keeping up the communications with you, not about commentary on the review recommendations but about the way we are working together. Because I hope that will also provide some confidence to community about what comes next.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca speaking, just to reinforce that point. So, I had to duck out for a meeting with the Minister and a chair about this very point. The agency will not be providing any running commentary in relation to any recommendations or any views the agency might have, although that has already started in relation to the news article that took us all by surprise, last weekend we were all asked for our position and we are obviously not going to be doing that.

But one of the clear messages and our team is working on this at the moment is one of the most important things we could do is get out the message that nothing changes immediately. There is no imminent change to the planning process, there is no imminent change to access, they are all things we will work through, with community and in particular this room.

We are going to go to great lengths, as I said to some of the earlier, in the lead up to Christmas to have people feeling really anxious about what it means to their access to the scheme or their plan is really heartbreaking so we will go above and beyond to keep getting those messages out. The Minister has agreed that some of his messaging will be talking much more about the

medium term transition so hopefully that will help.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking. Jenny?

SPEAKER:

Jenny Karavolos, Australian Autism Alliance, a simple thing off the back of what was said before from Darryl. Given we know what is coming out, should we lock in some dates to look at in a room to work it through? Because we all have different viewpoints but we should probably get together, we know it is coming, let's get going. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking, I think last question but I am conscious of our interpreters.

SPEAKER:

Catherine from Inclusion Australia. I wanted to reiterate what you said about messaging. When the Royal Commission report dropped, our community thought all these things are going to happen without understanding the process. Some strong messaging about process we can be agnostic but very strong process would be very helpful. Because so many people have said, "The Royal Commission said this," without understanding the process, that will be very helpful.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking, can I be bold and share our messaging with you guys. It is important that anything you can do to give people the confidence that that is the approach we are taking a that will be valuable, too.

SPEAKER:

Shannon did you want to jump in quickly?

SPEAKER:

Shannon speaking. I will be quick but I would note the new chair has listed the old chair in the last minute of the agenda. Well played, Aaron.

Many of you know me already, but I am Shannon Rees. GM for communications. It is nice to see you all and be part of the discussion. I wanted to reiterate what Corri had said. Many of you do know me and I would like to open up the door for communication by Aaron, Aaron's people, around what the messaging might look like and also around anything we can support you on your channels, noting that it is a very, very congested time of year, people are exhausted and we have significant channels and resourcing to support in the space.

So just to extend out that offer for people to work with us on that and give us any ideas on things they might need as well in communicating that reassurance. But also information piece to their constituencies.

SPEAKER:

Alright. Aaron speaking, thank you, Shannon for that update.

Alright, that is the end of the formal agenda. Let me firstly thank all of our participants both gradually and in the room. The openness and genuine discussion and feedback to inform future

topics. I also want to thank our interpreters today, it is a big effort, typically when we have got speed, and I also really want to say thank you to that.

And also thank you to everyone with me being the new chair, and the rolling door of people in this seat. Thank you for those coming tomorrow to continue the discussion.

SPEAKER:
Goodbye.

Live captioning by Ai-Media.

DRCO Forum MS Teams Chat

[08:57]

08:57 Meeting started

[09:51] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi Konstantina Vlahos - would you mind writing the session name into the live captions portal as a test please?

[09:52] Konstantina Vlahos

Yes of course Benjamin - will do now

like 1

[09:52] Hastie, Benjamin

Konstantina Vlahos

Yes of course Benjamin - will do now

Thank you.

[09:59] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi Emma Coughlan, we will be starting soon

[09:59] Emma Coughlan

Thanks Ben

like 1

[10:04] Hastie, Benjamin

Good morning,

Welcome to the February DRCO Forum,

My name is Ben, and I and my colleague Alysha will be your digital support for this event.

Accessibility

This meeting has two in-person Auslan interpreters, Linda and Alex in the meeting today and human-generated live captioning available for you to access via this link: [Live captions](#)

Meeting tips

Please place your device on mute and turn your video off unless you are communicating. If you would like to communicate or ask a question, please raise your hand, or use the chat function.

Please state your name before you communicate and try not to speak too quickly to assist interpreters and captioners.

AI Virtual Assistants

Please note: The use of AI Virtual Assistants or Intelligent Virtual Assistants (IVA) such as Read AI is not allowed in NDIA meetings.

Caption Viewer
[10:08] Ben McAtamney

Yep I'm online today folks

like 2
[10:08] Ben McAtamney

Nice to see everyone

[10:09] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

Thank you for the welcome, I am also attending online.

like 1
[10:09] Kelly Cox

i'm also here on behalf of FPDN

like 1
[10:09] Emma Coughlan

Emma Coughlan on behalf of Mental Health Australia.

like 1
[10:13] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

Thanks very much, looking forward to discussing the action items with you.

like 1
[10:21] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Who is on the Taskforce, please?

like 1
[10:22] Nick Avery

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers-standards-and-quality-assurance/ndis-provider-and-worker-registration-taskforce>

NDIS Provider and Worker Registration Taskforce | Department of Social Services, Australian Government

[10:22] Nick Avery

- Ms Natalie Wade, disability rights lawyer (Chair)
- Mr Michael Borowick JP, former ACTU Assistant Secretary
- The Hon Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO FAICD, former Administrator of the Northern Territory and former President of National Disability Services Australia
- Professor Allan Fels AO, former chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

like 1

[10:30] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Is a Deputy CEO for Children on the drawing board, please?

[10:30] Hastie, Benjamin

Meeting tips

If you would like to communicate or ask a question, please raise your hand, or use the chat function.

Please state your name before you communicate and try not to speak too quickly to assist interpreters and captioners.

[10:30] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Is a Deputy CEO for Children on the drawing board, please?

[10:30] Hastie, Benjamin

Meeting tips

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Please state your name before you communicate and try not to speak too quickly to assist interpreters and captioners.

[10:31] Ben McAtamney

Additional meeting tip: you will speak faster and be harder to understand if you're reading from a script

[10:31] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Thanks Benjamin. I'm using the chat function to ask questions.

like 1

[10:31] Kelly Cox

Could you please repeat the name of the person and Dept working with the First Nations Deputy CEO and clarify if that role has been filled please?

[10:32] Ben McAtamney

Totally agree with your points around DSS engagement Simon

[10:32] Kelly Cox

answering in chat is fine

[10:37] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Sorry - there are people on line with their hand up. Can we please ensure that people in the room are not always prioritised over people online for an inclusive and equitable meeting approach?

like 1

[10:37] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

And there are questions on-line as well...

[10:38] Cole, Alysha

Thanks Yvonne, we will ensure they have an opportunity to raise their question.

[10:41] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

The opportunities for questions needs to be equitable, please. These hybrid meetings always favour the people in the room over those online, which doesn't support inclusion. If we can actively look at how this issue can be overcome, that would be wonderful.

like 2

[10:44] Wright, Matthew

Kelly Cox will follow up and come back to you with a response as soon as we have the information to hand

like 2

[10:44] Kelly Cox

Hi Matt all good i pulled it from the captions

like 1

[10:50] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Gosh, if only we could get invited to a working group! Bizarre that we are not!

[10:59] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Wasn't the refence group supposed to have family voices?

[11:00] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

I would hope that Reimagine would be a part of the process along CYDA, please.

[11:01] McKenzie, Corri

Kelly Cox (External)

Could you please repeat the name of the person and Dept working with the First Nations Deputy CEO and clarify if that role has been filled please?

The Deputy CEO hasn't been appointed yet Kelly. Rebecca mentioned the commencement of the new Branch Manager for the First Nations Branch, Tanya Malthouse. We are meeting with Damian next week with Tanya in Canberra.

[11:02] McKenzie, Corri

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia (Guest)

Gosh, if only we could get invited to a working group! Bizarre that we are not!

The working group hasn't been established Yvonne, we will certainly engage with Reimagine on this.

[11:02] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

McKenzie, Corri

The working group hasn't been established Yvonne, we will certainly engage with Reimagine on this.

Thank you

[11:03] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Was there high awareness of the "early childhood approach" in the scheme?

[11:04] Kelly Cox

Thanks Corrie, I realised I did have this info once I looked at the captions.

heart 1

[11:04] McKenzie, Corri

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia (Guest)

Wasn't the refence group supposed to have family voices?

Just in case it was hard to hear online Yvonne, Rebecca talked about our awareness that we have some gaps in the voices of

Kelly Cox (External)

Thanks Corrie, I realised I did have this info once I looked at the captions.

Sorry for my slow response too Kelly!

[11:05] Carolyn Nikoloski

Hi all - sorry I'm late

[11:08] Emma Coughlan

Thanks all, I'll jump out of the meeting now that Carolyn is online.

like 1

[11:08] Cole, Alysha

Thanks Emma.

[11:08] McKenzie, Corri

Thanks Emma

[11:10] Ben McAtamney

So we have participants calling for capability uplift in the community, we have DRO's calling for capability uplift in the community and yet so many initiatives both in the NDIS space and the disability sector more broadly are hyper fixated on uplifting the capability of individuals with disability (capacity building). This is a really interesting disconnect especially given that the ADS, the goals of which all these initiatives should be working towards in concert, directly advocates for addressing barriers through the lens of the social model of disability.

[11:11] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Thank you Corri!

[11:12] Hastie, Benjamin

Question from Shannon for group: What do you need from us to support communications with participants, families and carers?

What can we do to help you all to communicate with your communities?

[11:12] McKenzie, Corri

Ben McAtamney (External)

So we have participants calling for capability uplift in the community, we have DRO's calling for capability uplift in the community and yet so many initiatives both in the NDIS space and the disability sector more broadly are hyper fixated on uplifting the capability of individuals with disability...

Sorry Ben - I hope I represented that OK

[11:13] Ben McAtamney

You missed the last part about community capacity being acknowledged as a key driver of improving outcomes in the ADS

[11:13] Ben McAtamney

but good job 😊

[11:14] McKenzie, Corri

Ben McAtamney (External)

You missed the last part about community capacity being acknowledged as a key driver of improving outcomes in the ADS

This didn't come out in the comms Ben (awareness of ADS not so high) - but it is an EXCELLENT point and definitely noted!

[11:14] Ben McAtamney

Cheers Corri

[11:18] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Can I ask a question about language please? A key urgent rec in the Reimagine Early Childhood National Action Plan to 2030 was to have a national conversation with families around language to reset the way to communicate with families of young children. This issue is now kicking up quite significantly in our Reform Working Group (Plan Flexibility). The language that we are seeing in the NDIA resources we are reviewing is problematic at best. If the Agency could get "language" right as foundational, it would then support better engagement and more meaningful impact/outcomes/expectations with families of young children (and other participants, too) across all comms and touchpoints. Does the Agency see merit in setting a foundational language guide and principles as a matter of priority? This could then underpin all of the work you are looking at and set it up for greater success. We would love to see the work on language prioritised by the Agency and would be happy to work with you.

Robbie. Wholeheartedly agree - we have a whole forward on the problem with "intervention" in the Action Plan, codesigned with families and practitioners nationally. It might be helpful. You can find it here on page 9: https://reimagine.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Reimagine_Early_Childhood_Action_Plan_to_2030.pdf

[11:21] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Love "investment" over "intervention" Robbie. We will adopt, too!

Thank you, again, Corrie!

[11:23] Nick Rushworth - Brain Injury Australia

...until such time as taxpayers start seeing, expecting, demanding a "RETURN" on their "investment". "Commodification[sic]", indeed.

[11:24] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Thanks Shannon. The 🤖 point is not to review document by document for language. The point is to establish a new foundational guide (what you have right now is not working, sadly) so that all documents are then generated using language that is lineal and uniform across the agency, and that families understand and respond to. This would then (hopefully) eliminate the need to documents to to be vetted individually, after the fact, and resulting in costly editing processes.

[11:24] Ben McAtamney

Good point Nick Rushworth - Brain Injury Australia (Guest) I think it also plays into this idea of the scheme reducing people's need for support over time by boosting individual capacity which has been problematic from the outset

[11:24] Bill Gye

Yes "Early Intervention" is not to far away from "Early Invasion", so better "Early Investment" though it does possibly raise an expectation of ROI.

[11:25] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Bill Gye (Unverified)

Yes "Early Intervention" is not to far away from "Early Invasion", so better "Early Investment" though it does possibly raise an expectation of ROI.

I actually love that it raises ROI in the context of parents of young children.

[11:29] Hastie, Benjamin

We are taking a short break. The Forum will resume at 11.40am AEDT

like 1

[11:40] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi, everyone is returning back to their seats and we will be resuming soon.

[11:53] Ben McAtamney

Any steps towards organising the work in a more connected and holistic way and with a focus on tangible outcomes for participants is a good move

[11:56] Nick Avery

Sound dropped out for a minute there

[11:57] Carolyn Nikoloski

This sounds like a really comprehensive and well-considered approach to bring together the reform efforts - I love the framing around change. I'm keen to understand how cultural changes will also be embedded through this process? It is usually the key to transformation.

[11:58] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

Sound dropped out for a minute there

Anything I should go back over Nick?

[11:58] Nick Rushworth - Brain Injury Australia

Nope. A computer/ user glitch.

[11:58] Nick Avery

Missed a small chunk when Carolyn was speaking, but was able to figure it out from Rebecca's response.

[12:00] Ben McAtamney

As well as focusing on the interconnected parts of the reform process a key focus must be systems and structures internally that promote and monitor the transition of policy goals into practices and behaviours. Further to Carolyn's point, when we began in the workforce capability group one of the first pieces of response we got to the desired skills and behaviours our members want to see from frontline staff is that these skills and attitudes are already embedded in the position descriptions. The discussion then becomes: what are the barriers preventing theory and policy from informing practice?

[12:02] Steve Williamson

Years ago, the CEO of Centrelink told her people at her first all staff meeting that a staff member either served a citizen, or served a person who serves a citizen.

[12:07] Nick Avery

McKenzie, Corri could we have a discussion about the significant problems with the current participant pathway since PACE rollout? People are having very negative experiences from access application, through forced Community Connections plan with PITC, through to receiving a 25

page PACE plan without any actual planning meeting, and with the entire Capacity Building budget stipulated as 'Stated Support'.

[12:08] McKenzie, Corri

Ben McAtamney (External)

As well as focusing on the interconnected parts of the reform process a key focus must be systems and structures internally that promote and monitor the transition of policy goals into practices and behaviours. Further to Carolyn's point, when we began in the workforce capability group one of the f...

Thanks Ben, this is an excellent point - and one I think the coordination approach is designed to - so hopefully will - help us to identify the barriers to those changes.

[12:09] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

McKenzie, Corri could we have a discussion about the significant problems with the current participant pathway since PACE rollout? People are having very negative experiences from access application, through forced Community Connections plan with PITC, through to receiving a 25 page PACE plan with...

Of course Nick, will be in touch to find a time where we can discuss properly

[12:09] Nick Avery

Thank you - much appreciated.

[12:17] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Is secretariat representing us as a group, or the Agency? Whilst #membership is important, and perhaps I've missed some nuance, it concerns me, if we, as a group, didn't all own the work, but only a few did.

[12:21] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Thank you Corri. Equity is exactly my point. #NailedIt

[12:23] Steve Williamson

I recognise the merit of implementing a 'secretary' role, whether established as a separate section within the NDIA or delegated to an externally competent organisation. However, this introduces a fundamentally different aspect, which might carry unforeseen consequences for the authenticity of citizen input. It warrants thorough evaluation over time by DROs. The devil will surely be in the details that I have yet to see.

[12:26] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

I didn't get a call. This is what I mean. All members of this group need to be represented, not just those we have relationships with, please.

[12:29] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi all, we are now taking a break for lunch. Please return by 1.15pm AEDT

like 2

[12:30] Deb Deshayes

Apologies, I need to step away to attend to a medical matter and will return around 2..30pm. Thank you for your understanding. Deb, Blind Citizens Australia CEO

[13:20] Hastie, Benjamin

Accessibility

This meeting has two in-person Auslan interpreters, Linda and Alex in the meeting today and human-generated live captioning available for you to access via this link: [Live captions](#)

like 1

Caption Viewer

[13:22] Carolyn Nikoloski

Sorry if I've missed this - but why is the NDIS review out of scope?

[13:22] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Sorry - what did I miss about membership and the government's funding round? How are they linked? Can you please elaborate?

[13:26] Carolyn Nikoloski

Thanks McKenzie, Corri that's really helpful to understand. I think it would make sense to align the focus of this forum to the broader Agency's reform program priorities - so that we're able to add value to the decision making / implementation process.

[13:30] Melanie SARU (she/her) (Guest)

I am wondering about the Foundational Supports strategy and if that will be in scope for what is included in this forum or if it will sit with DSS ? And, how can we make sure this group is included in this

[13:31] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

I agree Carolyn and would also like to ensure there is continued discussion about cohort-specific strategies and policies, including an NDIS Gender Strategy.

[13:32] McKenzie, Corri

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia (Guest)

Sorry - what did I miss about membership and the government's funding round? How are they linked? Can you please elaborate?

Sorry Yvonne, I think the captions may have got the wrong end of the stick - Jeff referred to two examples of additional pieces of work which had been discussed for this forum which were the consideration of the criteria for future membership of this forum and which is referred to in the terms of reference; and also the earlier conversation about communications channels.

[13:34] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

Thank you, Corri. So the two (membership and future funding announcements) are not linked? And thank you for tracking the chat and the room, and doing the two so well at once.

[13:34] McKenzie, Corri

That's correct Yvonne - and no worries 😊

[13:36] Nick Avery

Ideally we should be co-developing the reforms.

[13:45] Kelly Cox

It would be remiss of me not to mention Closing the Gap and ensuring First Nations people with disability are considered and included in all areas of policy development, not just the ones that relate specifically to community.

[13:46] Ben McAtamney

Who's doing the renovations in the room?? 🤔

[13:46] McKenzie, Corri

We are plagued Ben! We changed venues to avoid construction!!!

[13:46] Hastie, Benjamin

a rogue garbage truck going past Ben

[13:47] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine Australia

I'd like us to land on where children will fit into our work plan, if we can. Children are often "othered" or placed on the periphery of these discussions. Yet children are highlighted by the Review (and Reimagine's National Action Plan) as being an area critical for reform for Scheme success. So can we establish if they have a secure place in our workplan, or is this to be an adult-centric forum? If the latter, then how can those of us in the early years and childhood space have greater access to co-design in this area now and into the future?

[13:48] Kelly Cox

Is that the Mantra still? i don't think I'll ever attend that hotel in person again. Trying to get a wheelchair accessible cab from the airport (and back again) was a nightmare

[13:48] Kelly Cox

Is that the Mantra still? i don't think I'll ever attend that hotel in person again. Trying to get a wheelchair accessible cab from the airport (and back again) was a nightmare

[13:48] Kelly Cox

I got kicked out of one cab because I refused to pay an extra \$30. They guy literally made me get back out of the cab, in front of a line of onlookers,

surprised 1

[13:49] Cole, Alysha

I am so sorry to hear that Kelly. It is at the Mantra again today.

[13:56] Kelly Cox

Melbourne cabs are the worst in the country.

I later intervened when James was being aggressively led by a taxi driver by the arm and was being walked into the bollards out the front and then suitcases in the foyer.

[14:00] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi all. We are taking a short break until 2.20pm AEDT.

[14:17] Hastie, Benjamin

Hi all, we are returning in a few minutes.

[14:19] Ben McAtamney

Kelly Cox I'm so sorry you and James had that experience. What a nightmare. We really don't do well around accessibility and awareness in the general population here in VIC. Our Executive Officer was acosted by a security guard for taking his guide dog into a super market here in Melbourne last year. We really do have a long way to go.

[14:27] Nick Avery

Couple of questions for David re the NDIS Financial Sustainability Framework report (okay to take these questions on notice):

1. Why was it projected that there would be less people entering the NDIS last year, given we have a growing population and that the number leaving the scheme was lower than projected (0.9% instead of 1.6%)?
2. Why is the number of autistic participants projected to increase by 244% over the next 10yrs, when the Australian population is only projected to grow by 10.7%?
3. Is there data disaggregating the cost of participant plans by plan management type?

[14:29] Nick Avery

Re the current slide - how much of the reduction in new participants is due to so many access requests sitting in limbo (unprocessed) since October 2023 ?

[14:29] Bill Gye

The large positive changes highlighted on page one are pleasing, is there some common reason why they have occurred, or are there different reasons for each?

[14:30] McKenzie, Corri

Ben McAtamney (External)

Kelly Cox I'm so sorry you and James had that experience. What a nightmare. We really don't do well around accessibility and awareness in the general population here in VIC. Our Executive Officer was accosted by a security guard for taking his guide dog into a super market here in Melbourne last yea...

I agree - this is a terrible experience Kelly Cox I am so sorry. We will also keep working to find appropriate venues!

[14:31] Kelly Cox

Ben, what was great to watch was the people behind me in the line who refused to use that drivers cab after he forced me out, some of them naming discrimination. So on that occasion at least, some community members got to see first hand what life can be like.

[14:31] Ben McAtamney

Kelly Cox silver linings eh?

[14:36] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

I think it would be useful to consider the reference to 'higher prevalence of autism in males' in light of the research indicating that 80% of adult autistic women remain undiagnosed, the incoming National Autism Strategy and the need to promote recognition and identification of autistic women and girls. The reference to higher prevalence alone (cf. probable higher prevalence **in addition** to gender bias in referral and diagnosis) may perpetuate some unhelpful narratives that lead to under-diagnosis.

[14:39] Nick Avery

Gifford, David is there data on how many participants under the age of 18yrs are funded for Finding and Keeping a Job?

We are seeing participants of working age consistently being denied funding for employment supports until they are post school, which sets them up for a future of unemployment. It's much harder to gain employment as an adult, when you have no employment history as a teen. There is consistent research showing that after school jobs contribute strongly to employment readiness skills as adults.

[14:45] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

That's great, thank you!

[14:46] Nick Avery

Slide 19: Can this data be disaggregated for regional, remote and metro?

[14:49] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

Nick Avery (External)

Slide 19: Can this data be disaggregated for regional, remote and metro?

I echo this and would also love to see the data disaggregated by gender - there is gender-related data for access and participation, but given that specific cohorts have unique experiences across all phases of interaction with the Scheme (including in relation to safety and complaints), it would be really useful to have breakdown by these attributes/demographics throughout heart 1

[14:49] Nick Avery

Slide 24:

1. How many S100 RoRDs are currently pending?
2. How many S48 CoCs are currently pending?
3. How many S48 CoCs have been denied due to "expiry" (outside the participant service guarantee timeframe)?
4. How many complaints are still pending? (Personally I have 3 on behalf of clients from first week of December 2023 that still haven't been responded to)

[14:57] Nick Avery

Slides 30-31: How many participants were surveyed for this data, and does the survey pre-date PACE rollout (or include participants who have been through the PACE participant pathway)?

Apologies for all the questions - bit of a data geek.

[15:00] Bill Gye

In Section 5.1 (dot point three) it says "Changes in legislative and policy settings due to NDIS Review recommendations are expected to further moderate Scheme growth from 2026–27 onwards." Is this primarily due to the anticipated impact of the roll out of expanded "Foundational Supports" that will create an alternative pathway for some people?

[15:07] Nick Avery

Slide 44: What was the decrease in SIL costs attributed to?

[15:10] Sophie Cusworth | Women With Disabilities Australia

No worries from me, thank you!

like 1

[15:11] Nick Avery

That's fine with me also, thank you. 😊

[15:15] Nick Avery

Has the operating cost of plan reassessments been factored into the forward projections, for when all the 2yr plans established last year come due for reassessment? Because there were a huge number given 2yr plans at the same time, rather than staggering the reassessment due dates.

[15:17] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

Has the operating cost of plan reassessments been factored into the forward projections, for when all the 2yr plans established last year come due for reassessment? Because there were a huge number given 2yr plans at the same time, rather than staggering the reassessment due dates.

Nick, do you mean the Agency operating costs to undertake plan reassessments in large numbers at once?

[15:18] Nick Avery

McKenzie, Corri (External)

Nick, do you mean the Agency operating costs to undertake plan reassessments in large numbers at once?

Yes

[15:19] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

Yes

Short answer is no - noting we have had an investment in workforce through reform for outcomes, but this doesn't go specifically to the timing of plan reassessments which are due for participants

[15:20] Nick Avery

Thanks Corri. Just wanted to put that issue on your radar.

[15:20] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

Thanks Corri. Just wanted to put that issue on your radar.

Definitely on our radar Nick!

[15:32] Nick Avery

Thanks Gifford, David. 😊

[15:33] Hastie, Benjamin

Thank you for attending the February DRCO Forum. A heartfelt thanks to Gifford, David, Auslan interpreters, Linda and Alex and live captioners, Konstantina, Isabella, Angela and Steffina for their time today.

heart 1

230818 – DRCO Forum MS Teams

[9:59 am] Ai-Media Captioner (Ruben) (Guest)

External captions link:

<https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUDRCO1808A>

[10:00 am] Cole, Alysha

Good morning,

Welcome to the Disability Representative and Carer Organisations Chief Executive Forum.

My name is Alysha and I and my colleague Ben will be your digital support for this event.

Please feel free to contact us throughout the session if you experience any difficulty with MS Teams.

We have two Auslan interpreters Kelly North and Cina Hossack in the meeting today and live captions are available for you to access via this link:

<https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUDRCO1808A>

like 2 heart 2

[10:01 am] Cole, Alysha

We ask that you place your device on mute and turn your video off unless you are communicating. This will help to avoid any background noise.

If you would like to communicate or ask a question, please click the **raise your hand** button. Or you can use the chat function if you prefer.

Before you communicate, please state your name. This helps us to identify each other so we know who is communicating and will also assist the interpreters and captioners. If you have a question for a specific person, please address them by name before asking your question.

We also ask you keep our captioners and interpreters in mind when you're communicating and try not to speak too quickly.

[10:06 am] Andrea Garcia

Apologies from Dwayne Cranfield of NEDA who could not be here. I am Andrea (they/them) - a NEDA policy officer who is representing Dwayne today.

[10:07 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Hi from Nipaluna, lutruwita, paying respects to First Nations people as always.

[10:11 am] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

greetings from Whadiuk Nyoongar land

like 1

[10:13 am] Hastie, Benjamin

Accessibility: Attendees - Please do not remove spotlight off Auslan Interpreter. They need to be spotlighted at all times.

like 1

[10:13 am] REES, Shannon

Carolyn I will come to you after Quarterly Report if thats okay

like 1

[10:15 am] Kelly North

Hi, I'll be swapping with Cina now

like 1

[10:17 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

They can and are reviewing themselves. Sometimes that can be good ... or not.

[10:27 am] Catherine McAlpine

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest), could I join the offline convo about specialisation / small cohorts too please?

like 1

[10:29 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

i've sadly been met by a wall everytime I have requested informatron and transparency about the Childrens Taskforce...

[10:29 am] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

Interpreter swap thanks

[10:30 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Can I also say that its not really acceptable for the NDIS to publish the Quarterly Reports with a "qualifier" that says "Easy Read versions will be coming shortly". They should be made available at the SAME time. This is happening more and more across Govt agencies etc

[10:30 am] McKenzie, Corri

And I'll come back to you on offline conversation Bob and Catherine

like 1

[10:30 am] REES, Shannon

Unknown User

Can I also say that its not really acceptable for the NDIS to publish the Quarterly Reports with a "qualifier" that says "Easy Read versions will be coming shortly". They should be...

Noted Carolyn we do need to do better

[10:32 am] Catherine McAlpine

REES, Shannon could we have a convo about accessible communication overall? It's a live issue at the IDRg - would be good to make a plan.

[10:35 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Shannon - I'm assuming that the comments in the chat will be captured as transcript/record of this meeting

[10:37 am] Bill Gye

You mentioned we would today be (briefly) looking at the issue of provider viability - will that be coming up later? Or is this the time to bring this up now?

[10:38 am] ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

Bill Gye

You mentioned we would today be (briefly) looking at the issue of provider viability - will that be coming up later? Or is this the time to bring this up now?

this is briefly going to be covered by Rebecca in this session

[10:38 am] Bill Gye

Thanks

[10:40 am] Andrea Garcia

We would love to be involved in conversations about accessible communication as well - around developing accessible translated materials for CALD participants specifically (but also in general). Thank you

like 1

[10:40 am] REES, Shannon

Carolyn is this a new hand - just checking

[10:41 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Shannon - its Carolyn Hodge not Carolyn F

[10:41 am] REES, Shannon

apologies Carolyn

like 2

[10:42 am] McKenzie, Corri

Andrea Garcia

We would love to be involved in conversations about accessible communication as well - around developing accessible translated materials for CALD participants specifically (but also in general). Thank you

Absolutely Andrea - this is also a critical feature of the new CALD Strategy
heart 1

[10:43 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Important also to understand that there is a difference between Easy Read and Plain language.

like 1

[10:45 am] REES, Shannon

agree !

[10:45 am] Catherine McAlpine

FYI for everyone - the NDIA needs to do much better with accessible comms. However, there are certain docs that will always need to be external (Corri just said that!) but learning to write to people in accessible ways. And yes, the employment of people with ID in the Agency was another big topic over the last 2 days!

like 2

[10:45 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

See for eg: the USA legislation re Plain Language: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/law/>

heart 1

[10:45 am] Kelly North

I will swap with cina now

[10:48 am] Catherine McAlpine

The Aust Gov has guidelines around plain language and Easy Read that need to be followed / implemented at the NDIA and government more broadly.

<https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/writing-and-designing-content/clear-language-and-writing-style/plain-language-and-word-choice>

Plain language and word choice | Style Manual

Plain language can express complex ideas. Engage people with words they can understand quickly: use the list on this page. Clarify expressions people might be unfamiliar with.

[10:48 am] Skye Kakoschke-Moore

Thank you Alan for raising this. Here is the link to the report that summarises the surveys CYDA ran with families and young people: <https://www.cyda.org.au/resources/details/402/report-disappointment-and-discrimination-cyda-s-surveys-of-the-learning-experiences-of-children-and-young-people-with-disability-in-2022-and-2023>

CYDA would welcome the opportunity to speak to the Agency about these findings further
Resources

[10:48 am] Catherine McAlpine

<https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/content-types/easy-read>

Easy Read | Style Manual

Easy Read combines text with layout and imagery to simplify and explain information. Users often print Easy Read materials. The standard layout works as a handout.

[10:49 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Bus Aus Govt needs to legislate (like the US) rather than just have Guidelines

[10:49 am] McKenzie, Corri

Skye Kakoschke-Moore (External)

Thank you Alan for raising this. Here is the link to the report that summarises the surveys CYDA ran with families and young people: <https://www.cyda.org.au/resources/details/402/report-disappointment-and-discrimination-cyda-s-surveys-of-the-learning-experiences-of-children-and-young-people-with-di...>

Thanks Skye - will take you up on this offer! (My9yo was very impressed last night when we were watching the news and I said I knew you!)

heart 1

[10:50 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

How can you have got this far without having spoken to the Autism DRO about early childhood. You can't be serious.

[10:51 am] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

please slow down

like 1

[10:51 am] Catherine McAlpine

Skye Kakoschke-Moore

Thank you Alan for raising this. Here is the link to the report that summarises the surveys CYDA ran with families and young people: <https://www.cyda.org.au/resources/details/402/report-disappointment-and-discrimination-cyda-s-surveys-of-the-learning-experiences-of-children-and-young-people-with-di...>

Congratulations Skye Kakoschke-Moore and CYDA on a great report and getting such excellent coverage.

heart 1

[10:51 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

That's a very serious exaggeration of what the WA pilot might investigate or deliver.

[10:52 am] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

accessible formats need to include deaf and deafblind communities with auslan videos
<https://www.lwb.org.au/news/promoting-accessible-resources-for-inclusive-voting-in-australia/>

[10:52 am] McKenzie, Corri

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

That's a very serious exaggeration of what the WA pilot might investigate or deliver.

Hi Bob - will make sure we get a time to talk with you about the Inklings work

[10:54 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Reimagine holds significant insight and intelligence, from our co-design work with families of children with developmental delay, difference, divergence and disability, and the practitioners who support them, that would be incredibly valuable to the work of the Children's Taskforce. Yet, our ability to connect and support the work of the Taskforce, and indeed the work of the Early Childhood Approach itself, has been frustrated. Our monthly meetings with the EC Unit have been moved back to quarterly. There is no dialogue whatsoever. We feel that this is an enormous missed opportunity to achieve the outcomes that we need to see.

like 1

[10:54 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Sorry for the type's. Of course that should read 'co-design'

[10:57 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I've seen some of the dialogues with provider as they happen in the AAT. The dialogue can be substantially improved.

[10:59 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Corrie - I would like to have an offline discussion with you about SDA's - there's not enough time today and I dont want to delay the agenda etc

like 1

[10:59 am] McKenzie, Corri

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Corrie - I would like to have an offline discussion with you about STA's - there's not enough time today and I dont want to delay the agenda etc

Of course - will give you a call

[10:59 am] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

interpreter swap

[10:59 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Sorry, I meant STA's

[11:01 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I support Bill. And I'll highlight that there is a serious problem when providers are being defended in the DRCO Forum.

[11:03 am] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Not only quality, but accountability, transparency and integrity.

[11:03 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

The Agency is attacking quality providers in the AAT. Quality providers avoid the AAT - what are you doing?

We need to understand the existing workforce and its capability ... relative to service demand. We are far from ready for regulating this, unless we really commit to a massive effort to fix this.

[11:06 am] Nick Avery

Requiring all providers to be registered would be a disaster for people in regional and remote Australia. There would then be no support at all for people with disability in remote areas particularly.

Check-ins with participants which ask questions about providers and how they are operating would enable better monitoring of both registered and non-registered providers.

[11:08 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Reimagine has a bit of a different idea, for how to ensure quality across the sector from early childhood providers, outside of registration, that we would love to discuss with the Agency.

like 1

[11:08 am] Philip Waters

I think if participant goals in their plans are being achieved, then it does not matter if providers are registered or not. Its more important that there is monitoring of plan outcomes

like 2

[11:08 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

This is a complex area. FOr eg: there are some NDIS participants who dont know whether their provider is the "right" one for them

like 1

[11:09 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Philip Waters

I think if participant goals in their plans are being achieved, then it does not matter if providers are registered or not. Its more important that there is monitoring of plan outcomes

Absolutely agree.

[11:09 am] Catherine McAlpine

Nick Avery

Requiring all providers to be registered would be a disaster for people in regional and remote Australia. There would then be no support at all for people with disability in remote areas particularly. Check-ins with participants which ask questions about providers and how they are operating wo...

My understanding is that we are talking about a baseline registration requirement (like ABN so that the Agency knows who all the providers are), not registration in the current form. Is that correct?

[11:10 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Isn't behaviour support supposed to be registered providers already? How well is that working?

[11:10 am] Nick Avery

Catherine McAlpine

My understanding is that we are talking about a baseline registration requirement (like ABN so that the Agency knows who all the providers are), not registration in the current form. Is that correct?

Even doing that limits choice and control. There are self-managers who direct employ support workers, and requiring this would mean that is no longer possible.

[11:10 am] Steve Williamson

Thinking about the issue of viable providers, one area where NDIA can be proactive is in its internal procurement practices. Rather than putting all the eggs in one basket by appointing say, a single large provider, perhaps create a panel of providers in which small, bespoke organisations have equal opportunity to provide services to the Agency. Undoubtedly, it's more labour intensive but it could preserve competition.

[11:13 am] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

You're right Robbi - the biggest slippage in quality and delivery of services occurs in the legacy models.

like 2

[11:13 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

quality is how well you can fit your service into what is in people's plans. It's pretty clear.

[11:13 am] Bill Gye

Of course agree with Robbie here..

[11:15 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I think that sometimes we try to pack too much into these meetings

like 1

[11:16 am] Catherine McAlpine

Nick Avery

Even doing that limits choice and control. There are self-managers who direct employ support workers, and requiring this would mean that is no longer possible.

Yes, this is a huge issue we have been discussing with the Commission for years now. Our national 'Services For One' Community of Practice supports a light touch registration (noting that self-managers still need to comply with tax and employment laws). Nick Avery would you like to chat offline?

[11:16 am] Nick Avery

Catherine McAlpine

Yes, this is a huge issue we have been discussing with the Commission for years now. Our national 'Services For One' Community of Practice supports a light touch registration (noting that self-managers still need to comply with tax and employment laws). Nick Avery would you like to chat offline?

Happy to. 😊

[11:17 am] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

I (David Murray) wish to engage with 'Penelope 'Deputy CEO, there are systemic issues within NDIS workforce with not enough auslan interpreters and commguide (support workers). Deafblind Australia would like to share a report in to "State of the Sector'

like 4

[11:18 am] McKenzie, Corri

David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

I (David Murray) wish to engage with 'Penelope 'Deputy CEO, there are systemic issues within NDIS workforce with not enough auslan interpreters and commguide (support workers). Deafblind Australia would like to share a report in to "State of the Sector'

We will set a discussion up for you David

[11:18 am] REES, Shannon

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

quality is how well you can fit your service into what is in people's plans. It's pretty clear.

Bob if we can just be mindful of tone - everyone is doing there best to provide information to inform respectful conversation. If we can you be mindful of this please

[11:18 am] REES, Shannon

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

quality is how well you can fit your service into what is in people's plans. It's pretty clear.

Bob if we can just be mindful of tone - everyone is doing there best to provide information to inform respectful conversation. If we can you be mindful of this please

[11:19 am] Philip Waters

McKenzie, Corri (Guest)

We will set a discussion up for you David

I would love to be part of this conversation too! Auslan workforce (includes support workers, interpreters etc) is such a huge issue for deaf and hard of hearing people

like 1

[11:19 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Am still concerned about how the Review is going to have the time to review and incorporate relevant recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission

like 2

[11:20 am] Jeff Smith

We would be keen to chat further re "light touch" registration as there is a lot happening in this space

like 4

[11:21 am] Catherine McAlpine

Jeff Smith

We would be keen to chat further re "light touch" registration as there is a lot happening in this space

Jeff Smith would DANA prefer to coordinate a meeting or would you like us to?

[11:21 am] Carolyn Nikoloski

Do you know what the expected timeframe is for the Government to consider and respond to the review's recommendations?

like 1

[11:22 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Can Reimagine please be updated on what comes out of the Ministers Meeting in regards to early childhood?

like 1

[11:23 am] McKenzie, Corri

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Can Reimagine please be updated on what comes out of the Ministers Meeting in regards to early childhood?

we will circulate the meeting outcomes to this group yvonne

like 1

[11:23 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

At the appropriate time, can we get a new updated Organisational Chart

like 1

[11:26 am] Jenny Karavolos

Jeff Smith (External)

We would be keen to chat further re "light touch" registration as there is a lot happening in this space

This is what I was referring to regarding "registration" A minimum version to be aware of who is out there. And separate out "quality requirements" and make that about "regulated providers" or whatever the appropriate terminology is

[11:26 am] REES, Shannon

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngannawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Thanks Shannon. I glad we are all good about the robust conversation.

Robust and respectful Bob!

[11:29 am] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

it is real concern in NT for access to NDIS and the poor outcomes especially first nations people who are deafblind and those not properly identified have no access to communication support, no interpreters, no services available to them etc. DBA provided a report into Alice Springs - very emotional experience of 3rd world conditions to deafblind people living there. I congratulate NDIA and the ministers taking this step to conduct 'NDIS review' my concern is the lack of access to the deafblind community in NT will not be captured in the review due to lack of access issues.

[11:33 am] Falkingham, Rebecca

David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

it is real concern in NT for access to NDIS and the poor outcomes especially first nations people who are deafblind and those not properly identified have no access to communication support, no interpreters, no services available to them etc. DBA provided a report into Alice Springs - very emotio...

Thanks David. I agree and spent some time talking to participants in East Arnhem land last week about this issue. The NDIA senior leadership team will be in Darwin/Alice next week to do further work with community.

like 2

[11:45 am] Ganesan, Sanjiv

How would you describe the future of the Agency? What do you want the Agency to be known for and how do you want the Agency to be perceived by participants, their families and their carers?

[11:47 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

We would like the Agency to be more respectful. To understand the complexities and contexts of peoples lives.

[11:48 am] Alison Brook

We would love carers to have higher visibility, have their role respected, be enabled to provide their support with greater ease, and be included more in the NDIA's communications

heart 1

[11:48 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Can we also add "friends" and supporters to this question. Not all pwds have families and/or carers

like 2

[11:48 am] Nick Avery

We would like to see the Agency be transparent about decisions, and work in a respectful, trauma-responsive and collaborative fashion with participants and supporters to develop Plans.

like 2

[11:48 am] Darryl Steff

Agency needs to be perceived as a genuine part of the participants support network not a Government department that needs to be "dealt" with.

[11:48 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

To attract people who need its support. At present too many people who need help want to avoid contact as much as possible.

[11:49 am] Jenny Karavolos

Seamless, Engaged and Outcomes based where PWD are an investment and the organisation is vertically integrated in their culture , systems and processes. And it would be great it was not a bolt of strategies

[11:49 am] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

PDA would like the Agency acknowledge that we are the SME's of our disabilities and to not always question reports, that often cost s fortune.

[11:50 am] Philip Waters

All of the above as well as known for listening to disability advocates and willing to make policy changes based on their feedback

[11:50 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

PDA would like the Agency acknowledge that we are the SME's of our disabilities and to not always question reports, that often cost s fortune.

And to utilise us, as a priority, instead of funding consultants who ask us to provide support, IP, insights and solution for free.

[11:50 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

A single point of contact. People should not have to deal with twenty different people at the Agency

heart 2

[11:50 am] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

That is Physical Disability Australia thank you
like 1

[11:51 am] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Thank you

[11:52 am] Jeff Smith

Following on from Catherine's point, to be where there is need - eg the NT and other remote communities, as well as rural and regional communities more generally

[11:53 am] REES, Shannon

I think that's an excellent point Alan

[11:53 am] Andrea Garcia

Very much agree Alan

[11:53 am] Nick Avery

We would like the Agency to be known for trusting participants and supporters, recognising the expertise of participants about our needs and the funded supports we request - with significantly less requirement for extremely expensive reports to justify the requested supports (which are then often ignored).

like 1

[11:53 am] Catherine McAlpine

Agree with Alan also.

[11:54 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

I would also ask that the Agency step into its power as an effective advocate and steward across governments, agencies, and departments for the reform and deep collaboration that we need to realise to ensure that all people with a disability are supported in a universal way. (This point has been articulated as I have typed, so I wholeheartedly endorse the point)

like 2

[11:54 am] Philip Waters

I would like the agency to be known for being proactive in addressing thin and failed markets as well as being seen as a Nation builder, an agency that INVESTS in our future. like how infrastructure is seen by Australians. This investment is done through the ILC as well as in participant plans.

[11:55 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngannawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Can the Agency stop being largely defensive in the government context and start holding the other parts of government to account.

[11:56 am] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

I would like to see the Agency move from a deficit-based language that asks "Show us how disabled you are" to a positive and strengths-based language that asks "How can we provide access to support that will allow you to achieve your goals?"

[11:56 am] Hastie, Benjamin

May I ask that attendees with their hands up turn their cameras on prior to speaking?

[11:56 am] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

The Agency need to be our ally, not our enemy.

[11:57 am] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

interpreter swap

[11:58 am] Jenny Karavolos

Futures focused - anticipating the needs of the community

[11:58 am] Nick Avery

It would also be great to see the Agency promote the broader benefit of the NDIS to the Australian community as part of this strategy. The fact that NDIS brought services to regional communities that didn't exist pre-NDIS. The hundreds of thousands of people employed throughout the country, the return on investment of \$2.25 for every \$1.00 spent. The people with disability and carers able to join the workforce due to the NDIS, and so much more. Instead of the cost burden rhetoric we constantly hear in the media.

heart 1

[12:00 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I have a similar experience to Carolyn's about individual advocacy.

[12:00 pm] Robbi Williams

I would like the agency to be known for its courage (and supported in that courage by the members of this group) in no longer allowing funding to go to service models that are not authentically impactful re social and economic participation (usual suspects are group homes, sheltered workshops etc)

heart 3 like 1

[12:01 pm] Sally Karandrews

Yes on the need for common sense, and lessening the reliance on Functional Capacity Assessments and instead, building a workforce of knowledgeable, informed staff, the majority of whom have disability and are supported to make informed decisions in areas which they have the required knowledge through lived experience and where relevant qualification and training

[12:02 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

It would also like the agency to provide more inclusive access and to support relationships more equitably with organisations that are not located in Melbourne. As a peak body that is not headquartered in Victoria we have often felt relegated to the periphery, and not part of an affectionate name-basis relationship with the Agency decision-makers due to lack of easy proximity.

[12:04 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Absolutely, Bill. We've just made that point to the National Autism Strategy. We have a chance to show the world that much better outcomes are possible, not just for Autistic Australians but for all people with disability.

[12:04 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Most importantly, Reimagine would ask that the Agency commit, as a priority, to work to remove (not add) complexity and overwhelm to the lives of its participants.

[12:05 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

The focus should be on achievement of individual's goals, not on Scheme \$\$\$s

[12:07 pm] Hastie, Benjamin

May I ask that attendees with their hands up turn their cameras on prior to communicating? This helps us spotlight for accessibility.

like 1

[12:08 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@ Phillip - well put!

[12:09 pm] Ganesan, Sanjiv

What do you think the Agency needs to do to make this future vision a reality? Where do you think the Agency should focus its efforts?

[12:10 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

And, we have early childhood educators, pediatricians and maternal child health practitioners (often first responders in early childhood) who have never heard of an Early Childhood Partner.

[12:11 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@ Carolyn F totally agree. Not clear what the roles and responsibilities and importantly the accountabilities for their role

like 1

[12:11 pm] Carolyn Nikoloski

Improve workforce capability; implement the psychosocial recovery framework; improve pricing models; improve the interface with mainstream services

[12:11 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

I would like the Agency to "declutter" There is red tape on red tape and it becomes very confusing.

like 1

[12:11 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

The Agency needs major culture change. It need to approach everyone, participants, Informal Supports, providers, etc with an open mind. Only disrespect when it's appropriate - don't use that as the starting position.

[12:12 pm] Jenny Karavolos

Culture first, and outcomes and accountabilities put in place for roles

[12:12 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

I feel the focus should be on true co-design, and workplace culture shift away from "combativeness"

[12:13 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

The Agency should focus its efforts on the simplification of onerous and often overwhelming processes, as well as ensuring that it works seamlessly with other agencies, departments and governments to support an easier journey for the people it supports.

[12:13 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Understand its problems and challenges ahead of ideas and alleged solutions.

[12:13 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Not sure how to say this, cos I dont want to get slammed. But, there are many people on the Scheme who shouldnt be there, and many who should be on the Scheme who arent

heart 1

[12:13 pm] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

The agency needs to decouple from DSS and chart its own course

[12:14 pm] Robbi Williams

1) simplify the pathway

2) build a new commissioning approach to LAC based on participant choice

3) separate the process of 'assessment leading to a budget' from 'building a plan for social and economic participation'

[12:14 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Agree Codesign is so important as well as co-implementation. This will ensure for example that processes work for people with disability

[12:14 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngannawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Is there some way that we can get rid of the hard border of in and out?

[12:15 pm] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

The Agency could be making its own bilaterals with state/territory mainstream programs to ensure collaboration and place based solutions

like 2

[12:16 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngannawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I worry about the idea of "focus its effort". That risks leaving out crucial "minorities", especially those that are less understood.

[12:16 pm] Philip Waters

- More people with disabilities working at the NDIA
- put out positive stories out in the media
- take a whole of govt approach in addressing systemic barriers (e.g. workforce investments, human rights breaches, markets)
- more consistent planning decisions
- more funding for ILC and a better ILC funding model (to support the investment needs)
- better support for participants to achieve their plans (LACS touching base once a year is too little)
- more focus on working with community level organisations to be more inclusive (mainstream capacity building)

[12:17 pm] Kelly North

I'm ready to swap with Cina now thanks

heart 1

[12:17 pm] Robbi Williams

4) ensure a sustained ILC investment in capacity-building, because the Scheme and the agency needs a vibrant capacity-building space to assist Scheme outcomes

[12:17 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@ Bron - agree. This is what I clumsily referred to as "bolt on strategies" . Need to stop bolting on strategies on a bad design.

[12:19 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

When did any other depart co-fund a disability initiative or program? Hold the rest of government to account.

[12:20 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I would also like to see much closer and formalised engagement between the NDIA and the Quality & Safeguards Commission

like 1

[12:23 pm] Nick Avery

Some strategies to achieve this include:

- Simplify all NDIS processes, website information and resources. Codevelop these processes with participants, IAC, DRCOs and advocates.
- Ensure that communication from the NDIA is provided by staff with expert knowledge in the topic matter. eg The PACE webinars are being delivered by NDIA staff unable to answer any of the questions being asked.
- Reduce external contractors significantly, and build an experienced, well trained and specialised internal workforce which comprises a high percentage of employees with disability.
- Single point of contact wherever possible, with multiple family members with disability having the same point of contact.
- Draft plans to participants, and create plans collaboratively with participants and supporters (a negotiation rather than an internal decision).
- Regular check-ins by the NDIA with participants to ensure safety, provider quality and supports meet needs. Not check-ins by an external contractor as is currently happening, which is confusing participants and comes across as a serious breach of privacy.
- Management of ILC to be returned to NDIA from DSS.

like 1

[12:24 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

NDIS Engage with the participant's ecosystem - person to the environment and consider all expert facts, information and recommendations that is not limited to NDIS processes and decision making and be flexible to ensure scheme meets the genuine needs of person with the disability.

[12:24 pm] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

good points Corri thanks

like 1

[12:24 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I commend your efforts to prepare the Agency for acting on the review of the Scheme, and other input. This discussion has been good.

[12:24 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

Some strategies to achieve this include: Simplify all NDIS processes, website information and resources. Codevelop these processes with participants, IAC, DRCOs and advocates. Ensure that communication from the NDIA is provided by staff with expert knowledge in the topic matter. eg The PACE web...

thanks nick, this is great feedback

[12:24 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@Lisa thanks for the opportunity to have a different discussion from a different lens

[12:25 pm] Bill Gye

A bit of a random comment: ... This may already be happening (but I don't know where) but one thing the agency could do (to make the vision a reality) is to collect and collate (in a "research clearing house") all the many academic studies that are being done on the NDIS. I am at the THEHMHS conference right now and there is at least a dozen presentations by lived experience researchers on many aspects of the NDIS that I know would be of tremendous interest to many in this meeting.

[12:25 pm] Ganesan, Sanjiv

Thank you everyone, very much appreciate your time and input 😊

[12:29 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

PDA would posit that most participants would not, and do not see the NDIA and NDIS as 2 different things. Perhaps, as a part of the Agency strategy, that could be made more transparent.

[1:03 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Hello Paul Dunn (Guest) - how lovely to see you 😊

[1:06 pm] Paul Dunn (Guest)

You too Catherine.

[1:09 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Who are you with now?

[1:09 pm] Philip Waters

It would be good to clarify how the DRCO forum fits within the overall NDIA structure.

like 1

[1:10 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@ Corri - "suggest key partners"

[1:13 pm] George Taleporos

I notice that the IAC is not mentioneD on The Slide, is there a reason for that?

[1:14 pm] McKenzie, Corri

IAC is a legislated function to advise the Board - so a different function to the representatives engagement described on this slide.

like 1

[1:14 pm] Jenny Karavolos

Will the clearing house also have like a Steering Committee function to ensure optimising opportunities and any competing/ conflicting strategies are identified / managed?

[1:14 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Checking that the working groups mentioned here are separate to the RFO working groups? I think Jeff might be asking a similar question?

[1:20 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@Corri thank you. Happy to send thru thoughts how it can be integrated within the existing contexts

[1:21 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Thank you for that acknowledgement Corri

[1:21 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Catherine McAlpine

Checking that the working groups mentioned here are separate to the RFO working groups? I think Jeff might be asking a similar question?

Thanks McKenzie, Corri. Gives space for the proactive discussions.

like 1

[1:22 pm] Robbi Williams

Jenny Karavolos

Will the clearing house also have like a Steering Committee function to ensure optimising opportunities and any competing/ conflicting strategies are identified / managed?

I would say that for this to work well, the clearing house needs to remain alert to (and scope responses for) synergies, interdependencies, or solution conflicts arising from the range of works that have been initiated via the clearing house

like 1

[1:22 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Message to the group: Paul Dunn (Guest) is having some tech issues with Teams. Paul is representing SARU today.

like 2

[1:23 pm] Hastie, Benjamin

Catherine McAlpine

Message to the group: Paul Dunn (Guest) is having some tech issues with Teams. Paul is representing SARU today.

Tech help: recommend closing non essential programs such as Outlook and restarting teams.

[1:25 pm] Robbi Williams

As such, a typical body of work at each Forum might include scoping of new issues, setting new references for working groups (including a test for synergies, conflicts, etc), monitoring progress of working groups, and finalising matters once a working group has completed its work and reported back

[1:25 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@ Corri and Robbi - sure. Love to

like 1

[1:26 pm] Alison Brook

yes!

[1:26 pm] Bill Gye

A love the idea of this being framed as a partnership model and yes like all effective relationships we need to get the details right

[1:26 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

PDA is happy with this proposal

[1:26 pm] Catherine McAlpine

IA happy also

[1:27 pm] Philip Waters

(Sorry, I should have introduced myself, I am here in place of Jen Blyth, CEO of Deaf Australia. I am the General Manager for Deaf Victoria. Nice to meet you all)

heart 4 like 2

[1:29 pm] Bill Gye

Congratulations to all

[1:29 pm] Darryl Steff

Congrats Shannon

[1:29 pm] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

interpreter swap

[1:29 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Congrats Shannon

[1:29 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Congrats REES, Shannon

[1:30 pm] Bill Gye

Sadly in 1 minute I have a terrible clash as there is a national meeting called the organization contracted by Commonwealth DoHA (Health Policy Analysis) to assess and report in 7 months' time the "size of unmet need for psychosocial support outside the NDIS (and all other state/PHN psychosocial support programs) for people with severe mental illness in all jurisdictions". Thank you.. I know I will suffer from FOMO for having to leave this meeting.

[1:30 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Bill Gye

Sadly in 1 minute I have a terrible clash as there is a national meeting called the organization contracted by Commonwealth DoHA (Health Policy Analysis) to assess and report in 7 months' time the "size of unmet need for psychosocial support outside the NDIS (and all other state/PHN psychosocial su...

thank you for joining us bill!

heart 1

[1:39 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngannawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Sorry. I'm trying to multi-task. Another individual advocacy challenge right now.

like 1

[1:43 pm] Carolyn Hodge

same re clashes as many align with DSS DRO meetings

[1:43 pm] ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

Thanks for the feedback - we will look at forward schedule again

[1:43 pm] Catherine McAlpine

There's a clash today with an NDDA meeting, that went ahead anyway...

[1:43 pm] Carolyn Hodge

We did provide feedback but then the invitations came though unchanged

like 1

[1:43 pm] Jenny Karavolos

and clashes with DSS National Autism Strategy Oversight Council meetings

like 1

[1:44 pm] Catherine McAlpine

So did we!

[1:44 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Jenny Karavolos

and clashes with DSS National Autism Strategy Oversight Council meetings

That is not good

[1:44 pm] ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

We might need to ask you for more info on external meetings - apologies we just don't have visibility of non-NDIA arranged meetings.

[1:45 pm] Catherine McAlpine

ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

We might need to ask you for more info on external meetings - apologies we just don't have visibility of non-NDIA arranged meetings.

No worries. We are frustrated with DSS scheduling things on days such as today which have been in our calendars for a long time.

like 1

[1:46 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Catherine McAlpine

There's a clash today with an NDDA meeting, that went ahead anyway...

Yep, I'm here instead too.

like 1

[1:47 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

we'll talk separately about all this.

[1:48 pm] Catherine McAlpine

One suggestion would be to give DSS the key DRCO /Codesign meeting dates. And maybe (just to drop Jeff Smith in it) we ask DANA to strongly say to all government that it's not OK to ignore our feedback on availability, especially when it's another government meeting.

like 2

[1:51 pm] ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

Catherine McAlpine (Guest)

One suggestion would be to give DSS the key DRCO /Codesign meeting dates. And maybe (just to drop Jeff Smith in it) we ask DANA to strongly say to all government that it's not OK to ignore our feedback on availability, especially when it's another government meeting.

I was having the same thought - I will make sure we share our forward schedule with DSS. We are going to write to all RFO co-design groups on meeting dates next week. its not co-design if you all can't be there! we are also juggling IAC commitments and participant reference group meetings as well.

surprised 1

[1:52 pm] Catherine McAlpine

ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

I was having the same thought - I will make sure we share our forward schedule with DSS. We are going to write to all RFO co-design groups on meeting dates next week. its not co-design if you all can't be there! we are also juggling IAC commitments and participant reference group meetings as well.

There's a lot on!

[1:53 pm] Philip Waters

Will the CALD strategy include Australian languages like Aboriginal languages and Australian Sign Language?

[2:00 pm] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

interpreter swap

[2:02 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Ive remembered why my hand was up

[2:03 pm] Robbi Williams

Apologies but I lost signal and didn't hear Corrie's update re IPAG. Given we might safely predict the Review will assert there needs to be a change in the approach to access, assessment, budgeting, and planning, it seems worth the NDIA getting a jump on this by doing some pieces of work now. This could include running a small pilot of alternative approaches, or even

something relatively self-contained like co-designing a role description that sets out the skills and experience an assessor might need. Otherwise, my worry is the NDIA and its participants will continue to feel the burden of the deeply problematic current arrangements and we lose more time before there is momentum away from that

[2:06 pm] Robbi Williams

I'm very supportive of Catherine's comments re the importance of Easy Read

like 1

[2:08 pm] Andrea Garcia

Apologies my connection is having trouble - definitely an ongoing issue and thank you for raising Catherine. Dwayne would have more comments - we would love to be involved in further discussion.

[2:08 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

i agree Catherine and Corri

heart 1

[2:09 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

The discussion between Corri and Catherine leads well into the Agency's Strategy. The Agency should lead the way, and then encourage other Govt departments to follow their example.

heart 2 like 2

[2:09 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

The discussion between Corri and Catherine leads well into the Agency's Strategy. The Agency should lead the way, and then encourage other Govt departments to follow their example.

Great point Andrew

[2:13 pm] Jeff Smith

back in 2 mins

[2:13 pm] Catherine McAlpine

REES, Shannon now we are at this stage of the meeting I have realised a missing action item from the last non-RFO relating to PACE and the related changes in policies.

like 1

[2:13 pm] Catherine McAlpine

We asked for a briefing of the related policy changes that are outside of the items that O'BRIEN, Garth briefs us on

like 1

[2:14 pm] REES, Shannon

Catherine McAlpine

We asked for a briefing of the related policy changes that are outside of the items that O'BRIEN, Garth briefs us on

Noted Catherine - Alex do you mind chasing up plse?

[2:15 pm] ROSENTHAL, Alexandria

We can pick that up either out of session or cover in our next meeting - apologies we missed it in the last round of actions.

[2:16 pm] Catherine McAlpine

It's OK - I missed it on initial review also. You might remember Darryl Steff and I (in particular) asking a range of questions that were outside the scope of the presentations and asked for more info.

heart 2 like 1

[2:18 pm] Catherine McAlpine

O'BRIEN, Garth would you prefer questions along the way or at the end?

[2:24 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

How is this process going to be implemented for participants who are offered "rollover" plans?

[2:26 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

My current plan is due for renewal in November this year, but I have a plan rollover letter to extend it another 12 months

[2:27 pm] Catherine McAlpine

what are API's?

[2:27 pm] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

swap

[2:30 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Catherine McAlpine

what are API's?

Application Programming Interface

software accesses information and uses it or presents it differently.

heart 3

[2:30 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Thanks Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

[2:32 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Thank you for the clarification. much clearer.

[2:32 pm] Philip Waters

A question about PACE: is there going to be a field that records participant communication preferences? Background is that many deaf and hard of hearing people receive voice calls from NDIA/LAC staff even when they requested to be contacted via SMS or email. Voice calls really negatively impacts participant experience for our cohort.

[2:34 pm] REES, Shannon

I can follow up

[2:34 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I remain keen to see the data models of the new system so I know what the systems are capable of. I am especially concerned that the whole Scheme depends on the underlying data ... without this information, I simply cannot be confident the Scheme will deliver.

[2:35 pm] Jenny Karavolos

@Catherine AGREE

[2:36 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

I remain keen to see the data models of the new system so I know what the systems are capable of. I am especially concerned that the whole Scheme depends on the underlying data ... without this information, I simply cannot be confident the Scheme will deliver.

i'm so sorry, i ran away on leave without sending the link, Bob. I'll pop in the chat and also email to you for later on

[2:37 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/6212/download?attachment>

[2:38 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

doesn't go as far as you'd like, given your background, but is what we've produced publicly so far... happy to discuss further at a later point.

[2:38 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

What happened to Nadia? I take it that we never speak again of the Avatar? 😊

laugh 1

[2:41 pm] Sally Karandrews

I would like to be part of that conversation Catherine. For the entire time I have been at BCA one of the most visited pages on our website is 'Proving your identity'. Without a drivers licence or a passport this can be such a challenge.

heart 1

[2:42 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

AGREED CATH

heart 1

[2:42 pm] Catherine McAlpine

I understand the information about applying for a waiver re the birth cert process is not accessible

like 1

[2:43 pm] Philip Waters

Vinaka vaka levu, Gareth!

[2:45 pm] Sally Karandrews

That sounds like a really good idea Carolyn

[2:47 pm] Darryl Steff

Good idea Carolyn and Gareth - the questions have started coming through already.

[2:48 pm] Skye Kakoschke-Moore

[2:48 pm] Skye Kakoschke-Moore

Sounds great thank you Carolyn. I imagine there will be many parents of children with disability who may have questions so CYDA would be really interested in supporting you with what you proposed.

heart 1

[2:49 pm] Jenny Karavolos

Skye Kakoschke-Moore (External)

Sounds great thank you Carolyn. I imagine there will be many parents of children with disability who may have questions so CYDA would be really interested in supporting you with what you proposed.

Alliance as well

[2:51 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Jenny Karavolos

Alliance as well

And IA too. Thanks Carolyn Hodge
relieved 1
[2:52 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Noted, Skye Kakoschke-Moore and Jenny Karavolos and Catherine McAlpine I will share with DROs when we get going

heart 4
[2:52 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)
Jenny Karavolos

Alliance as well

Yes. Reimagine is happy to support, too.
heart 1
[2:53 pm] Nick Avery
Carolyn Hodge (External)

Noted, Skye Kakoschke-Moore and Jenny Karavolos and Catherine McAlpine I will share with DROs when we get going

Every Australian Counts are keen to be involved too, Carolyn. 😊
heart 1
[2:53 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Garth could you please talk us through the timing for the rollout? It would be good to align information with roll out

[2:54 pm] Carolyn Hodge
Nick Avery

Every Australian Counts are keen to be involved too, Carolyn. 😊

Thanks Nick, I've noted and will be in touch 😊
like 1
[2:54 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Fantastic to hear nominee start and finish dates are being introduced. Is that just for participants on PACE or overall?

[2:55 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)
Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Yes. Reimagine is happy to support, too.

Carolyn Hodge - in case you missed this comment.
[2:56 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)
Carolyn, PDA is keen also.
heart 1

[2:57 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Thanks Andrew Fairbairn (Guest) and Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

[2:57 pm] Nick Avery

Participants who have just started a 2 or 3 yr plan recently, will they be transitioned to PACE earlier to keep to the 18mth timeline?

like 1

[2:59 pm] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

interpreter swap 😊

[3:02 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Garth you spoke of a new website. Is this the PACE Sandbox?

[3:05 pm] Jenny Karavolos

Can I please check - was it relayed earlier (or possibly I miss heard) - that participants will receive a Draft Plan ?

[3:06 pm] Jenny Karavolos

Thank you

[3:06 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

we heard suggestions earlier that the NDIS Review may want some major changes to how the Scheme operates. Looking at the material, I wonder whether the system will be able to deliver what is required. We have experience that the underlying IT systems significantly limit the NDIS operation. Change does not happen because the IT systems don't get adapted. How have you tackled these issues?

[3:07 pm] Nick Avery

To clarify - the PACE system has been built to enable draft plans?

And secondly, Does PACE remove the primary / secondary disability problem?

[3:08 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Nick Avery (External)

To clarify - the PACE system has been built to enable draft plans? And secondly, Does PACE remove the primary / secondary disability problem?

No - there are not draft plans in PACE. The system is configurable though - so if draft plans were introduced by government in the future we could change the system to support this. This is

important because when draft plans were discussed previously we could not have changed our old system to enable this.

like 1

[3:09 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Nick Avery

To clarify - the PACE system has been built to enable draft plans? And secondly, Does PACE remove the primary / secondary disability problem?

In previous meetings Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest) and I have said very strongly that now that PACE has the capacity to record multiple disabilities, that this change should be a priority. But it seems it is only part of the gradual rollout 🙄

like 1

[3:12 pm] Philip Waters

Catherine McAlpine deaf and hard of hearing people have the same problem with receiving calls from unknown callers. we often miss appointments or deadlines because we didnt know the NDIA were trying to contact us

[3:13 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

It's interesting that the Technical Document you provided the link to does not mention disability type even though it has been a regular topic of conversation in these forums. Please can you explain to us (in writing) how this will be implemented?

like 2

[3:15 pm] Kelly North

Ready to swap 😊

[3:17 pm] Philip Waters

Might not be relevant here, but given that PACE changes the way plans are developed, what happened to the 'Would we fund it' fact sheets?

[3:19 pm] Catherine McAlpine

There's some interesting feedback coming up in the context of PACE about the role and performance of LAC's that is worth considering in the context of RFO work and the Review.

like 2

[3:21 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Philip Waters (External)

Might not be relevant here, but given that PACE changes the way plans are developed, what happened to the 'Would we fund it' fact sheets?

No changes to these as a result of PACE - PACE replicates current planning practice. If this changes in future (for example, out of the review) we can reconfigure the system.

[3:22 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Philip Waters (External)

Catherine McAlpine deaf and hard of hearing people have the same problem with receiving calls from unknown callers. we often miss appointments or deadlines because we didnt know the NDIA were trying to contact us

We are working on a solution this with a view to trying to make "NDIA" come up on phones when calling rather than "Unknown Number"

[3:22 pm] Catherine McAlpine

McKenzie, Corri and REES, Shannon I don't think there will be time for another question I had at the end of the meeting. I wanted to ask about the Decision Support project transition. Specifically - could we (IA and other interested DRO's) please see the transition plan and possibly meet to discuss some specific concerns? Assume Jeff Smith might like to be part of that discussion.

like 1

[3:25 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Were we not just told that PEP was gone?

[3:25 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Were we not just told that PEP was gone?

This will be a change for national expansion - we haven't made this change in Tasmania Test yet
like 1

[3:25 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

language for "participant endorsed providers" will be updated to "my providers" by national rollout - takes time to get the change to flow through :0

like 1

[3:26 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

beat me!

[3:26 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

Thank you.

[3:27 pm] George Taleporos

What is TSP

[3:27 pm] Nick Avery

Typical Support Package

like 1

[3:27 pm] Catherine McAlpine

McKenzie, Corri

Absolutely - not quite developed enough yet but as soon as it is next step would be a further discussion.

Thanks McKenzie, Corri. However, there was an initial transition plan that we haven't seen - and there are problems right now for some people that transitioned from the DSS pilot (with advocacy orgs) to NDIA (now LACs) not receiving the same level of support.

[3:27 pm] McKenzie, Corri

typical support package

[3:28 pm] McKenzie, Corri

Catherine McAlpine

Thanks McKenzie, Corri. However, there was an initial transition plan that we haven't seen - and there are problems right now for some people that transitioned from the DSS pilot (with advocacy orgs) to NDIA (now LACs) not receiving the same level of support.

Oh sorry Catherine I think I was talking about a different thing - will follow up offline with you

[3:28 pm] George Taleporos

McKenzie, Corri

typical support package

Of course! Thank you

[3:28 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

McKenzie, Corri

typical support package

a very important element in individual planning. 😊

[3:29 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

a very important element in individual planning. 😊

especially for a spectrum condition

like 2

[3:29 pm] Robbi Williams

Tsp = teaspoon. No wait, wrong network

laugh 5

[3:29 pm] Catherine McAlpine

What is Streamline Plan Confidence?

[3:29 pm] Interpreter - Cina she/her (Guest)

swap

[3:30 pm] Carolyn Nikoloski

Sorry all, I need to drop off the call now. Thanks for the meeting - will see you next time.

heart 1

[3:31 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth

Catherine McAlpine

What is Streamline Plan Confidence?

we're building some capability to allow us to try and not have to go through a full planning process if its not needed. the confidence is an indication of risk from our perspective, which then allows staff to ask the participant around their circumstances, and if everything is pretty good, we'll try to keep the process low intensity.

like 2

[3:31 pm] Bob Buckley (A4), Ngunnawal & Ngambri lands (Guest)

This is very helpful. I've never been shown anything like this before.

Previously, I've had to guess based on Internal Reviews in TDocs (AAT stuff) and the consequent NDIS Plan.

[3:33 pm] Ross Joyce

I'm in too

[3:33 pm] Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

How many goals can be added to PACE? Will they be in the similar format as they are now?

[3:33 pm] Philip Waters

how much of this will be shown to participants in planning meetings?

[3:33 pm] Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Can Peta record a walk-through and send out the video to this group? Might be more time-efficient?

like 2

[3:33 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Can Peta record a walk-through and send out the video to this group? Might be more time-efficient?

Doesn't allow for questions though?

[3:34 pm] Robbi Williams

Yes let's do this properly. Maybe even do an audio-visual recording Peta giving a summary of the platform, which we can watch in our own time, and then bring questions and comments?

[3:34 pm] Philip Waters

thank you everyone

[3:34 pm] O'BRIEN, Garth


Andrew Fairbairn (Guest)

How many goals can be added to PACE? Will they be in the similar format as they are now?

Yvonne Keane AM - Reimagine (Guest)

Can Peta record a walk-through and send out the video to this group? Might be more time-efficient?

we can't record, unfortunately. it opens us up to some security risks. but happy to continue to support some live demos.

AI LIVE  **NDIA - Co-design Advisory Group**
Meeting (AUCODE1209A - Ai-Live Premium)

SPEAKER:
Hi, everyone.

SPEAKER:
Hi, ^{647F - persona} [REDACTED].

SPEAKER:
I have ^{647F - perso} [REDACTED] in the background, so I'm going to go straight into mute, and hopefully he does not interrupt too much.

SPEAKER:
That is OK. We don't mind interruptions.

SPEAKER:
He has always been great in the meetings that I have been involved in.

SPEAKER:
He is very diplomatic for a three-year-old.

SPEAKER:
Hey, Skye.

SPEAKER:
Hello. How is everyone?

SPEAKER:
Pretty good. Thank you so much for agreeing to chair.

SPEAKER:
My pleasure. Thank you for thinking of me. Better collaboration, this is good.

SPEAKER:
Hi, ^{647F - personal p} [REDACTED]. How are you?


SPEAKER:
Hi, ^{647F - perso} [REDACTED]. Good, thanks. Hi, everyone.

SPEAKER:
Hello, ^{647F - perso} [REDACTED].

SPEAKER:
^{647F - perso} [REDACTED] has a new car and he wants to show it to you.

SPEAKER:
That is very exciting. You have to turn on the video, ^{647F - persona} [REDACTED]. I want to see the new car.

SPEAKER:

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Bye, ^{s47F - perso} [REDACTED].

SPEAKER:
Alright, do we have everyone?

SPEAKER:
I think we are still missing ^{s47F - persona} [REDACTED] and ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED]. Shall we give it another 30 seconds and then we will start?

SPEAKER:
Another 30 seconds. Let's do it.

SPEAKER:
Alright, I don't think anyone else is going to join us. Skye, you are welcome to start.

SPEAKER:
Thanks, ^{s47F - perso} [REDACTED]. Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the 21st meeting of the Co-design Advisory Group. My name is Skye Kakoschke-Moore. I am CEO of Children and Young People with Disability Australia. And I will be chairing today's meeting with the spirit of collaboration and co-design with the agency. I would firstly like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands we are meeting, and I pay respect to Elders past and present. And also to Elders from other community who may be here today.


Hi, ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED]. Just letting you know, I am chairing the meeting today, something different. That is why you are hearing me talking up. Just as I'm doing the acknowledgement of country, I would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to people with disability who are the reason the NDIS was built and why we are here today.

You will also notice that ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED] and ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED] are still not with us today, that is because we are still awaiting confirmation from the Minister to confirm the new members of the Independent Advisory Council. Once this is confirmed, we will choose the IAC representatives in future Co-design Advisory Group meetings. I would like to welcome Aaron Verlin, the general manager of the co-design division, and is a senior position which is exciting. And he is responsible for expanding and developing the NDIA co-design and community engagement, to ensure that the voices of the participants in disability sector is informed.

And this branch forms part of the new division, and Aaron will be joining us on an ongoing basis replacing Shannon Rees. Welcome to your first CAG meeting, Aaron.

SPEAKER:
Thank you, Skye. That was a wonderful introduction. I hope I live up to that statement of the role description. Certainly thank you for the opportunity and looking forward to meeting all individually and supporting this committee. Thank you.

SPEAKER:
Thank you. Today, we also have ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED] from DSS joining us, Narissa is filling in for a ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED]. It is ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED] here? Can I spot ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED]?

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Meeting (AUCODE1209A - Ai-Live Premium)

SPEAKER:

It looks like she has not joined yet.

SPEAKER:

And lastly, Corri McKenzie is on leave, is an apology today. Onto housekeeping. Housekeeping for today's meeting, we have captioning available for the meeting. And the URL to the live captions should be available in the Teams chat. Yes it is, I've just checked. Hopefully, you should have received the pre-reading materials for today's meeting, which includes the agenda, the CAG options paper, or Co-design Advisory Group option paper, the executive summary and the actions log from the last meeting in August. And I know there are a few actions listed on the agenda today.

Before I move on, are there any questions about the information or the actions?

Based on that response, we can move on to the first agenda item for today, which is in discussion on the future of the Co-design Advisory Group. And I have just seen in the chat that s47F - personal privac is travelling today and will be tailing in on her phone shortly. Thank you for the update. Hi, Ross. Thank you for joining us. I am sharing today, just so you know. That is why I am speaking now.

And s47F - persona, you just missed the acknowledgement of country and housekeeping. So there was material provided about that in the options paper provided to us in the pre-reading. I will hand over now to Alex Rosenthal who is the acting manager of co-design and engagement to lead us on this discussion on behalf of Corri.

SPEAKER:

Alex speaking. This follows on the conversation he had in August about the future of CAG now that we have the reforms for the outcomes and government structures establish, and that is separate to the reforms for the outcome Steering Committee. The conversation from last month was about different options.

Today we just want to facilitate a conversation with all of you about which option you are most comfortable with. The two options briefly are to either suspend CAG for the time being, for a short period of time. For example, until the end of the calendar year or in January where we can come back and review where we are up to, and the status of the six co-design projects and where the implementation is up to. What future co-design we need to prioritise out of the review from the Royal Commission.

Or the second option is to maintain both the CAG and the RFO Steering Committee as separate bodies, with CAG continuing to look after those initial six co-design projects through implementation. But maybe meeting on a less regular basis. At the moment we have monthly meetings. And then with the RFO looking after the six groups under RFO. It is up to all of you. I will open it up to members to discuss their views on what they think would work best for the next few months. Catherine?

SPEAKER:

Hello, thank you Alex. I think I was on leave for the last meeting, so the only things I know on is what is written up here. But one thing that doesn't seem to have, doesn't seem to have been

discussed in more depth, the role of what we call us, the role of the organisation who has to do some of the communication.

One of the really useful things about the CAG structure, and of course everything has changed since the RFO has come in, but part of the critical part of the CAG function is ability for us to meet separately for the sector, for us to meet with the sector colleagues and bring them back. One thing about the RFO implementation Steering Committee, it doesn't seem to have an organisation without function.

While there is the implementation committee and the co-chairs, and information will flow back to the working group, but there is not an opportunity for the sector to talk about the other working groups that they are not a part of. Because in general, the sector representatives are just in one group. But of course many of us have interest in multiple groups, across groups.

The suggestion that I was going to make, be blended suggestion I was going to make was that I would be in favour of suspending CAG until you said, January is a bit tricky, until after (Laughs) After, whenever the right moment is. After the NDIS Review, after the Royal Commission report, and at some relevant point around the RFO journey and in relation to the other two, when we start to see what the work in front of us is, and the way the RFO work will merge, with the Review by the Disability Royal Commission would look like.

But included in the RFO implementation steering committee, about talking to the sector colleagues, about being well informed about the other working groups and how people feel on how things are going. I just want to add my complexity, and add that into the mix as well.

SPEAKER:

That is good. Can I ask the question, s47F - personal privacy? The RFO implementation steering committee, and my goodness, we have to work on the titles of these groups, don't we? Last week we talked about the need as well, particularly DRCO and IAC members outside of the RFO process, to keep them informed. And they talked about talking about the joint DRCO and IAC meetings, so the whole network and see what is being co-designed. But I think what you are suggesting is less of a showcase, and more ability to feed into groups across.

SPEAKER:


Particularly the ability to feed into groups across. Obviously, I was not in the other meeting, but if the combined IAC and DRCO meetings, and also the DRCO Forum, trying to do all of that in that agenda with the NDIA and not have the ability to have the other conversations that we have for example, I would be strongly against that.

SPEAKER:

To clarify, the joint IAC and DRCO is going to be separate to your DRCO Forum. The DRCO will happen on Friday. We will separate them. However, I take your point, which is going to my question, which is we are still in the room, are you looking for a space without the NDIA, and I'm not going to be offended to have a conversation about what is happening across groups and what is working and what is not to align the sector views?

SPEAKER:

I'm going to throw to my sector colleagues in a minute. But I would strongly say yes. One of the

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things we need is a safe space to debate, and it is not helpful for us to have NDIS and other governments in the room when we have our own debate. We need a safe space to stop because that was the thing that we discovered. If it is not resourced, it is too hard for us to do. Having the resource and having the organisation go, "This is your role."

At the moment, it is IA, but the intent was to transfer that to DANA, because when the IA contract was signed, with CYDA, it is something... but also we have contract that is up for a couple of months. I'm not very concerned about who but I am concerned about how.

My view, and I will stop talking now, it is that we need a safe space separate to have those discussions and debates.

SPEAKER:
Totally.

SPEAKER:
Skye speaking. Thanks, Alex. I agree with what you said, s47F - personal privacy. I think having a safe space for those discussions is essential for the reforms outcomes program of work and supporting an organisation being funded to help coordinate that. That is important for us as a sector. In regards to the options in the discussion people, I am erring towards option 2, where we maintain the CAG and RFO Steering Committee, for a couple of reasons. My first thought is it is important that we do not lose sight over the great work that has already been done around co-design of agency policy and program at the sacrifice of the reforms outcomes work.

Think it would be important for us to maintain some of that momentum. One thing that crystallised most of you about option 2 when I saw the opportunity that was presented once the membership of the implementation Steering Committee was circulated, there were different organisations and presented there than here. And I think that is a great thing, and I think it is important the agency works closely with as many stakeholders as possible so I would see this Co-design Advisory Group provide a valuable perspective to the agency in that sense.


And the other thing, I am keen for us to consider how the Co-design Advisory Group can be less, continue to be responsive, but be more proactive in providing areas that need attention. That might come through the implementation Steering Committees through the reforms outcomes work, but because they are very defined in their scope, I just want to make sure we have less ability as a sector to give us thinking space around "we have not looked at here for a while, how is that tracking? Is there work that we need to do in the policy area?"

Given the workload of the Steering Committee, if we add that on top of the Disability Royal Commission, and NDIS Review recommendations, I'm just worried about the workload for one group, that would be my view.

SPEAKER:
Thanks, Skye. s47F - personal, I think you had your hand up, but we lost you. I think you are next in line.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Alex. Sorry about that. I couldn't hear anybody. I had to get out and come back in.

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Sorry, I missed everything you say, Skye. But I'm sure it is brilliant. I think it might be along the lines of what ^{s47F - personal privacy} said. I agree with ^{s47F - personal privacy}. I think there needs to be a forum where we can discuss things at a DRCO level. I think it should only be the DRCOs.

And we'll have also had a history with the CAG representatives, not just the ones here, but previously as well, we haven't got that working well. And part of it is the resourcing issue I think. In terms of bringing it back to the wider group, because not everybody is involved in the other Steering Committees.

Not everybody that is on those is a part of the DRCOs, and we do not have a chance for those on what ^{s47F - personal privacy} was saying, to get together to have that discussion is an entire group, which I think if we would be able to do is great hearing that. And I think that has been proven over a long period of time.

As to whether we suspend, we can suspend for that period. And I think ^{s47F - personal privacy} mentioned the fact that January is probably not the right spot to fit if you are suspending. Because Christmas holidays and by the end we would be absolutely exhausted between what is happening at the end of this year. So probably February/March?

The mechanism, haven't got quite in my mind, but there is a mechanism where the DRCOs still needs to get together and discuss those things so those who are on the implementation can come back and talk about their perspectives, and those who are not, which is the other important piece, to also tune in and put their views forward if they do not think something is working the way they think it should be working or if it is going swimmingly.

SPEAKER:

I hear you on the need to have a safe space to connect and adjust and discuss and share information with us. I fully agree. What are your thoughts on... we presented that change to DRCO operating model on the last DRCO forum where there is more that independent secretariat support, potentially Catherine to your point, provided by DANA. Is that the type of thing you are looking for, or is it an alternative to that?


SPEAKER:

Oh no. Just from my point of view, and I just noticed ^{s47F - personal} has put her hand up. Skye, I think you said it much better.

I would be quite happy for that to be included in DANA's scope of work. Overall, the thing that is needed, and we started on a design and it fell over because of all of the changes. But there needs to be a space for us to talk and there needs to be a place where a whole lot of the information is put together, so that I want to know and have access to meeting minutes and things like that at the moment that I need them and not scattered in my inbox.

And we had discussions and done some thinking about whether information might sit, and also how do we have discussions. I would be interested in any discussion with DANA and the agency's making sure that is included in what would happen. I am interested in whatever would happen, just the input for the details of that.

But I have no desire to do it myself. I am happy for another organisation to be doing it, not us.

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Yeah. Yes, I think it could be incorporated into the model going forward.

SPEAKER:

OK, thank you. Thank you, s47F - personal privacy. Aaron?

SPEAKER:

I will just be quick. It's Aaron speaking. Nice to meet you as well, Ross. For me, there are three conversations around... one is around engagement between respective DRCOs and the ability to do that, anything that is very clear and can be captured, and the second one the current reform program for outcomes, and the ability of the coach has to have a space to have cross collaboration which is the implementation steering group, and then there is this sense around CAG and things like the evaluation of co-design to date and the other pieces were. There seems to be three pockets of work.

And of course I agree with you, s47F - personal privacy. And we have the review, and the Disability Royal Commission, and what is the agency approach, and the appropriate forums to use that, because implementation can be subsumed into that as we go forward. So the question is, the purpose of this group against those mechanisms and whether we have a level of clarity now, or do we pause, and say that we are in a better space now and what kind of looks like.

I think we need to think about the three pieces of work and mission we collectively make those requirements. But I will pause there, because I can see s47F - persona has her hand up.

SPEAKER:

Over to you, s47F - persona.

SPEAKER:

Thanks. Adding some of what I was going to say has been said. Really want to be respectful of what the DRCOs have mention in terms of the safe space, and the workload around all of this is immense for all of us. IAC is feeling that at the moment, and also conscious, I think the question here goes to some of the work that has been done previously in co-design.

It feels like in my head the question is, do we think that doing the evaluation of the previous co-design and keeping an eye on to where some of the pieces of policy work might be done through co-design, like participant safety and supported decision-making might be headed, is that the work that we want to be doing over the next few months, or is there a better place to be done in the new year?


I do not have a clear answer to that. But I just want to make sure that question got framed properly.

SPEAKER:

s47F - personal privacy.

SPEAKER:

Listening to the conversation, and I thought that was really helpful, s47F - persona. It feels like waiting until next year is too far away. I was listening to Skye's point, I think waiting this is too far away. Maybe we just skip the next six weeks or whatever, which is going to be full on.

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I'm just saying for all of the Auburnians. If we meet in November, do we have a meeting? Sorry, I'm going to check that to make sure that I can come to it.

SPEAKER:
It is on the 14th.

SPEAKER:
If we skip the next meeting, and then Aaron if the agency can do... or Aaron and Alex if you could do the work that you just described, and also what s47f - persona described on clarifying the purpose of this group in a context to all of us, you probably will not start that until some of the reports and once you have done your thinking. And then have the discussion there. It sounds a bit... I can see that would be very helpful. Would that work for you then, Skye?

SPEAKER:
Skye speaking. Absolutely.

SPEAKER:
And we can come back with significant update on the evaluation work as well. We can continue that work. s47f - persona and s47f - persona is here to talk about that. But we can continue that work and come back over the six week period as well.

OK, we pick this up again in November. Is everyone comfortable with that?


SPEAKER:
What is the action item? What is the action item in connecting the discussion about the safe space on the discussion with the implementation oversight committee, whatever it's called. Does that mean we will just have the discussion in November the in-person meeting?

SPEAKER:
I think we need to have that separately, s47f - personal privacy.

SPEAKER:
So we need to bring them together.

SPEAKER:
Our teams look after all of the groups, the DRCOs. And I think we need to fold that into that. We are going to be circulating a paper on the session on the back of the DRCO meeting, saying that this is what we think the revised operating model could look like. And we can feed the resourcing for that sector only, the information exchange for the proposal. We can check the feedback, update the paper, and you will see it out of session, and we can talk about the broader operating model in November, if you are comfortable with that. The DRCO meeting, not in November CAG meeting.

SPEAKER:
There is usually a communiqué that comes out of this meeting. Out of CAG. If we can measure that is all really clear, because it is confusing. So that is really clear and whether action is being taken, that would be great.

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SPEAKER:

If others are comfortable, if that is too confusing, I'm happy to take the feedback and have a different approach. Our others comfortable with that element being picked up in the broader DRCO group?

SPEAKER:

I think so.

SPEAKER:

Yes.

SPEAKER:

Great, thank you.

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I'm late everybody. I have been held up in a couple of other meetings. I'm sorry about that.

SPEAKER:

Not a problem, b47f - personal privacy. We just had a conversation about those options that were put to CAG around the future of CAG and how we will work. There were mixed views on whether we want to pause or continue. And we decided we are going to skip the October meeting and come together in November, and have another check-in on where the RFO work and the review work that is coming up too, the recommendations from the Royal Commission, and the evaluation were, and have a more informed conversation about ongoing future of CAG then. Are you comfortable with that, b47f - personal privacy?

SPEAKER:

It sounds fine.

SPEAKER:

Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. Is there anything as you want to get out of the conversation today?

SPEAKER:

That was wonderfully productive. I am grateful for everyone for being action oriented.

SPEAKER:

Looks like we are ahead of schedule too, which is good news, by 10 minutes. Hold onto your hats. We will move to the next agenda item now, which is the co-design evaluation proposal. There are three components to this item that we will be going through, a recap of the proposed options for co-design evaluation, and then a discussion of the retrospective co-design process an opportunity for CAG to be involved in procurement evaluation.

And thirdly, a discussion on the co-design evaluation approach with a focus on development of

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evaluation. Aaron, now is your time to shine in your first meeting with us. You will lead the discussion on the first two points, and then Aaron will hand over to s47f - personal, to talk us through the PowerPoint presentation on any procurement evaluation.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Skye. I have a couple of notes here. Clearly I was not at the last CAG meeting. The first man as you have said is to get confirmation around the evaluation approach and get confirmation from CAG, so do a bit of recapping on the previous meeting.

Clearly CAG has expressed the view that they wanted to undertake evaluation both retrospectively and clearly looked at the past co-design activities. But really importantly also, create a formation of a development evaluation approach for the current reform for outcomes.

Looking back but also looking forward. Clearly, that would provide the agency with the best outcomes to make sure that it informs our future co-design work. I just want to make sure we have captured that information right, so all of the agreements in the past, looking good? OK.

I will take the thumbs up as fine, Skye.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. s47f - personal privacy, it looks like I saw a raised hand quickly, but I think it was supposed to be a thumbs up.

SPEAKER:

That was just me not being able to use the technology.

SPEAKER:

The next one is then the role of CAG in the evaluation process and more importantly the procurement activity. What we have done is we have rattled the government procurement folks to find out the most streamlined way we can do that. I will speak and then I'm happy for questions about the approach that we are seeking for CAG's endorsement today.

We are looking for external provider for the retrospective, the past co-design activity. I know s47f - personal privacy and s47f - personal will talk about the internal work for the future, so we are looking at the previous co-design activities.

What we would be establishing is clearly CAG would be set up as an advisory group, and what I mean by an advisory group, there are a couple of parts to that. The agency clearly remains the delegate, because under the Commonwealth procurement guidelines, the agency is the entity entering into the agreement and going through the process.

I think that is clear, but we want to discuss what functions of the CAG have. The first requirement is making sure there are no CAG members interested in undertaking the activity, in assigning a conflict of interests statement, and the next part would be the agency would prepare a draft scope of the intent of the evaluation. And clearly, we would bring it to CAG's review for their input and make sure we capture your questions or concerns

Then the agency would undertake the procurement activity. Once the respondents have

submitted their applications, the agency would clearly undertake the one-on-one probity to make sure that all of the mandatory fields have been filled out and then we will submit the evaluation, against the statement of requirements. And then we will involve CAG in that assessment before making a final decision.

What was the determination? And then we would seek CAG's views against the finding, their understanding would provide a report. And the finalised decision point would be the process of entering the contract. The probity advice is clearly CAG is not the delegate. I think we all understand the contractual perspective, but we are genuine in bringing CAG along for the scope and the evaluation of the respondents before we finalise our approach to market.

That is a lot of information, Skye. I'm happy to repeat any elements. But I will pause for any questions or comments on the proposed approach.

SPEAKER:

b47F - personal privacy, over to you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. A couple of things, firstly overall that sounds pretty good. I was not involved on the CAG when the first evaluation was developed. I think this is where b47F - personal privacy might be particularly helpful and b47F - personal privacy. My understanding is it is frustrating when CAG had input and it was not designed in earlier enough class time, but my biggest question would be, are you talking about an open tender or a targeted tender approach in that we might have use, and the others might have views, and I certainly have a view in terms of preferred or one particular preferred provider for this type of work?

I'm interested in what input we might be able to have in terms of the decision, input into whether depending on the approach you are taking, that certain providers are considered?

SPEAKER:

The short answer is yes, b47F - personal privacy. We would welcome your recommendations on who we should approach. So we would welcome your input into the entities that you believe would be good to bid for this work.

SPEAKER:

And at this stage, are you intending it to be open, targeted direct selection or is that part of the thing that we might provide input on?

SPEAKER:

Andrew, did you want to jump in and answer that?


SPEAKER:

It would be targeted.

SPEAKER:

Targeted. So if it is targeted, therefore we can have input?

SPEAKER:

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Spot on.

SPEAKER:
Lovely. Thank you.

SPEAKER:
Ross, you are next.

SPEAKER:
Yes, thank you. Agree, the last time it would have been better for us to have involvement in the process. That is good stuff. I think the process is much better than what we had previously.

Very supportive of the approach you have got, and it is good to hear that we can recommend various ones. We don't have any capacity whatsoever. Nor do I think we have sufficient skills do that. But as ^{s47F - personal privacy} said, we have a couple that would be good to have put in front of to see if they have an interest going forward. It would be good for us to have that available. Thank you.

SPEAKER:
I will just quickly respond, if that is OK, Skye? Certainly, we were not anticipating CAG being any of the entities. We just have to ask the question. That would be fine. On the other thing I missed, when we went out to the direct source, we would also make mention that CAG would be aware of the submissions, and be aware of the process, we want to make sure there is visibility for anyone is aware of the CAG process as well. I should have added that. ^{s47F - personal privacy}, I think you are next.


SPEAKER:
Thanks very much, Aaron. I have a question. There was a list of organisations, a list of suppliers. Have they already been approached or is that just an FYI on page 6 of the pack?

SPEAKER:
^{s47F - personal privacy}, I can answer that. That is just an FYI. Those are the organisations that have experience in evaluating partnership-type arrangements. We will not have discussions with anyone until we have approval.

SPEAKER:
OK.

SPEAKER:
Skye speaking. Aaron, was there any other advice or input that you would like from the group about this particular item?

SPEAKER:
I don't think at this point, but before I hand over to our other colleagues, I thought just for transparency, I want to make sure to capture those points, the steps along the way, just so it is clear. Because of that it is a good reference point to say that this is where we are in a step of the process and work CAG is involved, and where NDIA and the delegates are involved. I just want to take that as an action that we can provide so that people understand where we got to. But nothing else from me.

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SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. Thanks, Aaron. s47F - personal private?

SPEAKER:

My apologies. I am not sure if this is a question for now. But the slide pack on the approach of the retrospective evaluation, there were two questions. What is the key evaluation criteria for bids? Is that a question that you want answered now or will this be the developmental approach and the retrospective?

SPEAKER:

The development approach plan is to undertake that in-house. The research evaluation branch will deliver that. You would be retrospective. But happy to discuss that now if you want to plan ahead or we can wait.

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I deliberately have not talked about some of that stuff yet, assuming that we would do it later in the agenda, which is fine. Just have to get myself organised.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. I might be guided by the agency here in terms of where you are planning to take the conversation next. Does it make sense for us to embark on that aspect of the discussion now would you like to take a step back and go through the PowerPoint and land at that point?

SPEAKER:

I think CAG on confirming the evaluation process, I think we have ticked off on that one. I'm at hand over to s47F - persona and Alex to start, and we might end up in a conversation around the particular parts that might be the suggested way forward.

SPEAKER:

s47F - persona, do you want to share the slides? I stuffed it up last time. I cannot be trusted.

SPEAKER:

s47F - persona speaking. Just give me a moment, just to make sure that I am sharing the right ones, so you do not get a view of my emails, which is not that interesting.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. You also look like you are enjoying a delicious snack.


SPEAKER:

s47F - persona speaking. Andy, give me a thumbs up.

SPEAKER:

Perfect mate. I can see that. Beautiful. I think we have only discussed this is the recap that Aaron gave on what we have done in the co-design space, but also keen to embed as early as possible and iteratively look forward around the co-design on the reform for outcomes.

s47F - persona, do you want to flick on because we have covered that one? Last time we had a chat on

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evaluations and there was feedback. There was agreement on the questions, but there needed to be some additions and modifications. It would be good to revisit those quickly and make sure that everyone is comfortable on where they are at right now, because these will guide both aspects of the retrospective and the developmental evaluation.

The first couple of questions are around appropriateness. And the first one, a pre-existing question from the last session was around the extent on the approach to co-design of the NDIS is appropriate for a building trust, strengthening engagement and improving the relationship between the agency and disability community.

But we had a second, whoops, s47F - personal privacy?

SPEAKER:
Who is the target of the questions?

SPEAKER:
Very good question. The target would be those who have been involved in the co-design. And in the sector more broadly. That would be my addition there.

And for retrospective, it depends on how much is considered in the recruitment process but there should be more visibility. The second question is again around appropriateness, this is a more theoretical question. This is around the codesign, particularly the approach that was taken and we will take, is actually the right approach to achieve some of those goals that we have for the scheme, so we wanted to be effective and we wanted to deliver great outcomes for participants. We also wanted to be efficient, so we all certainly understand the financial sustainability constraints of the scheme. So is codesign the right approach to be able to support those objectives? That's a new question, that was added based on some feedback last time.

A couple of process questions, these relate to the program logic which is not in this pamphlet but was in the previous pack. That for each project or phase of the project, how did, how will the necessary conditions and mindsets in codesign implemented? So we went through those mindsets last time, and then follow on question is what enabled or inhibited those conditions and mindsets for being implemented? The idea being that we build on the enables and look at what inhibits.

Yeah, s47F - persons?

SPEAKER:
Thanks, sorry. You may have outlined this already. A bit of brain fog at the moment. Just in relation to the conditions and mindsets, that is a part of the explanation that goes with all of this when you do the evaluation anyway, so it is clear what you're talking about there.

SPEAKER:
Correct.

SPEAKER:
Otherwise it is gobbledygook.

SPEAKER:

Yes, when you go to the previous meeting papers, you will see that. 100%. Brilliant. b47F - persons, do you want to flip onto the next one?

These are largely the same, some of the outcomes of codesign, reiterating that we are not actually talking in the evaluation about the... The actual impacts or outcomes for participants because they are going to be much longer thanks to measure, and we picked up those things and evaluation activities. In terms of outcomes, we are looking at projects achieved, decisions that are transparent to the disability community and key stakeholders, apologies for the missing word there. Looking at challenges and constraints related to the NDIS, and a disability community that feels empowered and has confidence and trust in the NDIS, or the NDIA.

Importantly, desirable and feasible policy solution for key stakeholders. The additional element to this question is around building sector comfort in coproduction approaches. So the last couple of questions relate to sustainability. The first was about how learning speed back into the codesign process, that is existing from previous questions. The last one is slightly modified, it is previously around the extent that codesign will endure, that is a real issue now, it is enduring through these outcomes. So we reframed that one to the extent around how it can be scaled, so applied to more policy or strategy or mainline processes in the agency, which aspects can be strengthened.

Skye, b47F - personal privacy, you both have your hand up, Skye I think you are first.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, I appreciate my question might fall outside the scope of the evaluation framework that we are looking at currently but in relation to outcomes, how are we ensuring that all the testing, the extent to which the actual changes that are implemented to policy as a result of the codesign process resulting in better outcomes for scheme participants? It may take time, I know for the policy to bend down and actually have some kind of effect but I am interested to see how we would close the loop on that.

SPEAKER:

Yeah, absolutely. As part of the implementation, various codesign solutions, that includes the evaluation component. There would be a separate evaluation framework for that we would use a mixture of quantitative data and qualitative data that we already collected as part of the scheme and also qualitative insights from participants around how things, how they are being impacted by the policies. And what has changed for them.

SPEAKER:

That's really helpful, thank you. What timeframe doesn't usually happen with them?

SPEAKER:

It depends. I think it is a balance, that exercises between needing to know and being patient. Realistically think about some of these policies and projects that implement the project, the first period of time, and how long is a piece of string. It will often be around getting that solution embedded, so that it is actually operating and we intend to monitor that.

And in time we will be looking at, when you think about the gap we have between data collection

and a participant outcomes, really in the 12 months to start to get an idea and over a few years, we will be really sure. It'll be a process of the evaluation outcome.

SPEAKER:

Thank you.

SPEAKER:

847F - personal privacy ?

SPEAKER:

Before I go on to mine, if I could follow up from Skye's to say that, Alex, one of the things we talk about with this group, is keeping an eye. Not losing that long-term work, making sure it works in the longer term period, that the IAC started to look at these days as well. Looking at the implementation, that we must continue to track them. So if I could just encourage us to do that.

Sorry, was that..?

SPEAKER:

Sorry, it's Alex, I totally agree that the implementation is where the rubber hits the road. I totally agree. I do think there is a question though because we also have steering committees for the codesign of those specific policies. There is a question about where that policy and evaluation lives, but I definitely think ICAC will have a role in overseeing that as well. I agree wholeheartedly with Skye and your comments.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. I have two very different things. One is that in the retrospective evaluation, it was my understanding that the agency quite deliberately took different codesign approaches in each of those four projects. And part of the intent was to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the approach. I can't see at the moment, you have asked... You will ask people the questions and the people that were involved in the specific codesign process will give advice. But there is no compare and contrast what worked better. Apart from the only other way to find out which would be at the end of two years to go, what did you think? And maybe there are some relative scores or whatever. At the moment, we would have views, for example, on how some things weren't compared to others.

I can't see the question where that would be collected. That's my first question.

SPEAKER:

Yeah, it should be there, it should actually be question six.

SPEAKER:

Yeah, so particularly with the retrospective, I don't really know going forward. The other thing is, and I think Andy, you have heard me say this before in a different setting, we... I have some concerns around the design of the evaluation questions that are very broad in terms of accessibility.

So one of the project is going to be evaluated, is going to be the supported decision-making project for people with mental disability and for lack of a better term, cognitive impairment.

Sorry, I would like to ask about how these get translated into easy read or get translated into more specific questions that enable the people with intellectual disability in particular to have really meaningful impact into the evaluation.

SPEAKER:

Yeah, so you are talking about when the evaluations are actually one, can we look at data collection instruments?

(Multiple speakers)

SPEAKER:

Not so much data collection, so we have had a really - I have explained to you previously to you all the other people in the team - a real problem with the evaluation questions that are deliberately left brought, so I think I would use the DES example. Explain or describe your jobseeking activities. A person with an intellectual disability, unpacking that sentence, I could take half an hour to tell you what is wrong with that sentence and why you're not getting the answers, the researchers are not going to get the answers they are looking for.

So there is a whole big debate which we don't need to have today, there is a whole big debate about how we make that methodology really accessible. And for the information you collect to be able to be part of the bigger, you know, the overall information collected. So just really, I don't want to... I'm not advocating for a separate - I'm advocating for this to be inclusive, not a separate way to make sure that people with intellectual ability are included.

SPEAKER:

That's a really good point. I think that's one of the most important criteria that they select, right? They have expertise or demonstrated expertise. Collecting data from people with disability in a range of accessible formats, number one.

Another important function that this group in its entirety or potentially members of this group can play is when the external provider who we commission starts to develop those tools, to actually roadtest them with yourself to say, hang on, languages and issue here, the presentation format for this cohort needs to be addressed there. So that we actually do 100% get it right.

SPEAKER:

We can have a more detailed conversation later. If you ask the question to the provider that you need to provide accessible formats, they will make sure everything will be read by a screen reader and they may or may not make sure that there is stuff on easy read. What they won't do is actually look at... They won't take it high to a design level, they will adapt an existing methodology in a way that - our experience is that there are very few organisations that have mapped that out. So it is not a matter of accessing materials, it is if you can actually participate. The other thing is that we, when you get into that conflict of interest, we would not be interested in being the overall provider. We would probably be very interested in running a couple of - like, supporting the way that you do it, if there is interviews or some targeted feedback.

Just noting for the record, it is not just supported decision-making policy, there are people with intellectual disability in other areas. With a range of disabilities, a lot of people don't think of intellectual disability when they think of the range of disabilities. It has to be caught, from our

perspective, it needs to be called out. We see it a lot and things that happen, and even with our, you know, with absolute respect, with our sister organisations around the country, that when they do things for people with a variety of disability, they leave out intellectual disability. I just want to make sure that is considered in this one, I think there is an opportunity to do better.

SPEAKER:

Their 100% will be. We are aware of it at least in our branch, we have some work out at the moment around developing a well-being index and we, well, Monash University are delivering that, they spent a long time just working out ways to be able to present the items to be explored, the tasks to people with intellectual disability in the most inclusive way.

It is pretty challenging and they possibly have not got it 100% perfect but my point is that there are options.

SPEAKER:

And when you mention one of our member organisations as your source of expertise, that is all good.

SPEAKER:

Brilliant. Great.

SPEAKER:

s47F - personal privacy here, I have had bits and pieces, so I came in late, sorry about that. I think with codesign, and people talking about that, I think there are some learnings to really take from the new CALD strategy which has been developed in the NDIA and the community, it worked very well and you have got various, as I said today, there is somebody now - the CALD communities have their own very complex political attitude, they like to argue about the way that they deal with things, so these meetings with stakeholders has been excellent and just want to say that there are some learnings to have their from that space.

While they are currently working on the Indigenous strategy, it is not very far along, sorry that is my phone again. It is not very far along to where we are at, we are almost at the pointy end of the stick, it has been a very good process. Much better than the process we went through six or seven years ago. That's all.

SPEAKER:

We want that extra focus around the different approaches and looking for better outcomes. Fingers crossed we can do better.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, I just wanted to jump in, s47F - personal privacy, I can see the track that he reflected on wanting to say something earlier, is now a time you feel comfortable to do so?

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I was literally just having a copy. No need to apologise s47F - personal privacy. I'm just glad that it did get raised about the questions. And I think Ross, you also said something about the language before, with the necessary conditions and mindsets. I'm very cognisant of the people that we work with that have a brain injury. It's the work method, again, I apologise for jumping and

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committed to I wanted to leave before about when it comes to the slide about possible procurement, I would definitely like to see people with lived experience of disability being researchers. To I guess expand on- sorry, I'm choking. On ^{s47F - personal privacy} [REDACTED]'s point. I will be back, but I am listening.

SPEAKER:

Brilliant. I'm conscious of the time here, can we move onto the next slide? Is there more comments about the questions?

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, I think we can move on.

SPEAKER:

Just looking at where we are at with a retrospective, including those codesign projects from 2021, those are the six projects, codesign projects there, which we all know. External to the valuation, and we certainly ask for the provider to submit a detailed design for us to be able to assess their bits.

Now properly in terms of timeframe, we initiated the procurement process, that does not mean we are with providers, we still have internal paperwork we need to roll out this week. But we would be looking at late October, early November for that process to conclude that for the evaluation to commence. It does take time with the procurement processes, we can push as hard as we can, but we know about the time these things take him and so many things can be made available as soon as possible. We are thinking around a four-month time period for that evaluation should be suitable, and we can navigate that extension but we will certainly aim for four months for that evaluation to be wrapped up or at the very least, for learning is to be available to present the necessary groups.

^{s47F - personal} [REDACTED] ?

So this is where we are very keen on your views- Aaron, sorry.

SPEAKER:

So with this question, what we are trying to understand is there is a codesign for the four activities, if I get it wrong, bear with me. There was a codesign for the for various activities, then we have codesign and reform for outcomes. What would be good would be to try and get some early insights along the way because everybody is anticipating correctly that there will be codesign elements out of things like the review or the Disability Royal Commission and those things. How do we get insights to influence our approach for future codesign that don't quite line up with those timeframes? I agree with the timeframes that you have got, that can take four months.

Clearly the review will drop and the government will need to consider it, there will be a government responsible, we will have a bit of time. I'm really keen to ensure that where possible, if we do have good insights around things that we might need to do differently, then we just don't roll out the next codesign the same way and then the evaluation says, you should have done a, B, C, D at the start. We need to be mindful of, as we keep progressing with codesign and mature and embed the codesign process and the agency, what are the

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opportunities to pick up along the way. That is a reflection I'm trying to work through.

SPEAKER:

That's a good one. I think the retrospective, there are realities that we might not know until early January. There's nothing we can do about that. But the evaluation approach can look at, because it is embedded, it is rapid. You could be talking every month, every six weeks to be able to provide it back in, so that we don't do things sub optimally.

547F - personal privacy ?

SPEAKER:

My apologies everyone. Just back to the previous slide, I have a few concerns about the timeframe commencing October, early November, and then across that point we have December and January, we will have people on leave and winding down. I think there is a possibility to extend that for a month, because you can also link it to possible supplies that it can branch out to without being dragged down either.

SPEAKER:

It would be similar to a contract, that extension option and we would certainly manage that. We kind of envision that realistically, given the timeframe when it is starting, that pre-Christmas period will actually be where we get all the data collection tools ready to go. It is going to have to be done, it is going to take a few weeks, maybe a month, realistically I would think that is a reasonable state for Christmas and then when everyone gets back from the Christmas and New Year's break they can start clearing through data.

It is an awkward timeframe, yeah. 547F - personal ? So with codesign, it is a pointy end, the clear horizon being the pinpoint there. But we have clear horizon, day for projects, first person consulting, rooftop social and ARTD, the other media enterprises are small enterprises. Really keen to hear even now or potentially in a later session, are you surprised (inaudible) from this? 547F - personal privacy , you have to hand up?

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I had an urgent phone call so I missed the start of the session. I would like to address that (unknown term) did a really good, this is not the exact same as the evaluation but a really good gaps and needs analysis for the ILC. They have some tools that they have been evaluating, that they have been working on for intellectual disability but I would be particularly impressed by their work.

SPEAKER:

Right, (inaudible) next. Skye?

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, I have some experience with the (unknown term) minor they have research with universities and I know that they engage with research with disabilities as a part of their evaluation approach so I put them forward as well.

SPEAKER:

I should add as well that one of the things we will mention is that consortiums or partnerships

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between three organisations are excellent because you might get an organisation that is pretty strong on one aspect but not the other, and obviously it is important knowledge of effective partnerships and codesign ideally, but also experience in engaging and collecting data from people with disability and support. Any other suppliers or suggestions? There is time, so if people want to drop ideas off after the session there is no problem at all.

OK, cool. So as I mentioned, we have commenced procurement, Aaron has already talked about the CAG involvement, if there are any ideas we can pop into the RFQ, in your eyes what are some of the key criteria that we should be including in that? Just to get us started. Skye?

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking. Genuine involvement and inclusion of people with lived experience of disability as researchers or any other roles in the evaluation project, I think that should be essential.

SPEAKER:

Yeah. Any others? Or that resonates is the most important across the group?

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I just want to speak to this in a second, I have something diabolical going on, if you give me one moment I will hand up after b47f - personal privac.

SPEAKER:

I think with previous researchers, and also previous experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from a CALD background. Also understanding and making sure that we have people with voice medication, so to Catherine's point, before particularly run decision-making I would also like to see imitation across all of the group, which I know there were members from (inaudible) as a part of a targeted approach to hear voices from regional, remote and very remote.

I would also like to see, not just talking about the multimodal but how people have had the supplies or experience with using like pictures and diagrams, and drawings and other ways in which people can interpret their responses to questions as well.


SPEAKER:

OK.

SPEAKER:

Sorry, I would like to back up what b47f - personal privac said and also... Thinking about how to include some of the people with the most complex support needs a part of the supported decision-making codesign process, we helped - a couple of sessions had a group with Western Australia called (unknown term) for people with really complex communications support needs. And we would have some comments, possibly not me but the team would have some comments on that. And the NDIS staff that were involved in that I think were really impressed and learned a lot so it would be great to have their perspective as well.

We also have a project for DCS as a part of the Disability Royal Commission work called inclusive practice, but includes a lot of stuff about inclusive consultation. And we have just done another piece of work for the national autism strategy work, talking about consultations with

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people with really complex support needs and their families. And so if I could possibly suggest that those be looked at by the team, and to pull out some of the strategies that might work really well, I will post both of those in the chat.

SPEAKER:

Perfect, amazing, thank you. All right.

So I am just really conscious of time here, and I'm looking at the agenda, are we going to spend the last 15 minutes on evaluation or are there any other items you need to get to?

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, the proposal was the main part of the meeting, so please continue on.

SPEAKER:

Perfect, I'm going to hand over to s47f - personal who is going to talk about the forward-looking evaluation and initial thoughts around how that might work. Over to you, s47f - personal.

SPEAKER:

Thanks s47f - personal, s47f - personal speaking. I just want to start by talking about some of the development to evaluation methods that we will potentially use. So I appreciate that these methods won't necessarily cover everything we may use, there will also be a lot of changes that are going to be made based on our valuation working group. There is a number of things that we will go through and discuss, which I imagine will be of significant interest to the group.

The sort of methods that we may draw on are some pretty classic tools. Probably lots of observation and data, and the internal evaluation is intended to have an evaluator embedded in the process and therefore there are lots of observations going to be made that are in an observational nature of what is being undertaken.

We are also expecting some very short, online surveys and when I say short, I am talking probably four to eight questions. Obviously more data means the more we have to analyse, so very short and underlined. We will also be doing things like focus groups, so group conversations to understand people's experience, and also looking at the ideas around that.

Also methods that are a little bit less typical, we have stories, we intend to change that we can better understand someone's involvement in the process. In this instance, codesign. Also what is more significant for them. We will also be potentially using learning or reflection logs.

To better understand what is being learned or what reflections people having as they work through the codesign process. These can be pretty structured or unstructured and often we use something around the triple loop learning, which is a basic sort of systems thinking, effective thinking about how we are showing up, how other people are showing up in elements of the system.

All right, we're going to talk about a couple more and then we will move on to some bits and pieces.

SPEAKER:

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Skye speaking, ^{b47F - personal privacy} has raised her hand.

SPEAKER:

Sorry ^{b47F - personal privacy}.

SPEAKER:

^{b47F - personal privacy}, your mic is.

SPEAKER:

Apologies, this one really interested me because he spoke earlier about the (inaudible) systems and being about stakeholders. All this also capture members of the NDIA who are a part of the groups or are part of... Who are part of the groups and what they have learned to. So here it references the DRCOs, participants first, a lot of people who are involved in what they like. We learn or will we ask members of the agency what they learned through this period as well?

SPEAKER:

^{b47F - personal privacy} speaking, absolutely. Everyone is involved. And I just want to take this opportunity to apologise that because I am sharing, and the way that I'm sharing, I can't necessarily see hands go up. So I really appreciate people jumping in, please do feel free to interrupt and apologies, my intention is certainly not to ignore anybody. So I might just open up, for any other questions. At this stage.

OK, no dramas. Two other potential methods and again, obviously we will be going through a process of co-designing and how we do two things. Two other options. An impact log which essentially seeks to impact and identify certificate changes as they occur. This can be quite good because we can fix it quite specifically onto domains, it tends to be quite easy to set up and change. People can typically access it whenever they would like to record something.

It can also help in terms of identifying things you might want to follow up on in terms of storytelling. So identifying someone's experience may be quite significant for the codesign process and can be flagged and followed up if it is identified as appropriate to do so to collect that story. Another piece which is going to be quite potentially helpful is using something like a pivot tracker.

Essentially what this will do is when we make changes to an approach, it will identify what the changes, why can about and effectively, it will help us to identify when we are making changes based on evidence that is being collected and reflected upon. It helps us to better understand how we can put together quite ineffective codesign process. So it speaks that continuous improvement of learning.

OK, roles and responsibly. Within the slide I focus the rolls around three key groups. You have got the research and evaluation branch, holding a sort of theoretical underpinning of design of the evaluation. Really kind of facilitating the process. You have the evaluation reference group, who will be helping design the approach quite actively. So determining what we're doing, how we are doing it, and when we are doing it. Because as ^{b47F - personal privacy} mentioned, we can effectively have as responsive of a process as you know, as is potentially desired. But it doesn't necessarily help in relation to response fatigue as well as people's other time commitments.

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Lastly we have got codesign project working groups themselves, who we would love to work or act as co-evaluators, making sense of the data we collect as part of that process and actually designing changes to the approach as we go. The intent is to be very responsive and quite specifically involve in these groups in terms of how we are doing it.

I would love the thoughts around potentially who might join the evaluation reference group. So the sort of, I guess representatives we might want to go to join. A quite active evaluation reference group. Maybe I stop sharing must we get some feedback.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, in reference to the evaluation working group, there should be representatives who were involved in those codesign processes, or should it be people who won't? I'm just, I haven't quite thought that through myself so I would appreciate others views to support my own thinking.

SPEAKER:

I have got a view on that, Skye. I think it is given for the reference group and evaluation, they definitely involve a couple of CAG members, I think that's totally appropriate. Looking at what is appropriate for this, especially having a bishop from the RFO steering committee, I guess it's just important to watch this space at this stage.

Any other comments on that? b47f - personal ?

SPEAKER:

I agree with the comments made.

SPEAKER:

b47f - personal speaking, it might be a good opportunity to feed into these ideas or processes, so it might be good for people to sit with their thoughts and come back to us. That's absolutely fine. Probably in the interest of time, we should sort of get cracking.

SPEAKER:

Apologies, I have not done well with keeping track of this meeting, but we have six minutes.

SPEAKER:

b47f - personal speaking, I like to think it is because everyone is very interested in the evaluation, it gives me affirmation around my job choice.

SPEAKER:

We are very interested.

SPEAKER:

All right, b47f - personal speaking, I might get Skye, now that I have my screen up, give me a thumbs up if I am on presentation mode on that PowerPoint? Great.

Onto the next slide, all right. So developmental evaluation in my opinion is perfect. With this codesign working group, with evaluation, the reason being is that it is highly collaborative it can work to sort of share decision-making. And the intent is that we will be actively involving the

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project working groups, as was spoken about, which include stakeholders from across meeting groups, with representatives, participants and agency representatives. So the codesign working groups and actually contribute to the study collection, as one. As one piece of that. But more importantly, and probably a lot more fun in terms of a collaborative approach, we will also be engaging with project groups and data analysis and sense making.

So the intent is that we present back the data that we are collecting, during these short learning leaks, because we come back to these groups and ask them to make sense of that data. And can actualisation. To potentially pick out what we can pull out and what might be missing.

We are also planning on asking these groups to actually design the pivots and approach. Based on these responsive learning groups. We would actually like them to determine how that approach is going to change and then we again, go through that learning process with them until the next learning gateway, when we do it all again, and we can design those changes.

The next step, the intent is to finalise the procurement, we got great feedback from everybody today, thank you very much for that. The intent is to then tap them on the shoulder to submit those proposals and review those providers proposals and then contact successful providers. Get them to do all that planning work before Christmas so that when people get back next year, we can get going.

For the development to evaluation, as it is embedded in a quite intensive process, effectively what is happening at the moment is going through all the codesign documentation, which as you can imagine, there is quite a bit there. Not necessarily a bad thing, lots of good documents to read, getting idea of what's going on. Attending some of those codesign sessions and building relationships with those key stakeholders, who sit within this project groups. So I didn't have the pleasure of attending one just as an attendee. In the evaluation process, but we will start doing that.

Then to work on, I think three and four are slightly in the wrong positions, but the intent is to form an evaluation reference group, work with them around finalising that developmental evaluation group that will guide the groups currently up. But you can with the intent is to be testing that framework with the evaluation reference group, work out a lot of those details, particularly in terms of how we do those things and when we do them.

I might just stop sharing because that is effectively the end of the slide deck. I can see a hand up as well.

SPEAKER:

Aaron has his hand up.

SPEAKER:

Aaron speaking, just trying to figure out the timing of the next CAG meeting and the potential for looking at how we undertake that review. So we might look at that out of session and come back to the group, just to make sure we have captured that to make sure that we undertake our appropriate advice from CAG before we procure the service, thank you.

SPEAKER:

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Skye speaking, that sounds great Aaron. [REDACTED]?

SPEAKER:

Sorry to hold everyone up this afternoon, but just about last dot point we talked about the codesign project and working in groups, as these stories, groups or review those collated and this is the bit and trying to understand. That will then vote to determine (inaudible) change. So when we are talking about the most representative change, I just... Can you land me up on how you mop are going to make sure that we hear the voices that don't often get hurt. Do you know what I mean?

So for Blak fellas that might speak quietly, how do we get those voices, and for those people that don't go to work? Does that make any sense?

SPEAKER:

[REDACTED] speaking, [REDACTED], can I just say that's a really good pickup in terms of how most of it has been a changed approach, it is offered and acted does not necessarily represent all and often actually lend itself to that process. To be honest, my preference would be not to have that second part of MSC we actually go through the voting system, and I think the way in which we do things will be very much determined and developed by the evaluation working group and the project groups themselves.

That being said, I would just like to underline that my preference in terms of doing the MSC processes is to not follow the second part, with the story collection and the group vote, I don't think it is always a great way to do it but that is the traditional approach of collection method. Great callout.

SPEAKER:

Too deadly [REDACTED], thank you very much, I appreciate it.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, [REDACTED], is there anything else you want to unpack or get feedback from the group from at this stage?


SPEAKER:

[REDACTED] speaking, thanks Skye, not the state, it was great to get thoughts on that reference group and I would love to hear any thoughts that come up for people out of session. But that is effectively everything from me. And thanks to everyone for your questions and comments.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, I will go to the rest of the group now. As a body of so many questions or comments they would like to add now before I draw us to a close? No?

Just to refer back to [REDACTED]'s comment in the chat committee asked me to pass on to everyone that one of her team members received quite distressing news which is why she had to leave the meeting quite quickly. She did ask though for the agency to, all I'm asking on [REDACTED]'s behalf, could the agency reach out to [REDACTED]? She is keen to talk through these last slides with the NA meeting in a couple of weeks, I'm not sure if we should take that action but if it could be included in the action book that would be great, thank you.

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Thanks everyone for being here for your time and for your insights and contributions today. I found it a really helpful meeting, so thank you. I understand that a communiqué from this meeting will be sent out and actions from today's meeting will be posted in the chat shortly, and if not they will be posted in the communiqué that we get. I'm looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting, but Aaron will, he will stay in touch in the meantime to inform the group of the retrospective evaluation process.

SPEAKER:

Great sharing Skye, thank you.

SPEAKER:

She wasn't that good, it was late.

(Laughter)

SPEAKER:

I will take that.

SPEAKER:

It was a great meeting. Respect to you all.

SPEAKER:

See you on Thursday guys.

SPEAKER:

Bye.

SPEAKER:

See you later.



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Post Budget Forum Summary

Friday 2 June 2023

Background

The National Disability Insurance Agency held a joint meeting with Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCOs) and the Independent Advisory Council (IAC) members to start the development of a co-design work program to support the delivery of the Government's seven budget initiatives.

The DRCOs represented at the 2 June 2023 Post- Budget Forum were: **A4 Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia, Australian Autism Alliance, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand, Blind Citizens Australia, Brain Injury Australia, Carers Australia, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, Community Mental Health Australia, Deafblind Australia, Deafness Forum of Australia, Disability Advocacy Network Australia, Down Syndrome Australia, Every Australian Counts, First Peoples Disability Network, Inclusion Australia, JFA Purple Orange, Mental Health Australia, National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, National Ethnic Disability Alliance, People with Disability Australia, Physical Disability Australia, Relmagine Australia, Self Advocacy Resource Unit, Women with Disabilities Australia, and Young People in Nursing Homes Alliance.**

There was an apology from: **Deaf Australia**

Representatives from the IAC included: **Leah van Poppel, Dr Leighton Jay, Sylvana Mahmic, Tricia Malowney, James Manders, Sam Paior, Liz Reid, Dr George Taleporos, Gavin Burner**

Representatives from the NDIA included: **Corri McKenzie, Liz Neville, Shannon Rees, Sam Bennett, Alex Rosenthal, Matt Wright**

Summary of what we heard

DRCO and IAC members raised the following issues and concerns during the Forum for noting and for further discussion as part of the reform work program.

- DRCOs need to be appropriately funded to participate in this program of work (Simon Burchill)
- The NDIA Outcomes Framework needs to be reviewed and updated. Needs to reflect government's emphasis on well-being and updates to measurement and reporting (Bob Buckley)
- Over 2021-22 we saw plan reductions of 20-75% on the majority of plans (average of 40% cuts). The only participants we've worked with who have



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overspent their plans, did so because their funding had been drastically cut. (Nick Avery)

- NDIA modelling needs to include specific disabilities (Bob Buckley)
- The RFO program needs to align with other work being done in the sector, including the:
 - NDIS Review
 - the Disability Royal Commission
 - the National Autism Strategy
 - national regulatory harmonisation
 - review of the Disability Services Act (Katharine Annear)
- Need to further discuss overspending (Bob Buckley)
- Need to align the NDIA Outcomes Frameworks with:
 - frameworks for integrated support, particularly when a participant is receiving multiple services
 - a core guiding value and / or aspirations. For example, social and emotional wellbeing
 - the unique situation of each individual, and their needs, wants and circumstances. (Bill Gye)
- We cannot start a co-design process until we have opportunity to contribute and agree on practice guidelines (Simon Burchill)
- Will LACs continue to do planning meetings and draft plans long-term, or will this role will be transferred to delegates? (Nick Avery)
- The outcomes of the Scheme need to be made clearer (Sylvana Mahmic)
- The NDIA should commit to employing more participants across all positions, not just planners (Simon Burchill)
- Can the Workforce capability funding be invested in expanded the number of delegates directly employed by NDIA? Ideally the majority of people would prefer the planning role of LACs be phased out entirely so that people meet directly with the decision-maker (Nick Avery)
- Will the planning group address the issue of Planning (NDIA funded plan) and planning (visioning for a good life, learning from peers, choosing who you plan with) (Sylvana Mahmic)
- The NDIA Outcomes Framework should draw in measures from external frameworks that are aligned to the:



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- International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)
- Social determinants of health, and
- wellbeing. (Katharine Annear)
- Planners need to have improved knowledge of disability, for example, Autism, before they take on a planner role (Bob Buckley)
- Supports the review of the NDIA Outcomes Framework (Sylvana Mahmic)
- Planners should have minimum core competencies, besides lived experience or capability in understanding delivery of best practice approaches (Jenny Karavolos)
- Planning should focus on meeting participant needs. Would like to see goals and planning separated. (Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)
- Planning either needs other preparatory supports behind it to be successful, or planners need more time & skills than we currently allow to do it well (at least for people living with psychosocial challenges and others). Here is a stab at those requirements <https://1drv.ms/w/s!AsCey716GXNBggqgx5iAWy2NB1J0Ww?e=01JyeL>
- (Bill Gye)
- Planning should be done by an accredited life planner of the participant's choice, then the plan is submitted to the NDIA delegate for funding approval. (Sam Paior)
- Key performance indicators impact the accuracy and quality of plans, and increasing the volume of S100 and S48 requests (Nick Avery)
- Agree that as the NDIS is an insurance-based scheme, there is an expectation that support reduces over time. Need to balance this with ensuring participants receive the support they need, when they need it. (Sylvana Mahmic)
- Need to clarify what is meant by "exits." There is a presumption that a range of effective 'Tier 2' supports are available to support participants that exit. This is not the case. (Bill Gye)
- Suggest people with permanent disabilities, who have fluctuating needs, can remain in the Scheme, but opt to have a \$0 plan until their needs increase. The NDIA would need to publicise this option. This could mitigate people's fear of not being able to regain access if their needs increase. (Nick Avery)
- Need to agree what "evidence-based" means (Bob Buckley)
- Would supports for children in the early years be covered under evidence-based support work? (Sylvana Mahmic)
- Need to change the acronym SIL. It contains assumption about independence. Suggest Assistance with Home and Living (AHL). (Katharine Annear)



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- The increasing number of plan rollovers and auto-extensions creates an issue with the 'About Me' section of participant plans (and also with how goals are implemented). The information changes and isn't updated. As part of the PACE rollout, is it possible to enable participants to update the 'About Me' section of their plans in the portal? As participants are being expected to comply with their plans, it causes problems when the info in the plan is no longer correct. (Nick Avery)
- What constitutes evidence? Will participant input be considered evidence? (Nick Avery)
- There is a conflict of interest when a provider can undertake an assessment of disability and also be a provider of services. This needs to be changed. NB this is not fraud because the NDIA allows it. (Sylvana Mahmic)
- Will participants be targeted for compliance, or will the focus be primarily on providers? Will participants incur debts and have Centrelink payments deducted to repay debts, for example, for expenditure that is 5 years old? (Nick Avery)
- Need to ensure appropriate safeguarding and protections are in place to protect participants from coercion from a provider or family member perpetuating fraud. (Catherine McAlpine)
- Working groups are divide and conquer. (Simon Burchill)
- Large groups do not achieve outcomes. (Simon Burchill)
- It's too hard for all members of a large group to talk about all initiatives in detail. (Catherine McAlpine)
- Concern that giving us all a say does not deliver outcomes. There needs to be commitment to the successful delivery of improvement and timely responses to unintended consequences. (Bob Buckley)
- Working Groups should include participants from regional / remote areas, ATSI, CaLD in each working group. Proposed changes tend to impact these groups significantly more, and their specific barriers and needs should be considered. (Nick Avery)
- Need a variety of open channels for people to engage. Need a process for managing and coordinating any overlap between working groups so they do not end up at cross purposes. Suggest some people are on more than one group to help with cross group coordination. (Bill Gye)
- Participants and family carers need to be involved in the working groups (Eileen McDonald)
- Propose to include an objective that recognises and embeds, intersectionality. (Carolyn Frohmader)
- Need to look at how to build capacity in informal carers. (Bob Buckley)



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- Need to ensure informal carer advice is respected by planners. (Bob Buckley)
- Previous Agency attempts at co-design have been rushed. For example, by missing a meeting people have lost the opportunity to meaningfully contribute.
- Need to acknowledge that slow and deep consideration leads to better outcomes. Deep consideration also requires transparency (an information sharing portal may work). It also requires perspectives that come from academia and research. Need to consider the latest evidence from critical policy and disability research. (Katharine Annear)
- Need to consider the Prime Minister's draft [National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy](#). (Carolyn Frohmader)
- Important that this program of work does not unravel great work done previously in the sector. (Jenny Karavolos)
- Concern the modelling that has led to the 8% growth target does not account for the growth in the autism population. (Bob Buckley)
- Resourcing challenge for DRCOs who also have other program of work to participate in, for example, the National Autism and Strategy Review (Bob Buckley)
- You have a list of suggested actions for each of these points. I think it would be more useful, rather than just telling us what you're thinking, to
- The NDIA should ask group members what it thinks reforms could look like, rather than providing a list of proposed reforms for each initiative. (Simon Burchill)
- Workforce planning needs to be across the whole Agency to achieve better outcomes. (Simon Burchill)
- Won't the PACE system mean LACs will no longer be needed? (Simon Burchill)
- Will the planning group address the issue of planning for NDIA purposes such as a vision for a good life, learning from peers and that kind of thing? (Nick Avery)
- 'Big life' planning should be done in a way that feeds into the NDIA.
- There is a risk we will continue to see inconsistencies If LACs, or other external parties, are doing planning in some areas and not others.
- When LACs are being used to do detailed plans, not the big visioning stuff, then we are getting mixed outcomes.



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- It is important that this process seeks not a consistency of results, because it is a person-centred scheme, but consistency in terms of the resources that make the Scheme work.
- Need to have resourcing and arrangements in place to ensure any changes made do not negatively impact the NDIS and people with disability. (Carolyn Hodge)
- Support coordinators need to understand any changes that are made and how to implement those changes and know how to fix issues participants have. (Gavin Burner)
- People with disability should always be able to access the supports they need to live an ordinary life. (Simon Burchill)
- Need a clear definition of 'early intervention' and what conditions need to be met to count as 'early intervention'. (Simon Burchill)
- How will the work on the independent living initiative align with:
 - the supported decision making policy?
 - planning decisions, because we need to prioritise the decisions people make themselves around their home and living options. (Catherine McAlpine)
- Is the intent that the Evidence Based Supports working group would look at Market Stewardship and what a good provider looks like? Or is that part of DSS and the commission? (Jenny Karavolos)
- Need to help people select policy providers. Need to address what is meant by a quality provider. (Jenny Karavolos)
- There are certain practices that help facilitate fraud and bad practices. Need to work out whether it sits under the Evidence Based Supports initiative or under the Fraud initiative or Workforce Capability initiative. (Jenny Karavolos)
- Around fraud, it is interesting because there is a piece here around
- As part of the work around Fraud, there needs to be capacity building work to support decision making. So there is overlap between the Fraud initiative and the Workforce Capability initiative. (James Manders)
- Need clarity around the responsibilities of the different systems. For example, the responsibility of the community mental health service to support an NDIS participant. (Carolyn Frohmader)
- Further discussion is needed on the co-design model before the group should agree to the approach for the RFO program. (Simon Burchill)

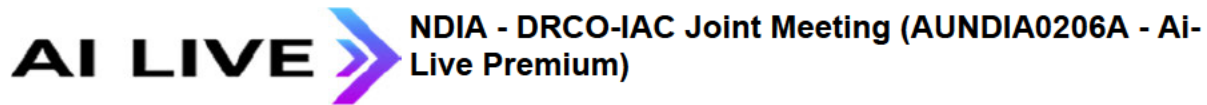


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- Recognition there are issues around the co-design approach taken, but it would be best to move to that working group stage and have further discussions around the co-design approach for each initiative in the working group. (Jeff Smith)
- Do not support an approach of working through all initiatives in a large group. The proposed working group, steering committee and quarterly meeting concept provides a good starting point for this program of work. Need to ensure we refine the approach as we progress, if required. (Darryl Steff)
- Can people be on more than one working group? (Eileen McDonald)
- Do the DRCO representatives on the working groups need to be the people who have attended the Post- budget forums so far? (Eileen McDonald)
- Can one person from a DRCO be on one working group and another person be on another group, because that might be more their specialty? (Eileen McDonald)
- Important that whatever the working groups develop, that it comes back to the larger group to verify and support. (Jenny Karavolos)
- It is important that whatever approach is taken, that it is iterative, and that there is governance in place to ensure there is alignment between the work of the working groups. (Jenny Karavolos)
- There needs to a clear definition of co-design. This process is co-production, rather than co-design, because of the predetermined parameters. (Eileen McDonald)
- It should not be up to each working group what co-design means to them, rather it should be about the adaption of which processes will work for that group. (Eileen McDonald)

Actions

Action item	Action lead



SPEAKER:

Can people hear me? We are actually in the same room. Fantastic.

We might just give people another minute to join. And then we will kick off.

We have a lot to do today, don't we? Full agenda.

I really appreciate you all making the time. It is fantastic to have you.

SPEAKER:

Excuse me, Shannon. This is Carolyn.

Is that a handknitted jumper?

SPEAKER:

It is actually not. It is actually a vest. It is fabulous.

My mother can do these things so I bought this and now she is making me multiple ones.

Next time I will pointed out.

Good pickup!

Alright. We might kick off.

Welcome to everyone for joining us on our second joint DRCO IAC forum. Lovely to see you will and for anyone who doesn't know me, I'm Shannon Rees, the acting general manager of communications and engagement at the agency.

First of all I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and the custodians on which we collectively meet and pay my respects to Elders, past and present and emerging.

The country I am meeting on is the country of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation's and I pay my respects to them and to their cultures.

I would also like to extend that acknowledgement and respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here with us today.

I also acknowledge my gratitude that we share this land today and my sorry for the costly and I hope we can move to a place of equity, justice and partnership together and I would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to people with disability who are the reason the NDIS was built.

General housekeeping today. Obviously, we are a virtual event. Please place your device on mute and this will help avoid background noise etc.

If you would like to speak or ask questions, please click on the raise your hand button. Alternatively, you can use the chat function.

When you speak, please state your name and organisation. If you need anything during the meeting, don't hesitate to ask for support via chat. Matthew Wright and Philip are on the call. They can help.

We have captioning for this meeting. The URL for the live captions should now be in the chat. We also asked me to keep our wonderful captions in mind when you are speaking and tried not to speak too quickly and I have just adjusted for that purpose.

The purpose for us today is obviously to provide some more information per the agenda on the sixth budget initiatives, we know there are more of them but they are the ones that sit in the NDIA space and that we lead.

As reflected in the agenda, the first item will be a discussion of the reform outcomes, the second is the co-design approach, and by the end of the day, what we're trying to achieve is have the co-design approach agreed and also we will actually capture the next steps. To progress the program.

You will see some materials with excessive amounts of notice and I acknowledge that and appreciate the feedback from all of you. What we will do is address that feedback in session.

We will address anything and questions in both the two different sessions. We keep that, our feedback channel open, noting the time is tight, anyone who would like to contribute or haven't had the opportunity will get that open until Wednesday next week.

We have really fantastic and with the time constraints, it is incredibly generous for you to commit your time. We also have about 75% back in terms of the working group, I will not let on that right now, we will come back to that at the end of the session.

I am sure it will be picked up in the conversation along the way.

I also just wanted to read back confirmation of what we heard from the last meeting.

I will read directly from the feedback that we have collated.

The summary outlines, the issues and concerns we heard from you during the first forum. The points we heard were: questions whether the projection of modelling the NDA uses accounts for variances in different cohorts of people with disability. Request that further modelling work is undertaken to understand the different needs of different cohorts.

Question around how the Commonwealth government will ensure state governments contribute to their identified sharer as part of the proposed reforms.

Seeking of clarification that the budget included funding to implement any NDIS review outcomes.

The issue of DRCO funding to be addressed in order to be able to participate in the program of work. Some commentary received about proposed work programming and co-design, priority of

reforms, and the predetermination of reforms.

Request for consideration of co-design with the disability community to provide input into Scheme priorities and outcomes.

View the co-design practice guidelines needs to be developed in all previous co-design projects undertaken by the agency need to be reworked based on the new practice guidelines.

Previous work and recommendations undertaken by the NDIA and IAC should be included in this program of work.

AV was put that any program of work undertaken should consider the NDIS reviews so that disability, community understands all the challenges the scheme faces so they can make better informed decisions on the scheme, priority areas, and the view that the proposed reforms are not participant focus but have been identified to ensure the NDIS reaches the government's growth targets.

A view that a complete map of scheme challenges is required including those that cannot be sold as part of this work, need to identify explicit measurement and reporting mechanisms for participant outcomes including how general well-being outcomes are measured and reported.

Maybe the actions related to independent living needs to be codesigned, all of these have relevance in the context of the conversation today.

Is there any particular questions or feedback. I might go to Cori first because I know you wanted to provide feedback. If you could have the microphone.

SPEAKER:

I'm finding this odd because I'm not turning my microphone off so you will have to forgive me, everyone.

Quick update from me on a couple of items raised at the last meeting.

The first thing, just to say that we are very conscious. Just in relation to resourcing, we are finalising, trying to work through the allocation of the budget around the 720 across the portfolios.

And so, and particularly with a view to resourcing, particularly for DRCOs who are participating in the co-design work and the co-design work more broadly. Very close to that.

Once we have kind of got the co-design approach out of our conversation today, we will seek to set up a meeting with DRCOs to confirm resourcing and just to see if we can work through that.

Just to put that on notice.

The other piece of good news and a shout out to Matthew Wright for his spectacular work on this, but we have also come out of the last meeting gone back, just on the reporting requirements associated with DRCO funding. And we think we have been able to strip out a

range of components of that to make it much more efficacious. An easier for DRCOs to report that funding so we will bring that draft that meeting as well so that we can have a conversation about that.

And just to note, Simon, I have noted your comment in the chat. I think that is an important point.

We are very conscious and thinking about, in resource and the work that needs to afford, the fact that bits and bobs of money are not very helpful. You need people. And people have total costs and overheads as is appropriate. We are very mindful of that point, Simon, thank you.

SPEAKER:

I would also like to make a note that we have taken an action item around compiling some questions, to get the scheme to answer, that has been the process of continued with that and there was also a range of questions we were compiling which we have put to the Minister responsible and we will come back to that.

Sorry, Carolyn, you have been very patient. Over to you.

SPEAKER:

That is not something I'm known for, actually. Patience.

SPEAKER:

I am a good mood this Friday and you commented on my outfit.

SPEAKER:

My question is whether query, and I don't know if it is the right time to ask it, but I am wondering how the work that you have spoken of, I am wondering how the paper that has been released by the Prime Minister in regards to the care economy intersects with this work given that it does actually go to specifically the disability workforce of one of the four kind of priority cohorts in that draft. Admittedly, I have only read it once. So I don't have a lot.

Is that a proper question?

SPEAKER:

Definitely a proper question. I might throw to Corri in regards to the feedback she might have into any discussions we have around that care economy paper.

SPEAKER:

It is a really good question, Carolyn. Very relevant. Very relevant to the work both in terms of an almost, I would say, particularly in relation to the work for the NDIS review down the track.

Any sort of proposed changes that they are anticipating for the market, for want of a better term. And the way that we deliver services for people with disability are going to be impacted by that workforce, the workforce demands and the structure of the market.

So, I think it is a little callout. While it might not be immediately relevant to the delivery of the

implementation of the \$720 million, as you know, our aspiration around that is really about making sure that is a good foundation for the work of the review.

I think having that very clearly in our kind of line of sight is really important and we will continue to be so because I think that care economy can we work, as the PM has pointed out evolving too.

We have to make sure we are closely connected too.

SPEAKER:

We have a big work program for a very short period of time, and unless there are any other burning questions, I am happy to pass to Corri to kick off the first session.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. I would like to acknowledge that I am on Aboriginal land as well, on the lands of the Wathaurong people this one. I acknowledge the Elders, past and present and emerging.

Lovely to see all of your faces again this morning, including the wonderful avatar, Sam, which is making me very happy on the screen.

SPEAKER:

Is it weird?

SPEAKER:

That is awesome!

SPEAKER:

It is better than my COVID face.

SPEAKER:

I am going to apologise. I don't have COVID but my voice is not at its greatest. I apologise to you all for having to endure my croaky voice, I hope it is more Phoebe voice than frog like. We will see how we go.

The purpose of this session was to see we have an opportunity to talk through initiatives in the budget. Your emoji game is strong this morning. Thank you, Bill.

Very impressed. Following our last discussion, the initiatives included in the budget and make sure that we have more information so that we, so that everyone in the room can make sort of informed decisions about the particular areas of work that they would really personally like to be involved in.

But also so that we can all have a good sense of the work that is going on and also how the work that each of the streams of work intersects because I think there are obviously clear intersections across each of the streams of work.

We have some questions. And some feedback.

I thought it might be really useful to work through some of those in the first place.

And then, I thought I might talk through each of the six initiatives that are NDIA led in the budget. Just provide an opportunity for us all to have a conversation or to ask any further questions to understand the initiatives of what we are trying to achieve overall.

I think this would be helpful if it is a kind of very open conversation. Please feel free to ask any questions that you have along the way, just pop up your hand and discuss, very happy to answer anything and to discuss further.

I am also conscious that not everybody thinks of things in the same way, thinks of things at the same moment.

Not at all!

Thinks of things at the same moment in time, so things might come to later or you might feel more comfortable asking outside the session, which is perfectly fine.

And so, if you want to either send us an email or give us a call after the session as well, obviously, that is really open.

Probably just reiterate the point that Shannon made. We asked for some preliminary feedback for people who had an opportunity before the meeting, but I know that not everyone did. We circulated the papers quite late.

I'm sorry about that. More things might be triggered from the conversation today.

In terms of formal feedback as well, please remember that that is open and biblically that open at least until the middle of next week too so there are plenty of opportunities to provide any thoughts or reflections on that too.

So, overall, overall, I think probably the starting point I wanted to reiterate is that at, and I know that we talked about this at the last meeting, Katherine, you have made my day that the cat looked on your computer and turn the microphone on.

It is all very real, I loved it. Probably just to reiterate, I think that from the agency's perspective, the purpose of this, of our collective effort and a work program is really about recognising that in the budget, the government has made a significant investment in the Agency of \$720 million over four years.

To invest in a series of initiatives that are designed to improve outcomes for participants in the scheme.

And the work, and those initiatives have been described in the budget papers and we had an opportunity to describe them in estimates again this week.

So, there are some parameters and guardrails about how that money is expected to be invested.

But that really importantly the agency has been explicit with government in the development of the budget and since then as well that the way those initiatives are designed in detail and implemented is something that we need to do in partnership with the sector and with people with disability.

And so, the work we are seeking to kinda kick off with you will is about how we work in partnership to design the detail of those initiatives, and to oversee the implementation.

Really importantly, those initiatives are reflect broadly a whole range of feedback that we are aware of and views about how we can make changes within current policy and legislative settings, to improve the performance of the agency and the experience of participants in the scheme, to help support better outcomes.

Clearly, in the context of the budget, national cabinet has also indicated these 8% target.

Our focus is not get to that eight invested in the agency to achieve participant outcomes. We know that percent target at all costs. That is not the intent of this work. We are to invest the money in insurance scheme, which is designed to maximise lifetime opportunities and minimise lifetime costs of care and support too, that if we focus on outcomes, they can only be beneficial for the sustainability of the scheme, but our focus is really here is on how we can use that money in the way that we have always asked for more investment to do so to improve outcomes for scheme participants.

As context for the initiatives themselves.

So, a couple of questions I might work through that have come through in response to feedback, and thank you again for people who have been able to review and provide any comments.

The first is a broad question, but I think the really important one in relation to the specificâ€¦ sorry, Carolyn, your hand is up. Did you want to jump in?

SPEAKER:

I will be really quick. Sorry, I'm a bit thick.

Can you just go back a sentence?

When you said, within legislative parameters.

Umm.

Sorry if I'm not getting this. So, if there is potential to look at changes, legislative changes that might be necessary, is that the NDIS review? But not within the scope of this work.

SPEAKER:

I think not immediately within the scope of this work, yes.

We are really clear and the government is really clear that out of the budget, there is no

intention to change rules or to change legislation. The first focus of our work is what we can do within our current operating environment in order to start making those changes.

We are very conscious that the review is reporting in October, and that is very close, and I know you are all furiously consulting and doing all sorts at the moment with the review.

But I think the approach, the approach should be, we are focusing now on what we can do currently, but very consciously to lay the foundations for the work coming out of the review.

I think, in doing our work now, about what we can do in the current parameters, we should identify if there are legislative or policy changes that we think should be made that would benefit the outcomes for participants and make sure those are fed into the review and Agency is happy to take on the responsibility to catalogue and make sure that is fed in, I know you have a number of ways of doing that too.

Ideally, I am conscious in the Agency that we need to be in a position to react quickly to react to recommendations of the review in order to be able to respond. And so, my ideal would be that we develop a good way, building on the work we have done to date, a good way of working together through these initiatives and that is a very strong foundation for how we continue to work together in implementing recommendations out of the review too.

I see them very much as a continuation of the same piece of work.

But for the purposes of the current scope, we are operating within current policy and legislative settings.

Great question, Carolyn. Thank you. Geoff, your hand was momentarily up?

Was that a passing thought?

SPEAKER:

I did have my hand up that kind of answered it.

SPEAKER:

Fantastic.

I am happy to take it as an action to make sure that we are actively capturing suggestions and changes to feed into the review too.

As I said, we received a number of comments and questions of the initiatives themselves.

I thought I would start with that and then work through more specifically each of the six initiatives.

The first questions, which I thought were excellent, with a broader question about the process really about the outcomes framework.

The NDIA has an Outcomes Framework that was developed, I think it was about 2016. It is

relatively old now.

The outcomes framework that was developed, a period of time ago.

I think that there is merit inâ€¦ sorry, my apologies.

What was the process to develop the Outcomes Framework? What work has been done on the framework in relation to consistency with other adjacent frameworks? Particularly around DSS, score, etc. Is there an opportunity for further work to create greater consistency between the two frameworks.

Just a flag, the Outcomes Framework exists and was developed as part of starting the NDIS and as I said I think it was finalised in 2016.

I think it is a reallyâ€¦ the other frameworks have been developed for slightly different purposes. And so, there isn't a specific connection between those frameworks.

I do, just a kind of elaborate on the comment, though, as I said at the opening, we are very much thinking about how we design, reform work with very explicit focus on outcomes and participant outcomes.

And I know particularly Bob, this is something you raised out of the discussion with the scheme actuary at the last session.

And I think it is an excellent point. If we're focusing on outcomes able to articulate very clearly, essentially the theory of change that sits behind the outcomes we are driving is really important.

And so, you have just skipped the end, Bob, which I'm delighted by and suggested that such a framework needs to be completely reviewed in the context of the emphasis on well-being and measurement and reporting.

I think it is an excellent point. I think also an excellent point in the context of anticipating quite significant reform in the scheme, particularly out of the review, but that really understanding measurement and reporting of outcomes is going to be critical feature of this.

Can I suggest that out of that question, we just flagged that for consideration in the context of the co-design approach.

It is an excellent, excellent callout that is really valuable and will be very valuable to the longer term piece of work underway.

The second couple of questions around the initiatives relates to planning.

The better planning initiative. The first question is, has the NDIA investigated the link between imposed plan cuts, especially in SIL and the recent phenomenon of plan overspend?

In understanding this question, I think, what I understand of this question and please clarify if I am misinterpreting it, but the question relates to, there was a period of time particularly in 2021

when there was a quite significant reduction in the rate of inflation between plans.

And that people were seeing quite significant reductions in their plans when they went for a planned review.

In terms of the link, so the answer to the question is, in relation to that period of time when we saw that reduction in plan inflation, we have investigated, we have been trying to understand that link. It is very hard to attribute those trends in actuarial data.

What is very clear, however, is that the current rate of plan inflation and you will recall the slides David showed at the last meeting. The current rate of inflation is very high. We would estimate includes some degree of correction. The first is that there was quite a significant drop and decline over that period of time, so a bit of artificial repression of the rates of plan inflation.

So there is probably an element of correction of that to a normal rate.

The other point of correction is in relation to COVID-19. What we understand is that we know there were much lower utilisation rates in plans through the COVID-19. Because people were struggling to get access to services. So we saw quite a depression of utilisation as well. That also had an impact on plan costs as well.

So, in the most recent work that the actuaries have been doing and presented to you last time we met just after the budget, his projections take into account the fact that there has been some calibration. What that means is that we have investigated what that relationship is. Even then we are still seeing projections of increased plan inflation into the future. But, probably not as significant as we have seen in the past 12 months because of those factors.

It is an excellent question.

A second question in relation to planning is what is the approach to people with large plans, especially people with complex needs and with family support. Can we confirm that this group who are by definition the people with the highest needs, are not being specifically targeted in this reform?

Yes. We can absolutely confirm that. And we can confirm that because the focus of our thinking, in terms of work, is really about not the fact that some people have, by necessity, very complex needs and therefore complex plan sizes. That is always anticipated to be a feature. It was the core purpose of the scheme being established. So, the fact that someone has complex support needs in itself, and whether they are self-managed or plan-managed, is irrelevant for the purposes of modelling.

So, it certainlyâ€¦ I don't think there is any desire on the part of the agency to consider better planning, by looking only at plans that are significant in size. Because some people just need plans that are significant in size.

I think there is more merit in looking at plans that areâ€¦ the spread of plans that are significantly higher than other people with similar needs. I think that is not about picking off particular people, but looking at trends around that. And then looking at the trends around inflation.

So even if someone has very significant support needs because they have complex needs, if those needs remain relatively consistent, because the circumstances remain relatively consistent, then regardless of the size of the package, we can still anticipate what rate of inflation of that should be. So, we are not so concerned about the size of packages, but about the rate of change across all packages. I hope that clarifies.

The final question, before I get into each of these initiatives, is "How will the NDIA ensure reform initiatives does not including the workforce up skill planner and partners. Will there be specific work focused on this?"

I hope so. That is my answer to that. Certainly from the agencies input to this, we think there has been some tremendous work done in the past couple of years, in particular. A supportive decision-making policy that was released recently I would also add the participant safeguarding policy that was released recently. Excellent pieces of work that I think I deeply relevant, particularly to workforce capability in the agency.

But I think there are other pieces of work that are also really important. I think about things like the work on the Home and Living framework, and the work on the psychosocial framework as well. This is very important. So, certainly from our perspective, we would really like to see that work as a core feature of implementation of budget initiatives as well.

For that reason, we have, as part of our thinking of a draft approach we have proposed that a specific objective of the reform or program of work for us, is that the work builds on work that has been done to date. So, that that is a poor input of the development of the work program and of the budget too.

SPEAKER:

This is something Jenny may be able to answer. I am wondering how the work in relation to the national development of the national autism strategy also intersects with some of this work. Or doesn't it?

SPEAKER:

I think Katharine has just called out the same thing in the chat. I think it has to. I think that my comments earlier around the NDIS review also have two relate to the environment that we are working in, which is that there are a whole range of work underway. Obviously one is the disability commission. That is significant. As you said, the autism strategy. You also called out on. I would anticipate the landscape mapping and alignment is

What has to be a core feature of all the work we're doing. We cannot do in isolation. I am also conscious that there is a range of work also underway in the agency. So we need to make sure things like PACE are reflected in that. I might take that as a key feedback from the conversation to date. Jenny?

SPEAKER:

I just want to add that you you have a representative in the National Autism Strategy to be feeding in and integrating. One of my questions about the codesign, governance and to your point, Corri,â€ you would think the quarterly meetings or otherwise, there is someone

integration mechanism to bring all the categories together. Because it won't happen just through mapping organically. Is that what you are meeting?

SPEAKER:

Yes, that is exactly right. It has to be explicit. And I think also that it is not just mapping, but we are identifying things that can be done that are better done elsewhere. We should not be wasting time on it. We should be focusing on things that we can do to have the most impact.

SPEAKER:

Most importantly it is not unravelling great work that someone else has done.

SPEAKER:

We have all been around too long, Jen. I totally agree. Jeff?

SPEAKER:

Thank you. To pick up on Carolyn's point about the care economy and the recent question about autism, we need to make sure in the working groups that in the selection and composition of those workgroups, that perhaps some of the membership of that can be dealt with in a way. Also, in the governance structure where we have those implementation committees, they need to be (inaudible). Otherwise the work needs to take place in context and so if we do both of those things then we can kind of begin to cover it off.

SPEAKER:

Yes that's a good call. Thank you, Jeff. I'm just trying to reconcile some of the comments in the chat.

Paul, you made a comment in relation to autism. Did you want to talk to that briefly, so I can understand how we can make sure that happens?

SPEAKER:

Before I retired into this position, one of the things I did through my entire career, in fact one of the earliest jobs I had was around modelling. Computer modelling. And all that stuff. I've been doing it all my life. It is an area I understand fairly well.

What I have to say is that I cannot see the detail in how the modelling is being done. I have some really strong suspicions that the NDIS is modelling because autism really presents itself very differently amongst other disabilities. Most disabilities are relatively stable in terms of the population. That is not the case with autism. We don't know why. It is quite non-uniformly distributed.

I have not had the chance yet to figure out if the 8% target actually stays within the growth that is going to happen just through the autism population. I am not seeing any evidence that that kind of factor is being taken into account in any of this stuff. So I am really keen to see how the modelling is done and whether it is being done appropriately, and whether it is clearly understood. This is really complicated stuff. It affects how you do workforce planning in significant ways.

There is a whole raft of issues here. If you are going to codesign we have to have confidence in

what's going on. It may not be that everybody in this group can do that... I would be really keen to see some work start on that. That is what I'm raising there.

SPEAKER:

That is good call. There are two things in you raised for me. The first is I would like you to have a conversation with David Gifford about the modelling,. A one-on-one conversation between the two of you will be beneficial and would be useful for you to bring it back to the group as well. Rather than have it in the broader group. It might just be my cold-y head but I am not sure I will keep up with it. I am happy to speak for myself, not others.

I might see if you are comfortable with that as an approach. If I can set that up for you it would be great. There are some important things to explore there. In relation to your broader point about outcomes, Bob. I would also like to pick that up in our next conversation about codesign approach to. Because I think it might be something that we want to

â€¦ I would be open to this but given our conversation about how this relates to other pieces of work underway, and whether this is something we specifically want to dedicate a piece of work to doing, because I think that might be really useful. Bringing those two pieces together might be useful.

SPEAKER:

The challenge for me is I have a national autism and strategy review to go through. There is a bit more money than we ever had before. It is still really a massive challenge for us.

SPEAKER:

As I hear that.

SPEAKER:

I can go through this fairly quickly and easily if we set up the time to do that.

SPEAKER:

Wonderful, thank you. Jenny and Jeff. You have your hands up. That's a legacy hand.

Katharine, you have raised not doing useless busywork. I think we should include as a principal because I am also not on board with doing useless busywork.

Without being flippant about it as well, alignment with the review is a material thing we don't want to be doing. The other thing I think would be explicitly considering how we can include this review in the work so that they can also call out if there are things that are a disjunct with the direction they are heading.

I should say we have consulted quite extensively with the review team and coaches in particular on the direction of this work and the key focus areas. It is certainly not being done to date in isolation, but we have to you remain detailed design and implementation is much more explicit, so we need to make sure the conversations are as explicit going forward to. That is an important point to call out.

Simon, I know you commented in relation to codesign. Let's put a pause on that, thank you.

We'll come back to that when we're talking about the codesign piece.

If everyone is comfortable, what I will do is talk through in more detail and specifically to each of the initiatives set out in the budget. And, kind of the things we might anticipate as being part of the consideration of that stream of work.

To start with, workforce capability. This is where the big dollars set in the budget initiative. The workforce capability initiative includes \$429.45 million over four years, to build workforce capability to result in consistency and equity in decision-making for access and planning decisions for NDIS planners.

So, importantly this initiative picks up the bulk of the workforce investment for the NDIA. The \$429 million is spread quite evenly over the four years. That is different from the other initiatives, where the money is in the first two years or so. This is because it is about an enduring workforce investment. It is spread more evenly over four years.

The intention of this is because we are talking about the greatest workforce investment, probably also important call out that this initiative relates very closely to all the other initiatives as well, because this is a foundational piece.

Bob has just asked whether it looks at the advocacy workforce. It does not. That is absolutely true. This investment is in NDIA workforce. It is specifically about the agency and particularly around our front-line workforce. That is really about the number of planning and access delegates.

The intention with this one is to look at how we can improve the planning experience for participants, and in improving the planning experience we get better and more consistent decision. That's not saying everyone gets the same thing, but the variability against people with similar support needs is less into the future. And there is more consistency and equity in that.

Also importantly, and that you have just raised this important question, planners have more time to spend with participants. So, there is probably two things here that are important. It's that simply having more planners in the agency will enable more planners to meet with more participants. As you know many participants in the scheme never have contact with a planner in the agency at all. And they don't have any contact with the decision-maker in the plan.

That is the source of immense frustration for the participants. Also it creates a bunch of anxiety and confusion in itself, because people don't feel like they have an opportunity to have a conversation or to understand what is behind a decision.

Then we get lots of section 48 variations and changes, and we go backwards and forwards. That can and in some real complexity. The intention of this, to your point Nick, is that we would expect as a result of this that many more participants are able to spend time with planners around the planning discussions and decisions.

To your point Nick, the intention therefore is that much more of the planning process will transfer from LACs to planners. The other important component of that is the computer system that is currently being tested in Tasmania also anticipates that. So there is already some foundational

places in place to support that.

In terms of the capability, and what this piece of work might anticipate, obviously the funding anticipates a lot more investment in NDIA workforce. But things we would anticipate—planners delegates—delegates from refers to access delegates and planning delegates make a decision about participant plans. They are all delegates

Some examples of what we might look like are ensuring that in increasing our planning workforce, we are employing more people with disabilities so that there is more of a shared experience. Making sure that people have time to work together with participants.

We would anticipate this would pick up much more around staff capabilities. So capabilities around knowledge and expertise in specific disability types and cultures. I think the other piece in this is an outstanding recommendation from IAC that we would anticipate including is a workforce capability framework that looks at the rising tide and floating all those to up skill planners and partners, particularly in and around evidence-based and best practice.

I might just pause there. I know there is some comment in chat, but if anyone wants to raise their hand I will work through some of the questions.

Simon says all participants should have a chance to meet with the planners. I agree and hope this investment will help us facilitate that. For your context, I'm sure many of you know this, we have not had significant investment in planning workforce for many years in the agency.

As a result, that was the cause for— even as the numbers in the scheme has significantly grown through transition. That was the reason for some of the planning process to be essentially outsized to the LACs. An increase in planning workforce gives us more opportunity to do that.

Simon, did want to comment on that?

SPEAKER:

Not specifically, but just in general. You have a list of suggested actions for each of these points. I think it would be more useful, rather than just telling us what you're thinking, to ask us what we are thinking. So perhaps a better way of to find out what we are thinking with regard to what could be done about the workforce planning.

I think workforce planning needs to go across the whole agency. In terms of getting better outcomes, given that you've got \$400 million.

Also, LACs. Doesn't PACE envision them writing out the process?

LACs are not there at all so this document is already obsolete. I would imagine that the viewer is probably going to think LACs get the support coordination in large part. That is what was always expected to do.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Simon. Helpful comments. A couple of things in relation to that. We are very happy

to receive any suggestions at this global level about additional things that should be fed into the working groups. My intention ensuring these suggestions was not to dictate at all, but to give a flavour of the things that might be considered in each of the working groups to help make sure people have information about what we are thinking, and so that those more detailed conversations.

I would expect through both this forum and detailed working groups, any and all suggestions of different approaches would be canvassed.

SPEAKER:

I am just wary that this is putting the cart before the horses.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Simon. A couple of other questions. In relation to PACE, an important point is the intention.. the computer system being rolled out in Tasmania that we're looking at expanding nationally is to transition much of the planning work from LACs to planners. That is absolutely the case.

However even in our current planning workforce, with the PACE system in place, we have insufficient planners. This investment is really important for being able to achieve that objective too.

Nick has asked a question about expanding the number of delegates employed by the NDIA. The intention is that this investment is only supporting NDIA delegates. This money is not intended to go to LACs.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Corri. Will the planning group address the issue of planning for NDIA purposes such as visioning for a good life, learning from peers and that kind of thing?

SPEAKER:

A good question. I think this feeds into the second initiative around better planning. This is really important. There is probably a question for a groups about whether we would like to do those pieces of work together, because they're quite complementary and very tied. Particularly around specialisation. The answer to your and Sylvana's question is that we want to talk want quality not quantity. How you do quality is something we would want to work through and what that looks like.

Probably the only caveat that I would put around in the first instance, within policy and legislative parameters, there are some things around improving the experience and focusing on lifetime goals that could do with consideration and review by that legislation and policy settings. The there are certainly a lot of work we could do on this.

SPEAKER:

There is a lot of meritorious view that people doing that big life planning should be dealing with the NDIA. It should probably be done in a way that feeds into the NDIA.

SPEAKER:

This is something that has come through a fair bit. In both chat and in feedback to date, understandably. Something for us also to consider is whether we explicitly want to do a piece of work out of this. It is not explicitly funded, but I think it is so relevant that it will be in the review. So whether we wanted try to get ahead and think about what that looks like. Planning for NDIA delegates without thinking about. Two and LACs is a bitâ€¦ it's not very coherent. That's something we want to think about.

Carolyn Hodge?

SPEAKER:

I have a question that builds on what you just said about consistency with the LACs.

If we are saying all of the plan ... If LACs or other external parties get pulled into doing the planning but only in some areas and not others, I think there is a risk we are going to see that inconsistency really continue. We have been talking about our experiences of LACs and where they are good, they are really really good, but where they are being used to do plans, the detailed plans, not the big visioning stuff. Then we are getting all these different mixed outcomes and I think it is really important that this process seeks... It is not a consistency of results, because it is a person centred scheme but we want some consistency, in terms of the resources that make the scheme work.

I think we're just the dials all the time because of where the money is and what not, and we are probably not really recognising how that is having an impact on the outcomes for people themselves. I guess I just want to be really careful in this work, that we are really thinking about that. Because it is really making a big difference and you have mentioned a couple of times around calibrating for people with similar support needs and I get that and I think the way I am reading into that is that you are thinking about similar support needs, not just in terms of disability, but what sort of personal supports, informal supports, whether they are in a rural or regional area or an area of the market or whether there is cultural considerations - a whole lot of things that come into play and I think having spoken to you, you are thinking about that.

But I think that also needs to be really explicit because sometimes that could be read as, this person has this disability that has a similar support need to this person and that is not the whole picture. So I guess to round out a long comment, we have to be clear that we have got the same resourcing and arrangements in place so we are not throwing out the system in certain areas and people with disability are paying the price for that.

SPEAKER:

I think that is a spectacular point, really well made and I think that is exactly, certainly from the agency's perspective, that is what we would love to be contributing into this program of work. To say where are the functions we need to be making sure there is consistency? Absolutely in our mines has to be consistency for people with different support needs and not disability types, that is not a good reference point.

I think also, I think I would also add to that because there will also be... There will always be a spectrum, even with people with quite similar support needs but we should have some confidence that across the spectrum, people's plans are fairly reflected in that too, and that is the thing that is going to be really important and requires exactly as you say, some kind of

consistency in who is making the decision, but also what the approach and capability of those decision-makers is too. I think that is really helpful.

SPEAKER:

Just a follow-up, I think the other part of that is, if, for instance, LACs in some area continued to be pulled into that, then that planning function, then what is going to be considered as a top up? So people in those areas are not going without the function? If you take from that bucket, you might be solving one problem here, but creating another problem over there so I think that has to be a live part of all of these discussions.

SPEAKER:

Very much agree. And I think, we have talked about workforce capability and then the planning conversation and probably the other thing in the better planning piece I would call out that we would be hoping to see in that is also really looking at the supports available to participants, and this go to your point, Carolyn too, the supports and other supports available to participants around plant management, support coordination and being able to manage their plan. And the LAC workforce is a component of that too, so I think we would hope to be really exploring that as well.

Sorry, Gavin?

SPEAKER:

Also the support coordinator needs to understand about what is changing, they need to understand what is going on behind the scenes so when something does go wrong, or we are not happy about something, a complaint, they understand what it is and how to fix the problem. I think that is really important.

SPEAKER:

That is an excellent point, and thank you for raising it. I think the role of support coordinators in change and helping participants in managing their plans, is really important and something I think we really want to make sure is a part of this work. Sam has just said that most support coordinators don't do any ongoing training. I am assuming we are excluding the growing space support coordinators from that but also to your point, Gavin, we need to make sure support coordinators know everything that is happening and changing so they are able to help participants manage their plans.

SPEAKER:

I'm conscious of time and we need to take a break at 11:40 and we are only on the first initiative.

SPEAKER:

I was on to three.

SPEAKER:

Want to do people want to do? We still need to talk about the co-design.

SPEAKER:

I need to have a break because that is the way I roll but it does not mean everyone else does.

SPEAKER:

Maybe if we can have a five-minute break, if people are comfortable with that, and then come back.

SPEAKER:

Excellent, so 11:45.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, guys. We will see you back at 11:45.

(Break)

SPEAKER:

... Corri and I and it was so nice, but Bill, your avatar is so smiley, a very calming vibe. We will just wait as people come back on.

I think your avatar looks very thoughtful, Sam, contemplative.

SPEAKER:

Very calming, I think it is something I should get on board. Maybe that is a challenge for us at some point in the future, we will have an avatar collective meeting.

SPEAKER:

The next initiative I thought, we have talked about workforce capability and better planning. The next one is around plan flexibility. So this is 63.8 million with a view to... Nick has called out KPIs impacting quality planning. I think that is an excellent point we would accidentally expect to pick up the better planning and workforce capability work and thank you for calling it out.

I think to the points that have been made, absolutely our intention with the PACE system is to transfer the planning functions to NDIA employed delegates. But from LACs, so there is more consistency. But the pressure of moving through quickly, obviously is also a huge contributor to participant experience, so thank you for that.

Plan flexibility, so \$63.8 million around a lifetime planning approach, to make your plans are more transparent and flexible for life events. So I think the intent of this initiative is to look at how we can better take a lifetime approach in working with participants. So rather than these year to year or two years to two years chunks around goals and I know some people have called out the challenge of goals, sometimes, in the chat, that we should take a more long-term approach with how we are working with participants and develop their plans.

We would anticipate this would consider things like longer term plans, less frequent formal reviews, a lifetime support approach, better transition planning over the course of their lifetimes and better planning around flex up and flex down of plants as people's lives change and evolve as people make significant transitions. Really looking at the kind of flexibility that might be anticipated in people's plans with a much longer lens. Simon?

SPEAKER:

Please finish first what you want to go over and I can contribute.

SPEAKER:

That was all I was going to say about plan flexibility.

SPEAKER:

Just reading the document that was circulated, I think there is a fundamental misunderstanding about what independence means. How it is or is not related to cost. When I read in the document there, the original intent of the NDIS to support people with disability independently and with the right supports but... Living independently does not mean you don't need the NDIS to continue to live independently.

Because that is what support means so I don't understand why anybody ever expects people to exit the scheme except when they die, quite frankly. You should always have the capacity for a person with disability to get the supports you need to live an ordinary life in the here and now and you should not be thinking about some distant future when you don't need that power wheelchair to get from A to B or you don't need that seeing-eye dog or attendant care to help you get out of bed in the morning.

I think that whole section needs to be completely re-understood in terms of what it means to be an NDIS participant and what you should be getting out of it.

SPEAKER:

thank you, Simon, that is a really important point and I should be clear that any reference to people transitioning out of the scheme is the early intervention pathway into the scheme which has always anticipated that at a point in time, that children or people entering, sorry, not just children, people entering through the early intervention pathway to the scheme would have a reassessment of their eligibility about whether they are supported to transition out of the scheme or whether they continue under section 24, which is the permanent disability pathway.

It is a very good point and it should be explicit that the transition only relates to people in the early intervention stream.

SPEAKER:

I don't understand because it seems to be the people who have access denied because it is deemed to be a medical issue and not a disability issue. I could talk about diabetes not being an eligibility criteria for the scheme until you lose a leg or whatever you or you go blind and that kind of thing.

I think there needs to be some work around clearly defining what you mean by early intervention and what conditions you expect... And isn't that medical? I don't understand that at all.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Simon and I take the point that the clarification around what we mean in the legislation in the early intervention stream, is a really important component and particularly if we are talking about flexibility of plans, I think that is helpful. Carolyn?

SPEAKER:

I am sorry, obviously I have not had a chance to read all the documents and the rest of it, but I would like to... And I say this coming from a point of ignorance in some respects, but I am not sure I fully understand. Surely there are opportunities, there could be opportunities for people to exit the scheme and not just children in early intervention.

I don't understand the kind of assumption that once you enter the scheme, you are on it for life. Unless you are a child. I believe it is related to a whole range of circumstances. Am I getting that wrong?

SPEAKER:

You are not, there is two ways people into the scheme, and the conversation is a really important one and that is about the current legislative frame so the current legislation has two ways people get access to the scheme and one is for people with permanent disability, which anticipates that people, once they access the skin, will be on the scheme for life or until they transition into aged care arrangements.

The second, and even then may continue in the scheme as well,... And the second one is in relation to early intervention. We often think about early intervention, the early intervention stream as being only four children, but it is not. It can be early intervention for a range of things and under the legislation, there is provision for people who enter through the early intervention scheme to exit the scheme. That is the current legislative frame.

I think what the conversation at the moment really picks up is exactly the kind of things I think we would hope to explore in this plan flexibility piece of work, which is really about the fact that currently, the way the agency administers, and I know Silvana, you have just pointed out that the way the agency administers access and support currently is very similar for whether URL intervention, or whether you are permanent disability and that there are probably better ways we can support people and exploring how to do that in a way that supports better outcomes for people would be really important.

And Nick, you have flagged really importantly the other question around flexibility, which is that currently we talk about transitioning in and out of the scheme but that does not pick up the fact that people's needs fluctuate over time based on the type of disability or the nature of their support needs or other supports or they are going through significant transitions. So thank you.

I am going to keep going, clearly there is a lot of talk about but we all anticipate we should have a really good working group or not just a working group but really good focus on this.

The next one is another really significant one that I know was very dear to many hearts, which is in relation to independent living. This is about inconsistency about doing some work to start to understand and make changes to support more consistency in decision-making around Home and Living supports, and particularly in relation to SIL, Supported Independent Living.

So this would think also about planning, but also how we can approach planning decisions more consistently and how we can make sure the connections with mainstream services, particularly around housing, a more consistent. And stronger, I think as well.

So thinking about how we can organise ourselves in the Agency to better support that, so with

specialised panels and I note this is something that is anticipated in the work that has been done on the Home and Living framework so this would anticipate building on some of that work to really improve our practice, in relation to how we support participants with Home and Living requirements and particularly those people on SIL.

Simon, is that an old or new hand? We shall go Catherine and then Leighton.

SPEAKER:

I apologise, I was late to the meeting, I was at an NDIS review meeting about SIL! I think you may have read at my question earlier, but how does this work in SIL interface with the supported decision making policy? I'm keen to understand how that interfaces with the planning decisions but it is about the decisions people make themselves around Home and Living.

SPEAKER:

Just to say, we think it is really important and that is one of the reasons we propose, as part of... We, the Agency, post some of the principles and objectives that this explicitly built and worked until eight and I would particularly callout supported decision-making and safeguarding because we need to implement those policies over the year and over the same period of time we will be doing this work so I hope it is really captured in this and build upon and done through this as well, I think it is really important and I agree it is absolutely relevant to this. Leighton?

SPEAKER:

Good question, Catherine, and certainly at a council level and Home and Living reference group level, there has been a lot of discussion of those two policies in the co-design along with the leading framework that has been developed. I guess for the sake of people in the representative organisations that cancel has had a Home and Living reference group for some time now several years, and there has been a lot of ongoing work to move the whole direction of Home and Living into a more contemporary model so it would be really important to make sure that is not lost.

SPEAKER:

Definitely, thank you. Silvana, to your point about checking the advice of the last 10 years, absolutely. We have gone through that too, explicitly against each of these to make sure that as we are trying to capture information that might need to be part of the discovery work with all of the relevant bits including advice is captured and we might make a note to make sure we bring that work to IACs so they have visibility of that too.

I am conscious of time. But the next one is a very important one so this is in relation to evidence-based supports. This is funding, the words in the budget funding to make sure we have a provider market that delivers quality evidence-based support and value for money for participants.

So this is one of the areas where there is a shared responsibility for leadership of this work with DSS. I think there will be three components to this and one is the expert panel on assistive... Sorry, the expert panel on assistive technology will be led by the Department of Social Services.

The second component is exploring ways in which we could use bulk buying capability for common commodities in the Agency, that participants use. Essentially to get better value for

money for participants. Examples of that might be, and we currently have, there is currently a panel for continence products, so that is already in existence but whether there was an opportunity to do something similar with things like feeding tubes or things like that that I purchased at significant bulk rates, significant amounts and whether or not a box right might bring benefit.

Obviously there are important considerations around to ensure choice and control around that so it would be keen to make sure that this is something that is codesigned in detail. I think in this as well... That is something we anticipate would absolutely be important.

The other thing is also looking at the question of, and I think this is the point that Savannah has made, is what more can we do around ensuring evidence-based of supports and the provider market as well? I think there is a fair piece of work to be explored and understood in more detail in this space as well in terms of the market.

SPEAKER:

This is an intervention, do you need to get a glass of water?

SPEAKER:

I have got one here, thank you for your intervention, I also had a little frog that I needed to... But I think I'm there now. Jenny?

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Australian Autism Alliance. In your statements, everything in their talks about a provider panel and then I see Silvana's comment and is the intent that this will address a Market Stewardship, the initiative would look at Market Stewardship and what a good provider looks like? Or is that part of DSS and the commission? Because in this, I kept reading it and I have sent questions through and it really just doesn't talk about panels and helping people select policy providers, but we all know that that needs to be addressed, what a quality provider is and the audits, etc. and I will stretch out because my son is about to come in... There you go.

When we go to the next one with fraud... Now you know what life looks like... Sorry for the interruption.

About the fraud that is coming up, is about we know that there is certain practices that sit, not deliberately but within NDIA, that help facilitate fraud and bad practices and I know there will be a discussion as to whether should sit but that is a burning topic does not come out because it is titled provider panel and sorry everyone it took so long to get that out.

SPEAKER:

Such a good point and I think my view would be that we should try to group some of the market pieces exactly as you say together for exploration and I think there is particularly some conflict-of-interest things that we need to explore, some of those markets... With all of the complexity of using the term market in this context, and I think a piece of work that picks up the provider penalties but also picks up the kind of broader provider questions that we need to address should absolutely be grouped together and that would be logical. I think better to group with this than with fraud which I think is a slightly separate question.

The things you might do in relation to fraud and the things you might do working with providers

about quality would be different so I suggest we group these together.

SPEAKER:

Can I just add to that? I agree, so what you would do for a quality provider is one thing but are you saying, because I started to think under workforce planning, I don't think from the top of NDIA and said to come up with decisions that help facilitate fraud to occur.

So I don't know where it should sit but what we are saying is there are some unintentional practices, not just from individuals but unintentionally, in order to help demand because demand outstrips supply, etc. that is actually facilitating that fraud. I am pretty sure lots of people have got examples, we have lots of specifics and it needs to sit somewhere, but I steered away from that because it was all talking about a panel versus what good looks like and I am sure all of us have opinions on what that is.

SPEAKER:

I think that is important, thank you. And that is probably an excellent segue to fraud and non-compliance, so this is \$48.3 million, which goes to continuation of current compliance workforce in the Agency, and that also goes to developing a business case around a more systemic approach to fraud, which I think would be quite heavily reliant on technology, to be able to analyse data in order to detect and investigate forward. I think that is the intention of this one.

James?

SPEAKER:

I apologise for my tone of voice, a fun time for all! Around fraud, it is interesting because there is a piece here around capacity building. There are people out there who will do nefarious things and one of the safeguards is to protect against that but the scheme is there to deal with capacity in the best way possible and supports decision making, so there is a lot of overlapping.

SPEAKER:

Fantastic point, James, thank you for raising it. And I think there is a question for us as to whether... I think in that better planning conversation, we had talked earlier about how we can support participants, the support available for participants to manage their plans as well, whether or not that is something we pick up there too, because it is a great callout and we need to make sure those pathways are in place and also people are empowered and saved two reports were they need to.

Caroline?

SPEAKER:

I don't know where this fits because I am sick of asking about it, but about those bloody TOS, about the interface and the responsibilities of the different systems and I think when we spoke recently, I gave you an example. I would like to repeat this example. This is only two days old, a 13-year-old NDIS participant slashes her wrist and try to jump off the Tasman Bridge and is taken in an ambulance to the emergency department of the Royal Hobart Hospital and is discharged from the emergency department into the community mental health service, whatever that is called and then discharged and does not even see them because they are an NDIS participant, it is the NDIS' responsibility.

In fact that is an acute mental health crisis and we are seeing this, we see this a lot. I know that Bill Shorten, and to me this is one of the most important kind of things of his streams or whatever his sex work, about the mainstream systems and I don't know how, unless those states and territories are dragged kicking and screaming to the table, how we get these systems.... I hate the word mainstream but you know what I mean, to actually take responsibility.

You can't tell me that a 13-year-old being dragged off the Tasman Bridge with cut wrists is discharged back to her dysfunctional home because she is an NDIS participant.

SPEAKER:

I think that is an incredibly important point and what is really clear from the feedback and from the conversation, but also how we know the connectedness of the system is, I wonder if, in thinking about the co-design approach and if we want to go through working groups, whether we make sure that tier 2 LAC importantly considers mainstream systems, because I am thinking particularly about the timing of bilateral negotiations, etc. coming up and having a good sense of how we see those sitting together and I know it is something the review will focus on as well, is really important. It would be useful for the Agency to participate in those conversations with you.

SPEAKER:

Is that an old hand or new hand? I am conscious of time so we might close out that part of the agenda and if we can move into what will be a tight discussion around the co-design model, all we distributed that during the week and most of the feedback we got from people was they were comfortable with the model but there was some questions. Corri might go through that, sorry Simon, we might take your question in the chat, so if we...

SPEAKER:

I just really want to say, I don't want to have this conversation in 10 minutes. Because I have raised a lot of real concerns about the co-design model and I think we all need to have a good long think about it before we agree to something that I, for one, don't think work at all during the projects that have been done so far, I don't want to put my hand up and say I am all good for a model that does not provide enough access. We need to talk about what should be done.

SPEAKER:

We can use the session to have provided feedback and have some discussion and then circulate the final model for further discussion, so Corri, we will throw to you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Simon, important point. And as we said at the start, a couple of things from me on that important point, which is that I am conscious, both on the initiatives and the co-design approach, that people might want to provide comments or feedback on reflection from our conversation today, or directly rather than in a group setting and that is all perfectly appropriate. And welcome. So certainly not intending to close out any decision today and I think that is very important.

I think the other thing I wanted to flag and I know we have a couple of hands up so I will go to that shortly, but the other thing I wanted to flag is that in circulating the document for today, what

we were hoping to do was to make sure that there is a process in place that we are able to discuss.

It is really hard to have nebulous conversations about things, so very happy to turn things on its head and turn them around but hard to have it in theory, rather than with something to work with. That was our intention and trying to provide something for the purposes of discussion.

Simon, absolutely note your point that you don't want to provide comments and feedback and that is not design. If you have alternative designs or key features that you want to see in design. I am very open to making sure that that is a collective design process as well. Jenny then Geoff. Old hand? Jeff?

Jeff Smith:

I guess I have a different view to Simon. I do recognise that there are issues around co-design, absolutely but I am not sure about the nebulous fit, but I do think personally, I think it would be advantageous for us to move to that working group stage and then have those discussions in there, because even within the working groups, you can cut and slice it in different ways, the independent living is a good example of where some of it may well be co-design, within the project itself. And other bits don't need to be co-design.

I think we need to get quickly to the working groups, to then have the conversations and I do believe they are important conversations but it feels like we have been going around a bit. At this stage.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Jeff. Daryl?

SPEAKER:

To echo a couple of things that Jeff said, but no one will sit here and say that what is being proposed is absolutely perfect but we should thank the Agency for putting something together, I think it is a pretty good structure in terms of something to get us started, as long as there is the openness and willingness which appears to be there, to refine it as it needs to be, both within the Working Group but then as we come back together as a broader group, we cannot take an approach of doing everything as a massive group, so we do need to have something that works and I think the concept of a steering committee and quarterly meetings provides a good starting point for some of the mechanisms to bring it all together.

On a similar page to Jeff, let's acknowledge that we have a process to review if we need to, but thank you to the Agency for pulling something together as a reasonable starting point.

SPEAKER:

Can I reiterate from the Agency's perspective, we are very open to discussing alternative ways of doing things, always, that is always on the table. I think the other point and this was made in some of the feedback we received head of the meeting, was that we should be explicitly taking an adaptive approach. I think Leighton you call that last time we met, that we intended to take an adaptive approach with the Co-Design Advisory Group and we forgot to take an adaptive approach we forgot to be as explicitly soft reflective as we wanted to and so I think certainly that is something we should be explicit about doing, which is we can start doing some work but if it is

not working or there are things we need to change, we should all be extremely open and explicit about doing that. I think that is a helpful principle to use.

I am keen to try to make sure, just some of the feedback we received is also shared. We did have, one of the things that has not been touched on so far is the importance of having a way to connect between working groups, where reforms overlap. I think that is something that has come out of the conversation today.

The other thing, and I think this goes it into your comment on the chat, Bob, that is important is the importance of reporting, so having really good reporting to make sure that the larger group stays across everything that is happening in each of the working groups and I think that is really important and I would say that is important in between regular whole group catch ups as well as at whole group catch ups.

One of the things, and Simon I hope you don't mind me calling this outfit we talked about what a good platform for ongoing conversation and sharing might be. And so the Agency has been exploring, in the past day or so, what a platform that we could potentially all use to share information and to chat might be, without something that is like Slack or SharePoint I know is used but whether or not there is a way we can have a platform to be able to share information but also talk about it in between sessions might be helpful. We will continue to have a look at those and obviously to make sure that we are identifying the most accessible platform to enable us to maintain regular contact and engagement on some of these things.

Eileen?

SPEAKER:

Maybe I have missed it, which is entirely possible, but I am wondering what is not clear is, with having different working groups, and we all represent a variety across the spectrum of disability, what is not clear governance wise, is can the same group be on more than one working group? Or does it need to be those of us who have attended these two meetings? Or one person from our staff be on one and another from another, because that might be more their specialty?

Unless you have said it, I have missed that end of the governance thing for how working groups good work. In a way that does give voice for all of what we would want to bring to those groups. Does that make sense?

SPEAKER:

Of course it does, absolutely and I think it is one of the core challenges of us all which is how to make sure we are across the depth and breadth of the work underway, but also that we have groups and ways of working that are close enough to be able to really dive into some of the details.

If you OK to pause on that important question, because I think we need to get to have the working groups might work. Silvana and Nick, both for your.... We might come to a working group model that is proposed or a draft working group model in two seconds.

I just want to particularly cover the objectives for us to work together so we also have proposed some objectives but we have not put numbers on the things we shared. Really, I thought it was

worth running through what we have proposed to make sure that we had discussed it and obviously any feedback or additional commentary or changes or revolutions, would be helpful.

The first is that people with disability are represented and participate in the design and limitation of initiatives and so I think to Silvana and Nick's point, the agency perspective, we would value participants working in working groups as well as ensuring there is more engagement with participants beyond working groups as well, so there is fairly explicit and direct participant voice in the work, I think that would be important.

Secondly, the NDIA and the disability community work together to design and implement initiatives out of the budget and 23-24, and the impact of the reforms is to improve outcomes for scheme participants and moderate the rate of cost growth in the scheme noting that the government's target is of an 8% rate of growth from July 1, 2026, so trying to be clear about the guardrails.

Design and implementation of the initiatives does not rely on policy or legislative change, we have talked about that. Design and implementation builds on work previously undertaken between the Agency and disability community through co-design projects and the IAC, and again we have talked about that as well.

And secondly, the design approach is fit for purpose for each of the initiatives, noting that some elements for summer initiatives and elements may not require detailed co-working arrangements. So that is picking up that there may be some kind of... I'm thinking about recruitment for planning workforce, for example that does not require detailed co-design. But requires visibility on the part of the group. That might be an example of that.

Participation of disability community organisations, IOC members and participants and detailed co-working will be appropriately resourced. Carolyn has suggested an objective that recognises and embeds intersectionality and this picks up on a point that Katharine has made early too, which I think is a spectacular suggestion.

Carolyn, unless you want to suggest an objective to include, that would be great otherwise we can draft one I think that is a great one and I would like to see that and it might be a slightly separate objective but I think one that picks up the comments that our design work will recognise the landscape and intersections with other pieces of work happening as well, which is something that has come out strongly in the conversation today, might be important.

Jenny?

SPEAKER:

In context to the comments in question asked, how do we make sure everything is across functionality, there is intersectionality, I think it is important in that model that there is the piece about verification, so it does matter for co-design or consultation, which you have said it will be an iterative model but that verification piece is whatever is being used and discussion points, it comes back to a group to verify the lens and interpretation that will help some of this.

I think at the quarterly meeting, it is hard work being done behind the scenes because it is about making sure not one initiative is not undoing another initiative or at the end, one group comes

back and says they don't understand that or it has gone off the rails and that is what keeps going around in my mind about this, how do we make it work? So I agree with the others, we need to start somewhere and keep building in the mechanisms. I hope that is helpful.

SPEAKER:

I think it is really helpful and useful as you suggest to call out in the objectives, that the work has to complement each other too.

SPEAKER:

I'm conscious of time so we are coming up on the end of the meeting, so is there anything particular you want to talk through, any burning last questions? Eileen has a handout?

SPEAKER:

I do because co-design has been substantially used in the meetings and paperwork that there is not a definition of it. It means many things across Australia and often it is conflated with coproduction. I would argue that more of what we are doing is probably coproduction rather than co-design, because there is, a lot of this has been predetermined and we don't have a say from the very beginning and we don't have much of a say in that so that is where co-design is, so I think for legitimacy, you call a spade a spade so I am doing that and suggest we have a clear... It is not up to each working group to decide what co-design means to them, I think it is about the adapting of which processes will work for that group.

But we need the understanding otherwise we will all cough criticism, so I'm saying it is a process of coproduction rather than co-design and if we are involved in all the other co-family, collaborate and co this and co that the bottom line is I don't think it is co-design, it is coproduction. I'm just calling it out.

SPEAKER:

I think that is a great callout and absolutely there are predetermined parameters around this work, so it is a great callout and I think also it speaks strongly to the kind of idea that we are coproducing the approach that best suits the circumstance.

SPEAKER:

And if you want evidence base, there is heaps of academic papers on that.

SPEAKER:

I am conscious of time and we all have many things on including a number of people who are going to the conference as well, and I think George, you are interviewing my CEO at some point soon so I should let you go and do that, so in terms of next steps, it would be useful if people are able to update provide us any further comments or feedback by uploading the forms and if you don't have time to do it by email, I am always available, as are the team, for a conversation about any feedback or comments you might have.

Similarly, I know that Simon, you have raised a desire to consider alternative models and approaches and I am open to that so if people would like to circulate alternative proposals for how we can progress work on the initiatives in a different co-produced approach, we are open to considering those things but the other thing is that we do want to make sure we are collectively making the best use of all of your time as well, and of ours, and we are progressing work

together. I think that is really important. So can I suggest we capture the feedback from this and we might try to close off this brand of feedback maybe by Wednesday next week, so everyone has, everyone has had the documents for a week, and we will circulate an update for our next conversation as well and come back to you all on that.

I know people have to run, apologies.

SPEAKER:

I also wanted to... Be obviously collected data around people's nominations for the working groups and people pass but over to the IAC and Secretariat to consider for the consideration of the establishment and membership of those working groups.

We will also provide some feedback around.... I can keep the channels open for the co-design feedback and any of those feedback forms and I think in regards to specific actions, we have taken a couple, particularly in relation to (inaudible) briefing by the actuary and also interim discussions of the outcome frameworks as part of working group discussions. And capturing policy changes in the context of the review, so as I said, we will keep those channels of communication open so we are looking forward to continue to get the feedback from you.

SPEAKER:

And just to Catherine's comment in the chat, yes, email post the feedback is the next communications as a whole group but I think we can all expect but that is really great...

I am conscious everyone has many things to do and many people to see and all sorts of other things as I think everybody so much for your time and your thoughtful engagement and experience and everything else. Lovely to see you all and we will all speak soon, no doubt. Have a wonderful time at DSE, and we will see you all soon.

Goodbye.



Reform for outcomes program

Feedback and Working Group preferences

1. Proposed approach to co-design

1.1. Co-design

- 1.1.1. We cannot start a co-design process until we have opportunity to contribute and agree on practice guidelines.
- 1.1.2. Further discussion is needed on the co-design model before the group should agree to the approach for the RFO program.
- 1.1.3. Previous Agency attempts at co-design have been rushed. For example, by missing a meeting people have lost the opportunity to meaningfully contribute.
- 1.1.4. Need to acknowledge that slow and deep consideration leads to better outcomes. Deep consideration also requires transparency (an information sharing portal may work). It also requires perspectives that come from academia and research. Need to consider the latest evidence from critical policy and disability research.
- 1.1.5. The NDIA should ask group members what it thinks reforms could look like, rather than providing a list of proposed reforms for each initiative. (Simon Burchill)
- 1.1.6. There needs to be a clear definition of co-design. This process is co-production, rather than co-design, because of the predetermined parameters.
- 1.1.7. It should not be up to each working group what co-design means to them, rather it should be about the adaptation of which processes will work for that group.
- 1.1.8. This process is not co-design but business-as-usual with the codesign label. What is happening is consultation at best, albeit with enlarged groups of consultees.
- 1.1.9. The Agency has not listened to what the sector believes co-design really looks like.
- 1.1.10. Recognition there are issues around the co-design approach taken, but it would be best to move to that working group stage and have further discussions around the co-design approach for each initiative in the working group.
- 1.1.11. The 'co-design' structure needs more consideration given to co-sensing for mental health – need to be clearer and empowering for participants and their families in asserting their own problem definition process. The NMHCCF as the DRO for Psychosocial Disability from Mental Health has specific perspectives to bring to this process from both the participant and the family /carer lived experience that is uniquely different than other the other disabilities represented in the NDIS.



1.2. Approach

- 1.2.1. Do not support an approach of working through all initiatives in a large group.
- 1.2.2. Very supporting of the working group approach and having a steering committee – provides an opportunity to have visibility of all working groups while not needed to be involved in all.
- 1.2.3. The approach we take needs to be flexible and adaptable to ensure the approach continues to operate effectively – need to reach agreement on the Outcomes framework.
- 1.2.4. Members of the Steering Committee should be encouraged to discuss plans for consultations and opportunities for collaboration.
- 1.2.5. Supports collating input/comments from members in advance of large group meetings to guide conversations.
- 1.2.6. Working group membership needs to be larger than 3-4 members to ensure all DRCO/IAC representatives have opportunity to participate in a working group (Slide 7 RFO Co-design approach powerpoint).
- 1.2.7. Working groups are divide and conquer.
- 1.2.8. Large groups do not achieve outcomes.
- 1.2.9. It's too hard for all members of a large group to talk about all initiatives in detail.
- 1.2.10. Concern that giving us all a say does not deliver outcomes. There needs to be commitment to the successful delivery of improvement and timely responses to unintended consequences.
- 1.2.11. Working Groups should include participants from regional / remote areas, ATSI, CaLD in each working group. Proposed changes tend to impact these groups significantly more and their specific barriers and needs should be considered.
- 1.2.12. Participants and family carers need to be involved in the working groups.
- 1.2.13. Can people be on more than one working group?
- 1.2.14. Do the DRCO representatives on the working groups need to be the people who have attended the Post- budget forums so far?
- 1.2.15. Can one person from a DRCO be on one working group and another person be on another group, because that might be more their specialty?
- 1.2.16. Contemplate changing approach if it's not working after a set time (adaptively managing).
- 1.2.17. Important that working groups are robust but have flexibility. As we go through this process it may become apparent some people's interests lie in what other working groups are doing, and so we need the flexibility to change where appropriate.



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1.2.18. The activities listed seem to be sensible but what is not specified is an underlying participant mistrust in the Scheme – fear of exclusion, cuts, investigations

1.3. Alternative co-design approach

1.3.1. Proposed alternative co-design approach:

- Shared definition of the thing that needs to be done;
- Round-table/fully-inclusive identification of potential strategies and tactics that can be employed to get the thing done within legislative and fiscal constraints;
- A genuinely collaborative approach to building the strategies and describing those tactics agreed to (for example, by having Google Docs draft policy documents that have genuine shared authorship); and
- A commitment to getting approval from all design contributors after the plan to get the thing done is written and not before it.

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. Propose to include an objective that recognises and embeds, intersectionality.

1.5. Communication

1.5.1. Hugely important to have a way to connect between working groups where reforms may overlap.

1.5.2. Need a variety of open channels for people to engage.

1.6. Engagement framework

1.6.1. Add “verify” to the engagement framework to show it is an iterative process, willing to readdress a strategy/initiative at any phase if identified as not going to have the required impact.

1.6.2. Important that this program of work does not unravel great work done previously in the sector.

1.7. DRCO remuneration

1.7.1. DRCOs need to be appropriately funded to participate in this program of work.

1.7.2. Notes the tight labour market currently, and the issue of recruiting staff to support this work.

1.7.3. Resourcing challenge for DRCOs who also have other program of work to participate in, for example, the National Autism and Strategy Review.



2. Governance model

2.1. Steering group and quarterly meeting

- 2.1.1. The proposed working group, steering committee and quarterly meeting concept provides a good starting point for this program of work. Need to ensure we refine the approach as we progress, if required.
- 2.1.2. Important that whatever the working groups develop, that it comes back to the larger group to verify and support.
- 2.1.3. It is important that whatever approach is taken, that it is iterative, and that there is governance in place to ensure there is alignment between the work of the working groups.
- 2.1.4. Important to have robust steering group and quality reporting to ensure the larger group stays across working group work.
- 2.1.5. Need a process for managing and coordinating any overlap between working groups so they do not end up at cross purposes. Suggest some people are on more than one group to help with cross group coordination.
- 2.1.6. Important to have a mechanism that allows for all proposed reforms to be assessed to ensure they will not negatively impact any other proposed reform or identify potential risk and subsequently develop a contingency plan(s).
- 2.1.7. Steering Committee to be responsible for identifying 'opportunities' as well as risk.
- 2.1.8. Change proposed governance model to "Integration Steering Committee" (Slide 7 RFO Co-design approach powerpoint).
- 2.1.9. Significant concern if the RFO program quarterly meeting replaced the DRCO Forum. The sector still needs a place to raise issues with the NDIA.

2.2. Issue prioritisation

- 2.2.1. Important that the governance model has a mechanism to prioritise reforms between working groups, to ensure the reforms that will have the biggest impact are prioritised.

2.3. Alternate governance model

- 2.3.1. Retain the working group model.
- 2.3.2. Modify the process to reflect more work and planning up front in short sprints. Add verification points/ decision gates throughout the rest of the stages. This will help support the following principles:

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- Harness co-design from stakeholders at the critical points to ensure that diversity of domain knowledge has been captured. This also allows potentially at verification points broader representation.
- DRCO indicating they are resource strapped - people and time by focussing on the critical points
- Provides transparency and co-design at the points of most risk and opportunity
- Enables traction so that outcomes can be achieved in an effective timeframe and allows NDIA to take carriage of detailed development and implementation. Also avoids the trap of trying to agree over protracted periods.

2.3.3. Establish a separate working group that may only be for the initial stages to mobilise – may be the Steering Committee if have the right skills, may be a combination of Steering Committee and those with specialised skills. Main goal of this working party is to develop the process and framework for uniformity. This includes more than modifying an existing outcomes framework but includes assessment of problem to solve, measures of success, impact initiative will have, likely resources, risks, interrelationships, conflicts, stakeholders etc. The working group can develop the profile of each initiative and provide back to the working group for discussion and progress. This will enable identification of priorities so can identify which initiatives will have the biggest impact in the relevant timeframe. There are techniques to do this at a high level, quickly even with uncertain information. It will also avoid the risk of initiatives unravelling as they conflict. You likely know this so apologies in advance if highlighting anything obvious.

2.3.4. This group to also capture and assess new ideas put forward by DRCOs.



3. Reform for outcomes program initiatives

3.1. General

- 3.1.1. The outcomes of the Scheme need to be made clearer.
- 3.1.2. Need clarity around the responsibilities of the different systems. For example, the responsibility of the community mental health service to support an NDIS participant.
- 3.1.3. The RFO program needs to align with other work being done in the sector, including the:
 - NDIS Review
 - the Disability Royal Commission
 - the National Autism Strategy
 - national regulatory harmonisation
 - the National Gender Equality Strategy
 - review of the Disability Services Act
- 3.1.4. Extremely important that members have visibility of the previous co-design processes undertaken with learned frameworks & process IP shared with the group.
- 3.1.5. Will there be mental health-specific approaches?
- 3.1.6. Where do family member/carers fit into this?
- 3.1.7. Where does addressing structural barriers to citizenship sit – ie, lots of work on addressing 'supports' in participants but nothing addressing systemic burdens – housing, employment, income, relationships, lack of individual advocacy, carceral and otherwise iatrogenic health systems etc
- 3.1.8. NDIA modelling needs to include specific disabilities.
- 3.1.9. Concern the modelling that has led to the 8% growth target does not account for the growth in the autism population.
- 3.1.10. The NDIA Outcomes Framework needs to be reviewed and updated. Needs to reflect government's emphasis on well-being and updates to measurement and reporting
- 3.1.11. Need to align the NDIA Outcomes Frameworks with:
 - frameworks for integrated support, particularly when a participant is receiving multiple services
 - a core guiding value and / or aspirations. For example, social and emotional wellbeing



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- the unique situation of each individual, and their needs, wants and circumstances

3.1.12. The NDIA Outcomes Framework should draw in measures from external frameworks that are aligned to the:

- International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)
- Social determinants of health, and
- wellbeing.

3.2. Workforce capability

3.2.1. The NDIA should commit to employing more participants across all positions, not just planners

3.2.2. Can the Workforce capability funding be invested in expanded the number of delegates directly employed by NDIA? Ideally the majority of people would prefer the planning role of LACs be phased out entirely so that people meet directly with the decision-maker

3.2.3. Needs to consider the Prime Minister's draft [National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy](#).

3.2.4. Workforce planning needs to be across the whole Agency to achieve better outcomes.

3.2.5. This working group reform should include driving a reduction in unethical provider practices as a result of changing current NDIS practices. Change here and get reduced fraud.

3.2.6. Won't the PACE system mean LACs will no longer be needed?

3.3. Better planning

3.3.1. Over 2021-22 we saw plan reductions of 20-75% on the majority of plans (average of 40% cuts). The only participants we've worked with who have overspent their plans, did so because their funding had been drastically cut.

3.3.2. Will LACs continue to do planning meetings and draft plans long-term, or will this role will be transferred to delegates?

3.3.3. Build staff knowledge and expertise in specific disability types and cultures.

3.3.4. Will the planning group address the issue of Planning (NDIA funded plan) and planning (visioning for a good life, learning from peers, choosing who you plan with)?

3.3.5. Planners need to have improved knowledge of disability, for example, Autism, before they take on a planner role.



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- 3.3.6. Planners should have minimum core competencies, besides lived experience or capability in understanding delivery of best practice approaches.
- 3.3.7. Planning should focus on meeting participant needs. Would like to see goals and planning separated.
- 3.3.8. Planning either needs other preparatory supports behind it to be successful, or planners need more time & skills than we currently allow to do it well (at least for people living with psychosocial challenges and others).
- 3.3.9. Planning should be done by an accredited life planner of the participant's choice, then the plan is submitted to the NDIA delegate for funding approval.
- 3.3.10. Key performance indicators impact the accuracy and quality of plans, and increasing the volume of S100 and S48 requests.
- 3.3.11. Need to ensure informal carer advice is respected by planners.
- 3.3.12. Need to look at how to build capacity in informal carers.
- 3.3.13. Will the planning group address the issue of planning for NDIA purposes such as a vision for a good life, learning from peers and that kind of thing?
- 3.3.14. Big life' planning should be done in a way that feeds into the NDIA.
- 3.3.15. There is a risk we will continue to see inconsistencies If LACs, or other external parties, are doing planning in some areas and not others.
- 3.3.16. When LACs are being used to do detailed plans, not the big visioning stuff, then we are getting mixed outcomes.
- 3.3.17. It is important that this process seeks not a consistency of results, because it is a person-centred scheme, but consistency in terms of the resources that make the Scheme work.
- 3.3.18. Need to have resourcing and arrangements in place to ensure any changes made do not negatively impact the NDIS and people with disability.
- 3.3.19. Support coordinators need to understand any changes that are made and how to implement those changes and know how to fix issues participants have.

3.4. Flexibility

- 3.4.1. Agree that as the NDIS is an insurance-based scheme, there is an expectation that support reduces over time. Need to balance this with ensuring participants receive the support they need, when they need it.
- 3.4.2. Need to clarify what is meant by "exits." There is a presumption that a range of effective 'Tier 2' supports are available to support participants that exit. This is not the case.



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- 3.4.3. Suggest people with permanent disabilities, who have fluctuating needs, can remain in the Scheme, but opt to have a \$0 plan until their needs increase. The NDIA would need to publicise this option. This could mitigate people's fear of not being able to regain access if their needs increase.
- 3.4.4. The increasing number of plan rollovers and auto-extensions creates an issue with the 'About Me' section of participant plans (and also with how goals are implemented). The information changes and isn't updated. As part of the PACE rollout, is it possible to enable participants to update the 'About Me' section of their plans in the portal? As participants are being expected to comply with their plans, it causes problems when the info in the plan is no longer correct.
- 3.4.5. People with disability should always be able to access the supports they need to live an ordinary life.
- 3.4.6. Need a clear definition of 'early intervention' and what conditions need to be met to count as 'early intervention'.

3.5. Independent living

- 3.5.1. When the NDIS was being designed my organisation recommended that the NDIA have in place long term contracts with DROs as expert providers of information on demand to staff and contracted coordinators, in addition to liaison and co-design roles. This idea could be revisited.
- 3.5.2. SIL is a major concern which has been raised with Rebecca and Corri at recent meeting, why are planners getting the costing so wrong.
- 3.5.3. Make sure participants at risk of overusing their plan are identified and supported early.
- 3.5.4. Need to change the acronym SIL. It contains assumption about independence. Suggest Assistance with Home and Living (AHL).
- 3.5.5. How will the work on the independent living initiative align with:
- the supported decision making policy?
 - planning decisions, because we need to prioritise the decisions people make themselves around their home and living options.

3.6. Evidence-based supports

- 3.6.1. Need to agree what "evidence-based" means.
- 3.6.2. A preferred provider should publish all their prices in a way that allows comparisons between providers.
- 3.6.3. Would supports for children in the early years be covered under evidence-based support work?

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- 3.6.4. What constitutes evidence? Will participant input be considered evidence.
- 3.6.5. Is the intent that the Evidence Based Supports working group would look at Market Stewardship and what a good provider looks like? Or is that part of DSS and the commission?
- 3.6.6. Need to help people select policy providers. Need to address what is meant by a quality provider
- 3.6.7. There are certain practices that help facilitate fraud and bad practices. Need to work out whether it sits under the Evidence Based Supports initiative or under the Fraud initiative or Workforce Capability initiative.

3.7. Fraud

- 3.7.1. There is a conflict of interest when a provider can undertake an assessment of disability and also be a provider of services. This needs to be changed. NB this is not fraud because the NDIA allows it.
- 3.7.2. Will participants be targeted for compliance, or will the focus be primarily on providers? Will participants incur debts and have Centrelink payments deducted to repay debts, for example, for expenditure that is 5 years old?
- 3.7.3. Need to ensure appropriate safeguarding and protections are in place to protect participants from coercion from a provider or family member perpetuating fraud.
- 3.7.4. This working group needs to drive change in reducing unethical provider practice by changing current NDIS practices, unless this change is the responsibility of the Evidence Based Supports working group.
- 3.7.5. As part of the work around Fraud, there needs to be capacity building work to support decision making. So there is overlap between the Fraud initiative and the Workforce Capability initiative.



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Working Groups preferences

- Top 3 preferences listed, unless stakeholder stated they wish to work in all working groups.
 - NB: Sylvana Mahmic said 'Use me if and where you feel it's helpful'.
- Chair nominations highlighted.

Working group	Workforce capability	Better Planning	Flexibility	Independent living	Evidence-based supports	Fraud
Representative nominations	Bob Buckley, A4 Sally Karandrews, BCA Alison Brook, CA Skye Kakoschke-Moore, CYDA Bill Gye, CMHA Jen Blyth, DA Darryl Steff, DSA Catherine McAlpine, IA Melanie Keeley, SARU Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Jenny Karavolos, AAA James Manders, IAC Carolyn Hodge, PWDA Nick Avery, EAC Bronwyn Morkham, YPINH Robbi Williams, JFA Eileen McDonald, NMHCCF	Bob Buckley, A4 Sally Karandrews, BCA Alison Brook, CA Skye Kakoschke-Moore, CYDA Jen Blyth, DA Jeff Smith, DANA Darryl Steff, DSA Catherine McAlpine, IA Carolyn Hodge, PWDA Simon Burchill, PDA Dr George Taleporos, IAC Sylvana Mahmic, IAC James Manders, IAC Nick Avery, EAC Bronwyn Morkham, YPINH Robbi Williams, JFA Eileen McDonald, NMHCCF	Bob Buckley, A4 Alison Brook, CA Skye Kakoschke-Moore, CYDA Jen Blyth, DA Jeff Smith, DANA Dwayne Cranfield, NEDA Carolyn Hodge, PWDA Dr George Taleporos, IAC Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Jenny Karavolos, AAA James Manders, IAC Carolyn Hodge, PWDA Nick Avery, EAC Bronwyn Morkham, YPINH Eileen McDonald, NMHCCF	Bob Buckley, A4 Jeff Smith, DANA Darryl Steff, DSA Catherine McAlpine, IA Dwayne Cranfield, NEDA Dr George Taleporos, IAC Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Nick Avery, EAC	Bob Buckley, A4 Sally Karandrews, BCA Bill Gye, CMHA Simon Burchill, PDA Melanie Keeley, SARU Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Jenny Karavolos, AAA Nick Avery, EAC Robbi Williams, JFA	Bob Buckley, A4 Dwayne Cranfield, NEDA Simon Burchill, PDA Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Jenny Karavolos, AAA - if only place to address changing NDIS practices reduce unethical practice Nick Avery, EAC



Totals	17	17	15	8	9	6
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Working Groups preferences

- Top 6 preference list.
- Chair nominations stated.

Name / Organisation	Workforce capability	Better Planning	Flexibility	Independent living	Evidence-based supports	Fraud
Bob Buckley, Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4)	All	All	All	All	All	All
Jenny, Karavolos, Australian Autism Alliance	3 and Chair	6	4 and Chair	5	2 and Chair	1 and Chair (This is my number 1 if this is the only place to drive change in reducing unethical practice of providers)
Katherine Annear, Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Australia and New Zealand (ASAN AUNZ)						
Ross Joyce, Australian						



Federation of Disability Organisations						
Sally Karandrews, Blind Citizens Australia		1	3		2	
Nick Rushworth, Brain Injury Australia						
Alison Brook, Carers Australia	1	2	3			
Skye Kakoschke-Moore, Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)	3	1 and Chair	2	6	4	5
Bill Gye, Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA)	1				2	
Jen Blyth, Deaf Australia	1	3	2			
David Murray, Deafblind Australia						



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Steve Williamson, Deafness Forum of Australia						
Jeff Smith, Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)	5	1 and Chair	3	2	4	6
Darryl Steff, Down Syndrome Australia	2 and Chair	1 and Chair	4	3	6	5
Nick Avery, Every Australian Counts	4	1	3	5	2	6
Damian Griffis, First Peoples Disability Network						
Catherine McAlpine, Inclusion Australia	3	2	4	1 and Chair	5	6
Robbi Williams, JFA Purple Orange	1	2			3	
Carolyn Nikoloski, Mental Health Australia						
Eileen McDonald, National Mental	2 and Chair	1 and Chair	3 and Chair	4 and Chair	5 and Chair	6 and Chair



Health Consumer Carer Forum						
Dwayne Cranfield, National Ethnic Disability Alliance			2	1		3
Carolyn Hodge, People with a Disability Australia	1	3	2	4	5	6
Simon Burchill, Physical Disability Australia		1			2	3
Yvonne Keane, Relmagine Australia						
Melanie Keeley, Self-Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU)	1				2	
Carolyn Frohmader, Women with Disabilities Australia						
Bronwyn Morkham, Young People in	2	1	3	4	6	5



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Nursing Homes National Alliance						
Sylvana Mahmic, IAC Member	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any	Any
James Manders, IAC Member	3 and Chair	2	1			
Dr George Taleporos, IAC Member	4	2 and Chair	1 and Chair	3 and Chair	6	5
Leah van Poppel, IAC Principal Member						
Dr Sharon Boyce, IAC Member						
Jennifer Cullen, IAC Member						
Dr Leighton Jay, IAC Member						



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Tricia Malowney, IAC Member						
Sam Paior, IAC Member						
Mark Tonga, IAC Member						
Liz Reid, IAC Member						
Gavin Burner, Intellectual Disability Reference Group Member (attends all Council meetings)						

Post- Budget Forum – Meeting 2

MS Teams Chat

[10:29 am] Wakefield, Phillip

Good morning all. Welcome to the second Post Budget Forum.

Please feel free to contact me throughout the session if you experience any difficulty with MS Teams.

We ask that you place your device on mute and turn your video off unless you are speaking. This will help to avoid any background noise.

[10:29 am] Wakefield, Phillip

Captions are available for you to access using this link: <https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUNDIA0206A>

Caption Viewer

[10:30 am] Katharine Annear

hi folks no camera or mic today - i have covod

[10:31 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Hi from Nipaluna lutriwiita and paying my respects as always to all First Nations people

[10:32 am] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

Eileen on Gundungurra lands representing NMHCCF

[10:33 am] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

@Katharine Annear I wish you a good recovery

[10:36 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I dont see the captioning link in the chat

[10:37 am] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

its in the three dots

[10:37 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Thanks Eileen

[10:37 am] Wakefield, Phillip

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I dont see the captioning link in the chat

Captions are available for you to access using this link: <https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUNDIA0206A>

Caption Viewer

[10:38 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Thank you Phillip

[10:39 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

I'm keeping camera off today. I'm not a pretty sight. Sorry I'm a little late.

[10:40 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

I would like to see a weighting of funding towards DRCO that are currently operation on very limited resources.

like 1

[10:41 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

*operating

[10:44 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Treasury also was looking at "well-being" of Australians. I did not see any disability related submissions to their inquiry ... which would seem to be an issue.

[10:48 am] Katharine Annear

Sorry the cat walked on my computer and obviously turned the mic on 😊

laugh 2 handsinair 1

[10:53 am] Leighton (Guest)

Good Q Carolyn

heart 1

[10:57 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Surely such a framework needs to be completely reviewed in the context of government's emphasis generally on well-being and its measurement and reporting.

like 2

[10:58 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

I can see outcomes dashboards on the website but not an outcomes framework that states aspirations

[11:01 am] Nick Avery

Over 2021-22 we saw plan reductions of 20-75% on the majority of plans (average of 40% cuts). The only participants we've worked with who have overspent their plans, did so because their funding had been drastically cut.

[11:02 am] Nick Avery

Or was underfunded in the first place.

[11:04 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

I'm still waiting to have a proper discussion about modelling and estimates relevant to the specific disability I'm here to represent. As yet, I cannot see how the modelling is done or why I should have any confidence in it.

[11:06 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Can I please have the caption link?

[11:06 am] Katharine Annear

As far as proceeding with work now I would like to ensure its not work for naught or busy work that demonstrates action is being taken by the Agency in the face of the review. For one doing work that doesn't align with review outcomes only to have to abandon it. Or doing work that doesn't align with other major pieces of sector reform required by the DRC, the National Autism Strategy, national regulatory harmonisation, review of the Disability Services Act.

like 2

[11:07 am] Wakefield, Phillip

Sam Paor | The Growing Space

Can I please have the caption link?

Hi Sam, Captions are available for you to access using this link: <https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUNDIA0206A>

Caption Viewer

[11:07 am] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

[10:37 am] Wakefield, Phillip

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I dont see the captioning link in the chat

Captions are available for you to access using this link: <https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUNDIA0206A>[10:38 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)Thank you Phillip
Caption Viewer

[11:07 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

please let me know when and how you want to discuss the so-called overspending issue. It came up in my unscheduled chat yesterday with the AAT branch. But we need a bit more of a formal communication about this.

[11:07 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)
Also the National Gender Equality Strtaegy

[11:08 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

There's also the DSS early childhood stuff.

like 1

[11:09 am] Bill Gye

In regard to Outcomes Frameworks the task is one of of triple alignment (a) alignment of frameworks for integrated support (particularly where these is an interface of services supporting one person); (b) alignment of all those frameworks with some core guiding value aspirations (e.g. social and emotion wellbeing for all); and (c) alignment of the detailed application of those

framework's to the unique situation of each individual, and their needs, wants and circumstances

[11:09 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Co-design can't start until we have all had an opportunity to contribute to and agree on the practice guidelines.

[11:18 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Does it look at the advocacy workforce? I doubt it.

[11:19 am] Nick Avery

Are you able to clarify whether LACs will continue to do planning meetings and draft plans long-term, or whether this role will be transferred to delegates?

[11:20 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Guest

I can see outcomes dashboards on the website but not an outcomes framework that states aspirations

We could help here and support the outcomes of the scheme to do better. the NDIA has not made outcomes of the scheme clear enough in my opinion. you can find the detailed outcomes linked to the questionnaires in this word document

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/861/download>

[11:21 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

I would like to see a commitment to employing more Participants (not just people with disability) across all positions (not just planners).

[11:21 am] Alan Blackwood (Guest)

Can this work be linked to the work on the LAC or related model of community connection that needs to replace the current contracts in 2025? Seems to be a good opportunity to start unravelling the current LAC approach and try a few things

[11:21 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

All participants must have the opportunity to meet with their planners!

[11:22 am] Darryl Steff

When you say planners Corri, do you mean delegates ? is that the same thing?

[11:23 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

How much of a concern is it that the AAT is used as a "contest of experts"? This is a huge challenge. Any work on doing this better?

[11:23 am] Nick Avery

Eileen McDonald (Guest)

Even when participants do meet with planners they still end up with a inadequate and inappropriate plans

Yes, but there's not that additional layer of gate-keeping.

[11:23 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Secretariat, I had to take a work call at the beginning of the meeting when Corrie was addressing questions that came up in the survey from this group. Did she address how these reforms will intersect with the Children's Taskforce? Thank you, Sylvana

[11:26 am] Nick Avery

Can the Workforce capability funding be invested in expanded the number of delegates directly employed by NDIA? Ideally the majority of people would prefer that the planning role of LACs be phased out entirely so that people meet directly with the decision-maker.

[11:27 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

How much of a concern is it that the AAT is used as a "contest of experts"? This is a huge challenge. Any work on doing this better?

Good point Bob, my understanding was that the AAT would be disbanded in the long term. In the short term the ndia have a team led by Prof McCallum who have more than halved the AAT cases and have introduced a better way of managing these up front.

[11:28 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Need to eliminate the use of contractors

[11:28 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Will the planning group address the issue of Planning (NDIA funded plan) and planning (visioning for a good life, learning from peers, choosing who you plan with)

[11:29 am] Katharine Annear

My concern around outcome measurement as outlined in the document Sylvana provided (the outcome framework) is that it doesn't align with external national and international measures of outcomes for disability and wellbeing. The framework should draw in measures from external frameworks that are aligned to the ICF, SDOH and Wellbeing.

[11:29 am] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

I'm yet to be convinced that meeting a planner who has limited knowledge of autism will help much for autistic participants. The result is that the participant have to tell their story repeatedly ... which is an issue we've all spoken about before. We need more concrete skills as planner prerequisites.

[11:29 am] Catherine McAlpine

Hi Wright, Matthew and RENWICK, Marg. I missed the early conversation about the questions raised in the feedback docs. Could this be shared with me separately?

[11:30 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Yes agree Katharine - plus the CRPD Indicators

[11:31 am] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

@ Bob Buckley agree the same is true for psychosocial disability

[11:31 am] Nick Avery

Catherine McAlpine (Guest)

Hi Wright, Matthew and RENWICK, Marg. I missed the early conversation about the questions raised in the feedback docs. Could this be shared with me separately?

Catherine McAlpine (Guest) if you scroll up on the captions you'll be able to see them

<https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Viewer/Direct?type=ThirdParty&sessionId=FdSg57xa9vsox6qhyuV5MQ!!&joiningId=6hLAejBMOP1jDBxF4Q0bLQ!!&accessToken=FD1BF298EFB0D7B3E0531503640A3DBE>

[11:31 am] Wright, Matthew

Catherine McAlpine

Hi Wright, Matthew and RENWICK, Marg. I missed the early conversation about the questions raised in the feedback docs. Could this be shared with me separately?

Have texted you a summary. Can provide more detail if you need.

[11:31 am] Katharine Annear

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest) yes UNCRPD as well

[11:31 am] Katharine Annear

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest) yes UNCRPD as well

[11:31 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Katharine Annear (External)

My concern around outcome measurement as outlined in the document Sylvana provided (the outcome framework) is that it doesn't align with external national and international measures of outcomes for disability and wellbeing. The framework should draw in measures from external frameworks that are ali...

The children's outcomes were drawn from international work in the field of early childhood for children with dd and disabilities. I don't know where the adult outcomes frameworks were drawn from. 10 years on, it's worthwhile to review the outcomes framework

[11:31 am] Jenny Karavolos

There are core competencies, besides lived experience or capability in understanding delivery of best practice approaches, that a planner should have as a minimum to undertake the role

[11:32 am] NEVILLE, Liz

Sylvana Mahmic

Secretariat, I had to take a work call at the beginning of the meeting when Corrie was addressing questions that came up in the survey from this group. Did she address how these reforms will intersect...

Sylvana, Children's Taskforce is identifying opportunity for cohort focus on children and families across the full suite of budget initiatives. Welcome your views on this as well.

[11:34 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Here's a thought: how about separating goals from planning altogether. Planning should focus on meeting participant needs there and now.

[11:34 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Sam Paior | The Growing Space is that your avatar blinking at us? 😊

[11:35 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Sylvana Mahmic

Sam Paior | The Growing Space is that your avatar blinking at us? 😊

Sure is! I'm not pretty today

[11:34 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Here's a thought: how about separating goals from planning altogether. Planning should focus on meeting participant needs there and now.

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[11:35 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Sylvana Mahmic

Sam Paior | The Growing Space is that your avatar blinking at us? 😊

Sure is! I'm not pretty today

laugh 1

[11:35 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Sure is! I'm not pretty today

(am saving myself for my DSC Conference appearance later this arvo...

laugh 1

[11:36 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Sam Paior | The Growing Space

(am saving myself for my DSC Conference appearance later this arvo...

I will head in after this meeting and look forward to catching up

[11:37 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Sylvana Mahmic

I will head in after this meeting and look forward to catching up

I'll be there on screen. I have covid. It's not nice.

[11:37 am] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Any system, no matter what it is, needs flexibility built in, because human beings do not fit neatly into 'boxes'

heart 2

[11:37 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Any system, no matter what it is, needs flexibility built in, because human beings do not fit neatly into 'boxes'

100% Carolyn!

[11:37 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

I know a lot of people who would rather not have to deal with their existing LACs at all given their poor quality.

[11:39 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Most SC's don't do any ongoing training. Our team do training literally every week.

[11:41 am] Bron Morkham (Guest)

Unfortunately SC generally lack capacity to work with other systems...we do capacity building all the time for people needing to work with non disability services/ systems

[11:42 am] Bill Gye

Either "good planning" needs other preparatory supports behind it to be successful, or planners need more time & skills than we currently allow to do it well (at least for people living with psychosocial challenges and others). Here is a stab at those requirements <https://1drv.ms/w/s!AsCey716GXNBgqogx5iAWy2NB1J0Ww?e=01JyeL>

[11:44 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

I've always believed that genuine planning should be done by an accredited life planner of the participant's choice - you might want to go to the MND Foundation, you might want to go to CID or PWDA or PFDN - and then that plan gets submitted to the NDIA delegate for funding approval.

[11:46 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

my avatar looks worried! I don't know how to change that to Bill's more stoner/relaxed look...

[11:46 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

how do you do that bill!

[11:46 am] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

oh yay!

[11:47 am] Nick Avery

I'd also like to highlight the issue of KPIs impacting on the quality of planning for delegates and LACs (acknowledging the staff shortages within NDIA). It's seriously impacting the accuracy and quality of plans, and increasing the volume of S100 and S48 requests.

[11:48 am] Bill Gye

Three dots and choose Avatar, once setup (1 minute) you choose gestures

[11:48 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Sam Paior | The Growing Space

I'll be there on screen. I have covid. It's not nice.

I hope you are doing well Sam, take care.

[11:51 am] Katharine Annear

the problem is that 'reasonable and necessary' has a temporal element. R&N is locked into immediate needs. It is not investment focused or aspirational.

[11:52 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest) you have raised a good point and worth clarifying. As an insurance based scheme there is an expectation that support reduces over time. how do we balance this tension? better articulating the needs of different groups? some will leave the scheme depending on their disability

[11:55 am] Bill Gye

Yes the issue of "exits" need clarification, where it does or could happen "effective exits" presumes a range of available and effective Tier 2 supports (which as we know is largely missing in action).

[11:55 am] Sylvana Mahmic

Sylvana Mahmic

Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest) you have raised a good point and worth clarifying. As an insurance based scheme there is an expectation that support reduces over time. how do we balance this tension? better articulating the needs of different groups? some will leave the scheme depending on their disab...

the original intention was that participants could move in and out easily as the situation required and peoples needs changed

[11:56 am] Nick Avery

An option could be that people with permanent disabilities who have fluctuating needs, are able to remain in the scheme, but opt to have a \$0 plan until their needs increase again (and publicise this option). This could mitigate the fear of not being able to regain access if your needs increase.

[11:56 am] Katharine Annear

INDEPENDENCE is a misdirection and an artefact of neoliberal capitalism. Human beings are not independent we are INTERDEPENDENT. Independence in some tasks relating to daily life are discrete goals but this should not be conflated with INDEPENDENCE at a societal level.

[11:56 am] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

My point was mostly about the error of conflating more independence with reduced cost.

[11:59 am] Nick Avery

Regional perspective:

In WA - we only have NDIS registered builders located in Perth. The requirement that home modifications exceeding \$30K must use an NDIS registered builder essentially blocks people in regional / remote WA from accessing modifications.

[12:00 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

Could the IAC check our advice of the past 10 years and review if any specifically addresses these priority areas? Would that be a good place for IAC to start out contribution?

[12:01 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

I wonder how well we understand SIL, SDA and accommodation supports. I've seen numerous cases where participants are told if you don't fit the limited existing models then you get no support. There's been no discernible effort to actually solve the issues. That's not very functional.

[12:01 pm] Leighton (Guest)

Nick Avery lets talk about this please. That's a diabolical blocker to getting better outcomes

[12:02 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

"Evidence-based" is a tricky concept. Means different things to different people

[12:02 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

We could start with try to agree what "evidence-based" means.

[12:02 pm] Nick Avery

Leighton (Guest)

Nick Avery lets talk about this please. That's a diabolical blocker to getting better outcomes

Sure. I raised it in the Home and Living Consultation group too.

[12:03 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

Would supports for children in the early years be covered under evidence based support work?

[12:03 pm] Leighton (Guest)

Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest) there are lots of discussions on exactly your point. There are several of us that push the Agency pretty hard about the way that existing models and structures repeatedly limit the H&L options that some people are given to consider.

[12:03 pm] Yvonne Keane AM (Guest)

Could we please ensure that early childhood is not left behind in this piece of work and gets the appropriate attention?

[12:03 pm] Katharine Annear

can we change the acronym SIL as it contains that same assumption about independence. Assistance with Home and Living - AHL would be better.

[12:05 pm] Leighton (Guest)

Much more active shaping of the market is absolutely needed Jenny and what sort of providers are enabled to blossom

[12:06 pm] Nick Avery

Re Plan Flexibility -

The increasing number of plan rollovers and auto-extensions creates an issue with the 'About Me' section of participant plans (and also with how goals are implemented). The information changes (often quite significantly), and isn't updated. As part of the PACE rollout, is it possible to enable participants to update the 'About Me' section of their plans in the portal? As participants are being expected to comply with their plans, it causes problems when the info in the plan is no longer correct.

[12:06 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

For some participants, there isn't the option of even finding a "provider", let alone a "quality" provider

[12:08 pm] Nick Avery

Re: Evidence Based Supports -

What exactly constitutes evidence? Will participant input be considered evidence?

[12:08 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

will this structural conflict of interest be addressed or left to later- that is the the fact that a provider can undertake an assessment of disability and also be a provider of services. This has resulted in some quite significant conflicts- not fraud- because the NDIA are allowing this

[12:09 pm] Catherine McAlpine

We have stories of people with an intellectual disability under coercion from a provider or family member perpetuating fraud. Keen to ensure appropriate safeguarding and protections are in place

like 2

[12:10 pm] Nick Avery

Re Fraud and Non-Compliance -

Will participants be targeted for compliance, or will the focus be primarily on providers?

Will participants incur debts and have Centrelink payments deducted to repay debts (eg over expenditure up to 5yrs old)?

[12:10 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

Nick Avery (External)

Re: Evidence Based Supports - What exactly constitutes evidence? Will participant input be considered evidence?

Nick Rushworth in early childhood the Autism crc have undertaken a rigorous process to identify evidence and a review of the the early childhood intervention best practice guidelines is planned to refresh those for all children regardless of their disability type

[12:11 pm] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

many participants have already incurred substantive debts due to incompetent SC's

[12:11 pm] Katharine Annear

I think that Jenny is talking about blatant intentional fraud (organised crime etc) vs billing practices within a demand driven system that might constitute fraudulent practice.

[12:11 pm] Nick Avery

Sylvana Mahmic (External)

Nick Rushworth in early childhood the Autism crc have undertaken a rigorous process to identify evidence and a review of the the early childhood intervention best practice guidelines is planned to refresh those for all children regardless of their disability type

Thanks Sylvana, I've read that document. My query is more around adult participants.

[12:12 pm] Katharine Annear
for sure Carolyn F

[12:13 pm] Sam Paor | The Growing Space

It's so shit this stuff happens.

[12:13 pm] Katharine Annear

over and over again

[12:13 pm] Sylvana Mahmic
Nick Avery (External)

Thanks Sylvana, I've read that document. My query is more around adult participants.

so there is nothing similar that provides overarching evidence based guidelines for adults?

[12:13 pm] Nick Avery
Eileen McDonald (Guest)

many participants have already incurred substantive debts due to incompetent SC's

Also participants with no SC and no implementation support from LACs who have used their Core funding flexibly.

[12:13 pm] Katharine Annear

with very vulnerable people

[12:13 pm] Katharine Annear

with very vulnerable people

[12:15 pm] Katharine Annear

The NDIS will not address the needs of vulnerable and marginalised people without broader systemic reform that focuses on intersectional disadvantage and oppression

like 1

[12:16 pm] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

I don't want to just provide comment and feedback, that's not design

[12:17 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Note that the National Autism Strategy development will challenge the mental health sector around some of the issues being raised. I'm not sure where the Health Roadmap for ID is on this. I expect psycho-social disability reps also have concerns. Support on these issues from the NDIA could help.

[12:18 pm] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Working groups are divide and conquer

[12:19 pm] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

done nothing as a massive group

[12:20 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Agree Jeff - I think it's too hard for all of us to talk about all the detail first. For example, the provider panels is not something I feel well positioned to contribute to deep co-design.

[12:20 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

My view is that we have a very important opportunity to help the agency plan this codesign reform and spending. Collectively this group have so much expertise to bring to how this funding will best have positive impact. The timing is not ideal, and we have to find a way around this obstacle.

[12:20 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

My concern is that giving us all a say does not deliver outcomes. There needs to be commitment to the successful delivery of improvement and timely responses to unintended consequences.

[12:21 pm] Nick Avery

Noting the suggestion that other stakeholders such as participants be included in the Working Groups.

Please include participants from regional / remote areas, ATSI, CaLD in each working group. Proposed changes tend to impact these groups significantly more, and their specific barriers and needs should be considered.

[12:22 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

As long as we dont have to use that bloody MENTI thing

[12:23 pm] Bill Gye

As I did not get a big take up on my four days away model, then we just at least need a variety of open channels for people to engage Beyond that if we do implement the Working Groups we need to figure out all the processes for managing and coordinating the overlaps so groups don't end up at cross purposes. I like the idea of at least some people being able to be on more than one group to help with that cross group coordination

[12:23 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

Nick Avery (External)

Noting the suggestion that other stakeholders such as participants be included in the Working Groups. Please include participants from regional / remote areas, ATSI, CaLD in each working group. Proposed changes tend to impact these groups significantly more, and their specific barriers and needs ...

McKenzie, Corri is it the intention for these groups to include participants as Nick suggested? my understanding was that the DRCO's bring this perspective and that participants will not have a role as they are contributing through the participant advisory group mechanism.

[12:24 pm] Simon Burchill (PDA) (Guest)

Disappointed that other models are not being considered

[12:25 pm] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

suggest needs to be participants and family carers in Working groups

[12:26 pm] Bill Gye

Very happy to hear about other models. Time is always too tight.

[12:26 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Can we have an objective that recognises and embeds, intersectionality

[12:27 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Is there anything looking at the way the NDIS builds capacity in Informal Carers then far too often ignores/dismisses their advice to planners?

[12:28 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

Its also consistent with the CRPD as an intersectional human rights treaty like 1

[12:28 pm] Sylvana Mahmic

Sylvana Mahmic

McKenzie, Corri is it the intention for these groups to include participants as Nick suggested? my understanding was that the DRCO's bring this perspective and that participants will not have a role as they are contributing through the participant advisory group mechanism.

thanks Corrie I missed that on the slides, it is there that participants will be involved

[12:29 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Is there anything looking at the way the NDIS builds capacity in Informal Carers then far too often ignores/dismisses their advice to planners?

Not aware of specific capacity building of informal supports? is there something specific you are referring to?

[12:29 pm]

[12:31 pm] Katharine Annear

thanks Eileen very important observation

[12:31 pm] Carolyn Frohmader (WWDA) (Nipaluna) (Guest)

I have to leave soon Corri. Can you update me with anything else that comes out of the meeting?

[12:31 pm] Carolyn Hodge

For next steps and now that we have had a good discussion re the Working Groups, should we use the Feedback Forms to confirm/express interest in the WGs?

[12:33 pm] Catherine McAlpine

The Chair of Our Voice (Kalena Bos) is speaking at the DSC conference right now! (Supported by Maeve)

[12:33 pm] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

any minute Catherine - she's not on yet

[12:33 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

Important!C McAlpine NDIS plans for autistic children are mostly about building the capacity of Informal Carers, especially capacity to deliver clinical interventions.

[12:33 pm] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

what are we allowed to communicate back to our organisations from this meeting like 1

[12:33 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Thanks Bob. Good to know

[12:34 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Sam Paior | The Growing Space

any minute Catherine - she's not on yet

Just got a photo of her ready to go on....too enthusiastic!
heart 2

[12:35 pm] Catherine McAlpine

How will you communicate with us next? Email post the feedback?

[12:35 pm] Bill Gye

Thank you Corri, even with some slight throat challenges your competency and grace is always appreciated.

[12:35 pm] Sam Paior | The Growing Space

Thanks everyone!

[12:35 pm] Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

That was MS Teams that decided my last post here was important, not me.

[12:36 pm] Carolyn Hodge

thanks

[12:36 pm] Eileen McDonald (Guest)

thank you

[12:36 pm] Darryl Steff

Thanks All

[12:36 pm] Nick Avery

Thanks Everyone. 😊

[12:36 pm] Catherine McAlpine

Bob Buckley, A4 (Guest)

That was MS Teams that decided my last post here was important, not me.

I've done that before too



SPEAKER:

Hi everyone. Can I get everyone to take their seats if we can. Can people hear me? Ladies, I might get people to take their seats, if I can.

Welcome everybody, welcome to everybody on the screen, noting we are in a hybrid meeting. I will let people take the opportunity to take their seats. It is really lovely to see you all. I feel like we left last year on a really positive note, so that those who do not know who I am, I am Shannon Reeves, acting general manager for communications and engagement at the Agency. There are a couple of new faces here that I will get to as we progress.

First of all I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet today and their continuing connection to land, sea, and community. For me that is the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin nation, I pay my respects to their elders, past present and emerging. I acknowledge my gratitude that we share this land today, my sorry for the cost of that sharing and I hope that we can move to a place of equity, justice, together. I would also like to pay my respect to people with a disability, the reason the NDIA S was built.

I will get into housekeeping. Today's forum as we know is a hybrid event so we can be very conscious that we have people participating on the screen. Those of us in person, you have a microphone in front of you to activates the microphone press the button.

Teams will highlight people on the screen when they are talking. Before you speak please state your name and organisation to help us identify each other. We also ask you keep our wonderful interpreters here, and captioners in mind, when you are speaking. I take this note right now, try not to speak quickly.

If you want to ask a question or make a comment please click the raise hand button on Teams. Alternatively you can use the chat function if you prefer.

The team here will bridge between the virtual and the in-present and we will also keep an eye on the chat. Toilets, for those new to the venue, are down, turn left when you exit the room, and down the corridor. In case of an emergency use the fire exit located at the end of the room. I feel like I should be doing gestures as if I am on an aeroplane.

If you need assistance the team here, Matt and Nathan are here to assist you. We have captioning for this meeting, the URL to the live captions will be posted in the chat.

We have new faces with us today. We have got Daryl from Down Syndrome Australia. He joined that organisation in January, welcome. He comes from his role as CEO for Down Syndrome in Queensland where he led the organisation for seven years. Welcome to Darryl.

I would also like to welcome Harry Lovelock, the acting CEO of Mental Health Australia. We also have Corrie McKenzie, she is the new Deputy CEO of Strategy and Service, and also Liz Neville is in attendance here, who is also my boss. You think you have hard lives! Welcome to Les and I will introduce Corrie when she attends. Rebecca will also formally introduce her.

Some of you will have met Corrie yesterday it will be great to have her here today.



We have received apologies from Nick Rushworth, from (inaudible) Australia who will be joining at 1030, and we have another late apology from Carolyn. Without anything else to do with regards to housekeeping, we will follow up on the action items from the previous meeting.

We have the log tracks, anything we have to track, distributed to attendees earlier this week. Did everybody get a chance to look at those? Earlier this week is not a lot of time so I apologise for that.

Carolyn, sorry, you have your hand up?

SPEAKER:

Well spotted there, Rebecca. Good morning everybody, I have posted a couple of questions in the chat and I want to know protocol wise, when is the right time to answer those questions, or do we just wait?

SPEAKER:

Good morning, Carolyn, Liz speaking. We have those questions and we are giving them to Rebecca and Shannon. I think they will be addressed as we go through.

I think we will be moving to hearing from Rebecca and there will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions and have a dialogue then, if that is OK.

SPEAKER:

Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you very much. I also wanted to say sorry Ross, did you have your?

SPEAKER:

It is the undamaged Ross here, with the action items, we did not get those, they may have come yesterday, but I will be honest and say I have not had a look at anything yesterday.

SPEAKER:

We will pause that agenda and we will look back on that and redistribute those before we go into the final session this afternoon. Apologies for that. Any other questions? That brings me to, I want to apologise for the lateness of the agenda and some of the items this week. What it is reflective of, which I am really excited to be having these conversations internally, off the back of having Rebecca here, at the last meeting, we really felt that having the opportunity to have some authentic dialogue around issues that are relevant to you all and driven by you all, is really how we want to proceed with this Forum.

We were looking at having a set agenda around a range of issues, and apologies for the lateness of the shift of tact, but it has been driven I think, by the intention to make this Forum more meaningful for you all and also to have you drive more of the agenda.

With that in mind, we know there has been a range of discussion around the contribution this forum makes to the Agency and the Scheme as a whole. So we thought, what a great



opportunity and time with the new leadership, it was funny I was talking to Dwayne, there is a real sense of change for the positive and also a renewed opportunity for us to authentically connect to the benefit of the scheme.

The discussion led by Rebecca, to have an opportunity for her to speak, really openly, we encourage that dialogue around what you think about how we should be doing this work together. And the structure and format of how you want to make their contribution. And following up from that, also have Corrie to have a dialogue around what is actually really important to you.

At the last meeting we had an opportunity where we, on the run, extended Rebecca, which I think was a really great decision. But also we had a conversation about -- started to have a conversation about cutting back presentation time, investing more in dialogue, so building on the field I got from all of you, was that that was really appreciated. We thought we would do things differently but the administration behind that was a bit funky, I do apologise. Jenny, you have your hand up?

SPEAKER:

I am not sure if this is the right point to bring this up but we also would be great, do exactly that thinking, in the second part, if there could be consideration, I am not sure if my colleagues will shoot me at this point, but some of us are on the PACE committee, and some are on the codesign committee, suggestion that you may be giving us another problem to solve when we are all together. We thought that might, I thought that might be a good thing, and I have spoken to a few others, but not to everyone, but I am volunteering that.

SPEAKER:

We have plenty of problems so we are very happy to share.

(Laughter). I think it is a really terrific idea and opens. I spoke yesterday at the CALD summit about what genuine codesign is, and we often forget the design part of codesign. To be able to talk through and issue we are all facing, then collectively work out how we would approach it, I think it is true value.

SPEAKER:

That sets a good tone for me to be able to introduce Rebecca to kick off that discussion. It is my pleasure to have Rebecca here today in person. Rebecca, are you happy to lead into the conversation a discussion before morning tea about the Forum itself?

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

I will try and speak more slowly than I normally do, I have been reflecting why I speak so quickly in the morning and I think it is to do with getting my children ready before I arrive. I want to acknowledge the land on which we meet today and pay my respects to their elders, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin nation. We are fortunate to be here today.

I think this Forum is really, really important and that we have a genuine conversation about what works and what does not. I am not very big on coming and speaking at people. I do not think that is a good use of your time. I think we need to get better at sharing in our session more regular updates what is going on in the Agency so you can come to these forums and have



discussions about what is important to you and your agency.

As I said, it is customary for the CEO to provide an update about what is going on within the Agency but we will try and cut that back and talk more about how we want this forum to run into the future. I will knock over some quick updates.

Some have asked for it, and some questions have come through. I will have a go. It has been a really busy time over the last four months since I joined. Yesterday we had the CALD summit, huge acknowledgement of Dwayne's leadership for an outstanding summit, due to Dwayne's leadership and leadership within the Agency. I thank everyone who is able to attend, it was the second time we could bring that group together, primarily our external advisory group has been driving that work.

It was an opportunity for us to share what we have heard from CALD communities through the Discovery phase of the codesign process.

Primarily issues important to community. I felt that the product coming out will really hold the Agency accountable for the longer term, in partnership with so many of you. We are really pleased we're working towards the new CALD strategy. Obviously we are keen to work towards an intersectionality strategy for the Agency as well.

Our disability Ministers continue to meet regularly. We are now the Ministerial Council following a review last year. The change recognises the significant work being undertaken and still ahead of us in a year where we have to renegotiate arrangements with the state in relation to their contribution and involvement in the Scheme. Ministers have agreed to a number of priorities. It would be terrific if we were able to circulate to you the communiques of what the ministers have agreed, and use this forum to flesh out the intent of some of those decisions as part of what it means for all of us.

At the last meeting we discussed closing some of the market gaps in remote and regional communities, ensuring access to quality and safe services, accessible communities, ensuring NDIS and mainstream work well together and delivering on the NDIS review, which is a big topic for us at the moment.

I am sure you might have questions about the review and the Agency, we might come to some of those. We are working very closely with the review. There are over 200 requests for informational briefings from the Agency that have come from the review.

I know you are all having your dialogue separately, but if there are things we can help to provide to the review, to articulate issues we all see in this group that need to be addressed, we will be very open to that.

I have had a conversation with Bruce, last night, it would be helpful if we could all provide a list of things we specifically want the review to address. My theory is we -- my fear is we get to October and some of the big challenges will be hanging over us. We need clear direction from the review. In terms of reference, very high level, being specific to programs, processes, and structures and systems is really, really important. We will talk more about that today.



I have made significant changes to the senior leadership within the Agency. We have a new updated structure. You will see, actually Shannon's team does fit under Corrie McKenzie and her new team, we have elevated market stewardship, we have elevated the work around codesign to be its own function within the Agency.

At a band three level we have personal lived experience, which is very extraordinary, a very extraordinary woman, and I am looking forward to introducing all of you to her over the coming months. She will be working on the H and L policies and reforms, and also work on market stewardship.

We will be unashamed in our role as market stewards within the agency and very clear about how we work with everyone, around service system gaps to quality of the market and the gaps we are seeing.

We will ensure you have the new structure, if you have not already got it, to have a sense of who is sitting where.

One of the key features of the restructure is to embed codesign into everything the agency does, and ensure everyone within the agency understands codesign and how to go about it.

You also see we have elevated the role of children within the agency. Liz Neville has a brief to set up our new children's task force, that will start to look at a very different practice model for children. Everything from their safety and how we are holding kids safe, through what are the best supports into the future, what is the best system into the future? To go back to the original PC report, one of the key recommendations was to move away from a fragmented system, and I do not want children to be fragmented within the system, but I think they need a very different practice model and support system within the Agency.

As you know my view is we have to be the glue in the Agency, it is our role to make sure (inaudible) are being held accountable for kids. We have \$3.2 billion every year that goes into support for children with a disability. There is no transparency over that money. None of us are aware how that fits with kids plans.

The need for a co-joint planning between the agency and the formal education system is critical. Liz will set up that task force and we will speak to you about how you would like to be involved over the next 12-months.

I will pause and say, any questions anyone has about the Agency at the moment? Issues or problems? I do not want to say problems to Bob, but honestly, before we get into how we want to work together, if there are issues we want to address now, I am happy to do that.

SPEAKER:

I have put some questions in the chat. One of them, sorry I do not know when to ask them.

SPEAKER:

You askâ€¦

SPEAKER:

One of my questions is, is there such a thing as current organisational chart for the NDIA? Current. Because there is acting this, acting that, deputy this, deputy that, so that was one. My other question is will the NDIA be putting out a statement at some point to support the Voice?

In terms of co-design and working with us in the sector, I have said it is a bit rude, it is not meant to be rude, but the same thing is said that all of these meetings about the lateness of receiving papers. That is not really acceptable if, you know, all of us in this room and that room, have so many or are on so many committees, there are so many reviews and reforms, legislation, you name it, so I think it is, you know, really important that we have papers for these meetings well in advance.

Not be receiving bits and pieces at a time. My other question, again I do not know where it sits, I would also like to hear about what the Agency has taken from the evidence that has been coming out of the Disability Royal Commission and whether there are changes occurring within the Agency in relation to some of the evidence.

Obviously there has been a lot of evidence given about the scheme. So I wanted to hear at some point, it does not have to be today. And another one is around whether the Agency will be preparing a response of some description to the Quality and Safeguards Motion Enquiry.

So they are my questions for the moment but I will keep putting them in the chat.

SPEAKER:

Carolyn, I will try and answer your questions. The structure, we have a functional structure that is live at the moment and we will make sure this group has a copy of that. The band 3s have been appointed and now we do the work about what sits under the groups. We have a lot of work to make sure, I have a small bright which is when I look at the organisational structure, I want to know what people's jobs are. Some is hard to decipher, if I cannot decipher it, and I am running the Agency, then we have a problem.

Each of the groups will be going through their own planning sessions to understand how they best work into the future. Having, really elevating codesign will be really big for the Agency in terms of how we set that group up for success.

Really importantly, I will share a story, Bob will be familiar with it. I identified there are six different entry points in the Agency around complaints. We have no formal complaint handling policy.

So I have no idea how we navigate that. The restructure will look at really practical things that need to change so that people are really accountable for what they are delivering, people understand who does what, and then how people work across groups.

Because as well, another thing that happens with Agency, not a criticism at all, every agency I have worked with people become quite siloed in how they work, which is to the detriment of participants. That will be part of our discussion.

We have so many talented people within the Agency, it is important that they are also given the best career structures possibility. In relation to the Voice I would put something out tomorrow if it



was just up to me, but there is a clear, from the Prime Minister, a message that public servants have to be impartial with regard to the referendum.

How we message this, I am a big supporter of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I will be in Queensland in a couple of weeks time, and what we hope to do, coming out of those discussions, is to actually give a response from the Agency to the Statement from the Heart in terms of what our role is delivering on that.

Wildly important debate goes on about Voice, as you know unless we are fixing things on the ground so First Nations people with disability and the communities are really well supported, the Voice is a bit hollow. I look forward to having discussion with you about that. I take full accountability for the lateness of the papers.

Coming out of the next discussion about how we want to work, I think we should codify about being really care what the deadlines are in relation to when papers come out and to show you all respect because you have busy days as well.

In relation to evidence from Royal Commission I think that would deserve a deep dive from this group. We have been doing a number of papers we want to release to sit alongsideâ€¦ We have one paper that has been through multiple codesign channels as well. We are keeping the timing right on that.

There are lots of themes, lots of key things we need to take forward. Also having the quality and safeguards Commissioner along as part of that conversation, to see where they would fit with that, is really important. In relation to (inaudible) motion enquiry, there are two recommendations the Agency is responsible for. We are implementing those. DSS would do a whole of government response to the (inaudible) motion enquiry. It is not been confirmed if they will do that but we will let that forum know.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, you talked about complaints. Some of us on this forum are also on the National Advisory Council, but some of us are also on the Complaints Advisory Council. When you are talking about complaints then, I have also said, I am sure you are well aware of this, the DRC-commissioned report from a human rights perspective, quite an extraordinary piece of work, that could be something that your team could be looking into when you are doing your work around complaints. Also using us, some of us who are on those other advisory points within the Quality and Safeguards commission.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

Thank you. She is leading that work for me at the moment and if she swears one more time, when she finds another entry point for complaints in the Agency, I might scream myself. I will get her to reach out to anyone who wants to be involved in that process. We want to make sure it is fit for purpose, into the future, that it is fair, equitable, and transparent.

SHANNON REES:

We will go to Jen Blythe next. Apologies for the camera movement, Jen.



SPEAKER:

Thank you, today I have a male voice because I have male interpreters but first I would like to acknowledge the challenge getting interpreters for today's session. This is the first time I have had an in person session for a while, that is my first acknowledgement. I would like to ask, in relation to the screen, it is a little bit distracting thing myself on screen. Can this be amended so I am not on-screen?

SHANNON REES:

We will adjust that.

SPEAKER:

Thirdly, I wanted to ask about the child task force, with relation to that, will there be an opportunity for any of us here today to be involved in that process?

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

Most definitely. I will not put Liz on the spot because it has just been announced. Nothing is off the table for us for that task force and we would be thrilled for you to be involved in that.

SPEAKER:

I notice the NDIA has been doing codesign work, which is great. I am concerned that potentially issues could be arising from this. In terms of codesign meetings, I feel we spent a lot of time talking about the problems rather than looking at solutions to the questions that are being asked in terms of what we need to respond to. My sense is ideally, we need to be able to focus on the problems and then secondly, have discussions about the solutions to some of these questions. Perhaps this has occurred before my role as CEO in deaf Australia. Yesterday, looking at the CALD strategy, we had half an hour for discussion, but I note we spent a lot of time discussing the issues before we could actually present our advice or recommendations on some of the goals.

I want to say that I feel as though the co-design approach probably could be rectified and managed a little bit better.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

Thanks, for everything you have said. And yesterday, my comments in relation to, we spend a lot of time on the conversation and not as much time on the design of coming up with solutions to the problems we have. The Queen of co-design has walked in the door just now. Corrie McKenzie, I will formally introduce Corrie to you. Many of you know Corrie already. I know that she is keen to talk to all of you about the ongoing really important function looks like in the Agency. We will make sure she reaches out to you, Jen.

SHANNON REES:

Welcome also to Catherine McAlpine who has joined us, and welcome Corrie. Alison has a question, I will ask we pause questions after that so we can move the discussion around your roles and your contribution, if that is OK.



SPEAKER:

I want to check and make sure that the childhood strategy is going to link in with the early years strategy happening more broadly?

SPEAKER:

Most definitely. That is our starting point for 0-8 kids but how we make that a reality is really important for us to get right. He goes to how we are going to bridge the gap between mainstream and our role. It would be good to sit down and have a good conversation with you about that.

SHANNON REES:

I will now open up for a conversation around the contribution of this forum, what is working, and future direction. This is a safe space and Rebecca wants to hear from you about what this looks like going forward. Shannon speaking, Jen.

SPEAKER:

I do appreciate having the interpreters here in person, and I wanted to reiterate this gives me better access, and being online for me personally, as a deaf person is not a great experience, not having that a 3D experience in the room. That is why my preference is to be in the room, face to face. It may seem controversial, in terms of what I am about to propose, but I am wondering if I cannot get an interpreter in person, could it be considered that we do not proceed with the meeting because I cannot attend, and the meeting is postponed.

Again, we are talking about inclusion and accessibility. I acknowledge my colleagues in the room also have needs that must be accommodated, and I am willing to fit in with those requirements. I want to put that forward as a suggestion.

I guess with the access I have online, I rarely present online and that is the difficulty I face.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

Thanks Jen, I would support that 100%. Genuine codesign is built upon everyone being able to be at the table. We will be trying to ensure that you are better supported earlier, in terms of meetings and interpreters. I think that should be a rule that we are all lead by.

SPEAKER:

I would like to seek support from the meeting in regards to that. If there is anyone who by exception has challenges with that, let us know, but I think what we are saying is that that is a commitment, if you would also be in support of that? Ross?

SPEAKER:

Ross from AFDA. We support Jen and we must ensure we provide full accessibility. I think it is a reasonable request. I think the challenges are, as we all know since Covid, and it has not finished, but that is another department and argument, for other areas. The difficulty has been in obtaining Auslan interpreters, it is profound on all of us. AFDA has been experiencing that as well. There will be a push for the Agency, as there is for us to have them online. For various reasons, there is a genuine shortage, and a lot of government agencies and departments are utilising them, which is fantastic, but I would acknowledge there is a difficulty in that. I would implore everyone to take that into account, there may be times when there will not be an



meeting if Auslan interpreters cannot be here in person, we would have to postpone. That would be what AFDA would do.

SPEAKER:

Understood. I will go to Dwayne.

SPEAKER:

Dwayne speaking. This is not the first time I have done this. I think last year, the previous government, we cancelled a meeting with the Minister because there were not interpreters available for Jen as well. It is not like something that is out of the hat. At NEDA we would definitely support this as well and this is not the first time we have supported Jen in the space, and I think this is the right thing to do. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

It is really lovely to have you here Jen, to have you contributing, in person.

SPEAKER:

Thank you. I want to respond to the question about this Forum and moving forward. For me, one of the things I find really problematic is that the policy siloing that happens, this has been the bane of my life years.

For example, I am working with the Office for women and the Department for Prime Minister and Cabinet, which includes references to the NDIS stop the national plan to reduce violence against women and their children has references and obligations in regards to the NDIS. As I said before, the Quality and Safeguards work we are involved in, the Disability Royal Commission, the National Autism Strategy, I find sometimes we are saying the same thing and there is no kind of coordination of these things.

So I also note, you spoke about the CALD strategy and the intersectional strategy. But I have raised this, we raise this with you at one of these meetings previously, about a Gender Equality Strategy for the NDIS. Given that we have not seen a change in women and girl's participation rate in the Scheme since it started.

Then there is, I had a call just before this meeting, about the DSS/NDIS pathways. I do not know the answer but I hope you realise what I'm trying to say. There are all these things where the NDIS is an important component, and yet, they are silo, they are all siloed.

How do we connect all of these things so we are not using the intelligence, the knowledge, the expertise, and all of these bases? I probably do not make sense at all, but that is not surprising.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

You make sense

In relation to that, I am always pretty frank about government departments and agencies, they generally do work in silos. Some of those documents you reference, I am not sure we know we are referenced in those documents. I know Corrie is really keen on this, is to develop a codesign, an intersectionality strategy for the Scheme which brings all of those strands together in one place.



So at the very least there is accountability that sits alongside that. In my view, you cannot design policy and you cannot deliver great services, unless you understand all of those connections across people's lives and we will talk much more to you about that.

SPEAKER:

Thanks for that, Corrie speaking. If I could add that, as Rebecca says, obviously, intersectionality and how the different pieces of really good work that are underway within the Agency, to start with, the work is great and there are really good pieces of work happening. But we have to be able to bring that together and to bring an intersectional lens to it.

To your point about gender equality strategy as well, I would also hope that in bringing that together, we actually have an opportunity to shine a light on where more work needs to be done as well. I think gender, obviously, is an acute, you are speaking with a former CEO of the Office of Prevention of Violence to Women, I think bringing an intersectional lens will help us to understand where we need more activity and work. I hope that actually gives us an opportunity to bring that together, but to also unify that work.

In relation to your broader point, as Rebecca says, I would love to say we could solve government not talking to each other. I have not found the pathway for that yet but I am determined to keep trying.

Without wanting to put more pressure on the sector, which is already working very hard, I am also a realist and think there are many circumstances where you will hear before we necessarily do, as well. So an open door, to say Corrie, I have this phone call, but I think you need to pick up your phone to colleagues in X, Y, or Z. So a standing invitation to make me call people is fine as well.

SPEAKER:

I will go to the room now, to Bronwyn.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Shannon. Bronwyn from the Nursing and Young People's Alliance. First of all I wanted to say there is a terrific sense of possibility that I am hearing, particularly comments around intersectionality, which are one of the key things for us.

It is great to hear that and great to see the team but is brought together, Rebecca, I am hopeful of doing tremendous work together.

With regard to this group, I think one of the great frustrations from a long time back has been the lack of interaction. I pick up on Jen's comment earlier, about put us to work. I think we have great knowledge, expertise in the room, we have always wanted to be much more engaged and not just be the passive recipients of information.

If I can support Jen's comment on that, I think we will go a long way to getting to a point where we are co-designing together, looking at a range of topics. I'm sure we share the problems, but it would be good to do some work from the (inaudible) level through to the macro level of policy.



Thank you.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

I would like to say that I have taken note of your comments about children and we will be in touch with you to talk about this.

SHANNON REES:

Shannon speaking, Jenny, you have the microphone.

SPEAKER:

Jenny, apologies I did not introduce myself before, from the Australia Autism Alliance. How we want to work together, transparency, and I know you have been wanting to do that. It would be good to be working together to solving things, and understanding the problem, what is not negotiable, understanding where the constraints are, what is not going to happen. Because we do pick up in the past, we have gone, we have put up and put out, and then something happens, and then we say, we are not speaking in English, but we have realised something could have been done, resources are not there. I will say the obvious, we are mature and understand we wanted to exceed, you both know that. But I think we are all welcoming, tell us what those constraints, or what is not possible, so we can work on some practical things.

SPEAKER:

I think that is a great point, Jenny. It is not just about telling you what our limitations are. Often there will be lots. It might be saying to you what do you think we could do to overcome those limitations. You are in much better positions... Sometimes as public servants we also second-guess things and think we will never be able to get to that point, or never be able to address that. But by talking to you openly we can often over come those challenges as well. I think that is a really good point.

SPEAKER:

Can I add to that, it is that verification as well. As you said, coming to us and asking us what you could do and how it could work, also verifying what we have said. I am pretty sure it is not deliberate, but verifying what was said, how it was said. Then we talk about it and talk about it and go around and around. I think we are saying the obvious, but that would be great.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

We will go to the room again, with Skye.

SPEAKER:

I would like to second comments by Jenny and Ron, around how us as a collective are able to support the Agency with your work. Rebecca, picking up on a few items you mentioned in your update, I think it would be helpful if, as a group, we could get a sense of your priorities for that work. For example, you mentioned it would be helpful if there was a list of things this group would like addressed by the NDIA Review, due to report in October. So that is a high priority.

There is also the work you mentioned around the Disability Royal commission, reporting in September.

Also the children's task force you mentioned is incredibly exciting, for the organisation I



represent, keen to work with you on ensuring we are amplifying the voices of children and young people in that. To support the establishment of that group, identify some priorities, I can talk later about the updates we have been hearing from our members. I would appreciate a sense from this group, about their priorities, if we come together, where we want to be at the end of this year? What sort of things can we tell our members we have advocated for, with the NDIA, about this. Some priority setting would be really good.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

When you think about what is going to land this year, it is both overwhelming but also extraordinarily exciting. I think us agreeing to what our priorities are, as a group, and being really honest about, I have to run alongside a whole range of reviews and things are going to report, to make sure the Agency is as prepared for October. So we all feel the workload now, we have to hit the ground running and demonstrate trust with people with a disability, the sector, and the community, that we will get it right.

Having you involved in some of those discussions is equally important, because there are other governance structures, ways of working quite differently, than the Agency just bringing things in and working on those problems.

To go to Jenny's point, when the review lands in October, we think there should be a strong response from the Agency. That should not be us beaver away and putting words on tables, it should be us coming and talking about it, saying this is the intent of the review, what do we think about how we will get there? Being realistic about timeframes for addressing those and the resources. One of the things that will sit alongside the review is the need for a very, very different budget approach.

Sitting outside the Scheme in terms of implications, it would be good to be transparent about that process with you as well, so that is a really good point Sky.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Skye. I want to acknowledge that Nick Rushworth from Brain Injury Australia has joined us.

SPEAKER:

I will be brief, Bill here from Community Mental Health Australia. I'm sorry not to be there in the room with you today. I know we have a little bit of time here and I want to raise one point. Coming out particularly, the conference we had on Monday and Tuesday this week, there were 22 really good ideas that came out of that. Leads me to think how do we include and make space for ideas here, because it is easy for me to bring up problems stop also some of the solutions will come walking through the door, an idea that may not be instantly recognised, and you need to be able to create some space to explain an idea, why it might work, to pro-and con-it. Otherwise the idea is a little like throwing a coin into wishing well and hoping your wish comes true. Most of the time they don't.

I want to put that out there about what I would like to see in terms of future consultation, how we have a process. It is also quite challenging, because I know some of my ideas, if I put them out there, some people will say that will not work, it will be stupid, because it will run counter to them.



You can only get to solution through ideas not through rehearsing the problems. Just a point I wanted to make here.

REBECCA FALKINGHAM:

Thanks Bill. You are channeling our chair who is deeply, deeply committed to having this year and ideas Summit. There is never an opportunity to talk about amazing ideas and how we can facilitate those ideas. One of the roles that (inaudible) will hold in the Agency is fostering... Markets how they develop, the quality of them, how we look at communities quite differently in terms of delivery of those services. It would be good to talk to you and I will make sure Kurt reaches out to you. In the anniversary year of the Agency he is keen this becomes a centrepiece.

SPEAKER:

Thank you very much. I am based in Adelaide. I would like to build on what has been said so far and to offer some synthesis. I think one of the challenges with this group, we talk a lot about this, is the tyranny of not enough time. There are too many things to discuss, and quite a lot of voices that want to have that discussion, so we are jostling for position in the space/time continuum.

We talked in the past, it found its way into the terms of reference I think, but this forum being a clearinghouse, I am not sure I saw it land. Given all the points we raise, it feels like we could imagine a three phase framework for the work of this Forum.

The first phase would be using this as a place of identification, naming issues, and ideas. And also giving some shape to understandâ€¦ What is the weight of this and why are we restless about it at this time? The second phase would be coordination, because most of the work to navigate issues, a bit like codesign, happens outside of the place where the ideas are identified, because you have to talk to people and have some channels to work, perhaps working groups, to unpack more details and start to look at where the truth may lie within, and what solution can emerge.

This group serves as coordination to identify people who could contribute to those groups, to understand the timeframe of those groups, and also to receive updates on how that work is travelling.

Also importantly to acknowledge the interconnectivity of issues. Two phases there, identification, and coordination, and the third is conclusion. Where material comes back to the group, and the group and agency can resolve shared learning about what that process has brought to light.

To make agreements, where that is right, in terms of codesign, but there are some things the NDIA ultimately has to carry responsibility for, so for this group it is understanding of decisions the agency makes. I would like to suggest that as a synthesis.

SHANNON REES:

Thank you. We have place marked the next session for Corrie to be talking to you about those issues. We definitely have the agenda, I think they are all really great points. I will go to



Catherine now. Historically there is work done from this group are we really keen to hear about that.

SPEAKER:

A couple of things just before I go there. In terms of what works, I did want to say, the CEOs reflections on priorities and current issues has often been the best part of the meeting. We have often said turn up for the first hour and 1/2 whether CEO might reflect on things, because that's really helpful and it gives us a good understanding of priorities.

There is a attention on how to do the deep dives, and I wanted to briefly reflect or give feedback on the role of the deputy CEOs, this is a CEO Forum that we have hardly ever seen a deputy CEO at. When we want to do deep dives, we go somewhere and we end up with directors.

In the hierarchy is there unaware of that. So the deputy CEOs, it's great to see Corri here. I will add my welcome. That there might be a way of thinking about things where this Forum is with you, but there are other mechanisms by which we can still do some of the deep dives that I headed by very senior, brings that level quite high.

SPEAKER:

That's a really good suggestion. Some of them haven't started yet, but whatever the next one looks like, it would be great to have them along to meet all of you, you can hear their reflections on how they going to set up their groups and priorities.

SPEAKER:

And how they might interact with us. In closing the loop, DSS are doing a thing about how we going to close the loop, I think Robbie just managed to say that quite well about conclusion. I would reiterate that.

Together last year, that was particularly some work that Ellen, to give her credit, that she helps navigate that. We put a proposal to the Agency based on a national aged care alliance model, one of the things there being that we have felt historically that the Agency sets the agenda, and we keep not being able to talk about things.

One of the reflections we've had within the NDIS review team, is it OK, we have picked up all of your submissions. We have said yes, but there are unexplored territories because some of the issues that we think are issues, the Agency has never asked us. For example we have never written an article on necessary and reasonable, written a paper to directly resolve for us why other people with intellectual disability, that when you get support they are funded on a group model? Et cetera et cetera.

There are things that are not on the record, because we have never been able to bring them up. And that would go collectively as well. So managing that tension, and acknowledging that we are not going to be able to do those deep dives in this room because of her need to be a part of it.

The thing about the alliance is again, is to talk about the fact, going back to Caroline's comments about the silo of government, we do the navigation.... I have now had meetings with all the party separately to try to bring them together. In terms of a couple of the issues that have



been raised.

In acknowledgement of that, that's why we are asking for a secretariat support because we have to do that navigation ourselves. So that we have the capacity to do more preparation and caucusing. If you want to say to us Corri, one of the top three per organisation? What a collective top three? That we have the ability to caucus and bring those issues to you in that way.

That's that suggestion came from. We would be interested in exploring further.

SPEAKER:

I read the proposal. I know that some people are new in the room. Is everybody familiar with the alliance concept?

SPEAKER:

We talked about, at the time we did it, we talked about it, so Darryl the advantage that you have is that Ellen will have briefed you. I have managed to leave a copy of the solution on my desk at home and bring it with me. So I will be quick. Can I ask Liz to help us with this?

SPEAKER:

Liz speaking. I can talk briefly to it if you like. I'm a little bit familiar with it. The idea was to propose a similar model to the national aged care alliance model, which is supported Secretariat function supported by government, that provides that coordinating function. Is able to bring stakeholders together, meeting quarterly or whatever, and any agency and government is invited into that space. It

As a group collectively, able to, as Catherine said, caucus between yourselves, come up with solutions. Also to have working groups, around specific issues, and bringing that up, so it is a considered approach.

SPEAKER:

That's really helpful. What we were suggesting is basically that an organisation is funded to do a coordination role. And we were fairly explicit that that would be done, that would align with the work that they are doing at the DRCO level. And that what will be looking for was that the principles of the approach would be leadership by the DRCO, the allies would be led by the organisation to drive the agenda, and that would work to shift the dynamic in terms of the way this forum is driven, so it would be driven from the perspective of the groups.

We would have robust governance arrangements, to make sure that the work of the Alliance is led by the sector. That we would work collaboratively, and at the alliance would have a permanent Secretariat, who would organise meetings, agendas, facilitate working groups.

And provide an opportunity for us to work out the areas of common interest and work ourselves into smaller groups we have, knowledge or interest in areas. A network would not be just around these quarterly forums, but ongoing.

It would be a platform for information sharing and consultation between DRCO members, the NDIA and the Minister. To provide a simple approach for the Minister of the NDIA to approach



on specific issues.

Involvement of the NDIA, clearly, we would seek to continue to continue the practice of collaboration. Any agency would also be involved in the development of the agenda, we wouldn't do that on our own, in terms of collaboration.

And it would have more reaching involvement, it would provide opportunities for the DRCOs to seek advice collectively for people with disability and their families. And that would be opportunity than for organisations that are not part of this forum to be able to feed into it without necessarily attending the meetings. They were the main principles.

And we use the national aged care alliance model, most people say in a sector that that is the one that has worked the most effectively.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Catherine. This is not a meeting to sign off on that model, so not to give Bob a heart attack, but really it does bring forward the opportunity to talk about the principles and how we can facilitate the structure that meets those. It could well be that we have had, if I can be honest, a change in the broader view in regards to our collective world, and a collaboration component is more at the forefront here in an authentic way.

This is really a conversation around how do we get to that? One of the considerations is around that model. Any further points? Simon?

SPEAKER:

Simon Burchill from Physical Disability Australia. I am a bit wary about the Secretariat kind of model. In that it places a layer of bureaucracy between the agency and the organisations. So I understand the efficiency of having a Secretariat collect things, and gather them together and present them forward, but I always think that some ideas are going to get missed out on, because somebody else will exercise their judgement and say, it might not be as important as these other points, so it will be down the bottom of the list. I may be left off the list altogether.

So I would much rather see a circular model, where we are all in the room, and we can all have our ideas heard and feed them forward.

SPEAKER:

Can I be clear, the Secretariat is to help us set organise ourselves. We would also be in the room. This meeting would not look any different from how it looks now is just our preparation.

SPEAKER:

I understand that, but I just find it, it's just another layer. I am wary of it. Because it hasn't worked well in codesign. Having committees and things treat us and the people who actually make the stuff that goes into a codesign project, I feel held at arms length, and I'm sure that others in the room I feel that way as well.

SPEAKER:

Corri?



SPEAKER:

Corri McKenzie speaking. I think, I really liked Robbi's suggestion of the kind of tiering of the meetings as well. To your point around making sure that in that identification conversation, that all of the issues, ideas, considerations are able to be raised. That's really useful.

I think it is important both in the meetings, and in the structure, that we are able to make sure that we can almost word cloud the issues in a sense. There are going to be some issues that are very common, and very significant and big, they are called out. It's really important to make sure that just because an issue is unique to a particular organisation, or community, that it is not seen as unimportant. So there is real merit in being able to see everything, and being able to coordinate from the two.

Catherine, I feel very comfortable in this room to say, we are very interested in the proposal, and really committed to making sure that this Forum is everything that needs to be for you, for the people that you represent, frankly, for the Agency as well, because we are not going to be able to do our job well if you're not engaged and supported to be involved as well.

A couple of questions, and this might be something that we might want to work through and come back to, to Shannon's point, is the immediate intention or ambition for the DRC owes, for their engagement with government broadly or specifically the NDIA? I say that with a little bit of self-interest in we have two negotiate if it is broader as well. If it's just the NDIA we can sort it out ourselves. Something to think about.

The other question is, I have seen the partnership arrangement work really well, so I wonder if there is appetite for a partnership approach to the DRCO between the Agency and the organisations, where we can facilitate a shared Forum, rather than being an Agency led Forum or other DRCO Forum. Is there appetite or interest in that? That is the other thing that I would be keen to discuss and flesh out.

SPEAKER:

Shannon speaking. I'm conscious of time and I'm not going to close this conversation because it's important, I don't want you to feel like you've been put on the spot either Catherine. Loser feels a bit like that. So what I'm going to suggest is that we break for morning tea and maybe give you an opportunity to have some conversations yourselves. Because this is by no means meant to be a determinant of how we are going to proceed after this conversation.

Maybe we break for morning tea, to give us an opportunity to have some conversations, and then we can come back and I'm sure that Corrie won't mind if we continue this conversation at the top of your session. Our people comfortable with that approach?

SPEAKER:

Jenny from the Alliance. Before we walk off, my understanding of everything that there is a model, and how we interact with it as a partnership, but what I thought I was hearing Catherine say is, you are looking for some arms and legs to coordinate, so they can put a submission, but is not done, is to get all the surveys together, or remind us that we were supposed to respond, so I think there is a model thing versus, rather you are looking for some arms and legs, you have to fund it yourself and find the time, and you forget. Is that what you're referring to?



SPEAKER:

It would be nice to have the time to have some of those discussions, and the resources to have some of those discussions. We keep intersecting in meetings where Bob and I have a whole lot intersection stuff around intellectual disability and autism, and we never have enough space and resources to have the deep dive conversation.

I think we are open to different discussions. What's happening is not working really well for us at the moment, and what we would like something better. We would like opportunities have more detailed policy discussions ourselves which is difficult for us to do, because we have to negotiate the siloing of government until we have to take it round to lots of different parties, to get something off the ground.

SPEAKER:

Corri. Heard and enthusiastically embraced.

SPEAKER:

We will break for morning tea. It's really refreshing to be having these kinds of conversations. We will reconvene at 11:40.

(Morning tea break)

SPEAKER:

Shannon speaking. It's nice having a countdown timer. Jenny, where would I be without you? If I could just get people's attention, otherwise Jenny will. Thanks everyone for joining back. Just want to welcome everyone back online. We will just get everyone to take their seats.

Further to the conversation that we were having prior to morning tea, we thought we would just give people the opportunity to raise any further points, and then we will take those points and continue to have a dialogue around how we collaborate and what it looks like going forward.

So we appreciate the frankness of the conversation and Catherine's contribution to review and come back to give us more information about some of the work you've done last year. I'll go to the floor to see, we will close it down in the next five minutes or so. Anyone else have any burning points or questions that they would like to raise we have Rebecca and Corri here?

Bill says is it just me or are the cameras off? Can we just check that? It's just you Bill.

SPEAKER:

It was to follow on, again it might be obvious, with that structure, that the roles will be clearer, that you need to do that next level, but then in there, we start to map that stakeholder mapping of the various groups. Often some of us are not aware, we should have been on that group, we should have interfaced. We don't realise who is driving what. So we do stakeholder engagement meeting, TRC for our forums. Not really clear on who and what exists. So if we could get that broader mapping.

SPEAKER:

Just go to the room.



SPEAKER:

Hi Dwayne speaking. I won't try to turn this into a love fest, but I wanted to say, coming back to the comments about our thing yesterday, our CALD strategy, I did get a chance to say something earlier. The reason it's been working so well, this new model or strategy is really coming together, I think, is in part partly due to the incredible efforts that the NDIA have been putting into it.

I wanted to acknowledge that here today, with this group. Working with the NDIA this time around on this new strategy has been a breath of fresh air, and the team have been incredibly respectful, incredibly committed to the presence in the model. They have been incredibly considered as well.

That's why its been working so well, and I'm really privileged to be a part of it. The second part, my second question is, I've been talking to Corri about it for a couple of seconds, I see the review as being a massive piece of work which will really determine many of the directions of the NDIA and some of the outcomes and how these will be fixed.

But my question is, I want to see the details soon about how it will be implemented. What the process is going to be. Not an implementation plan, I want to see broad strokes stuff around what the implementation process will look like, and what kind of co-design will go into that as well. For that review, where the rubber hits the road is going to be really important. Just like the CALD strategy yesterday. It's great to have these documents that sit on top of the filing cabinet, but you have to implement them.

So I'm looking for some future direction on the implementation planning.

SPEAKER:

Noted. Corri did you want to speak to that?

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking. Thank you Dwayne. It is really important. I'm happy to undertake that we will come to a future meeting around what the process is around the receipt of the Review. The reason is, there will be government decision-making processes around the review to, so the Review formally has report to the Minister, and so as soon as we work with dSS to understand what the government decision-making processes are, I can come back and report to this group.

Certainly from the NDIA perspective, our starting point is that we would what any response to the review to be informed by conversations particularly with this group, we would not want to do it in the dark.

But unequivocally, implementation of outcomes during the Review must be done together, and in partnership. So we will need to do some work to co-design what that might look like as we get a sense of those timelines too. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Excellent. I will go to Caroline first online, and then we will come back to Robbi.

SPEAKER:



Thank you. A quick comment fore Rebecca and Corri, while they are here. In relation to the NDIA comms area. There is so much innovative work that is being done by organisations like those in the room today.

The NDIA does nothing to showcase that work. We used to send all sorts of stuff to the NDIA to put out and about. And a very quick example, we have a standalone website that connected to our main website, that was designed by and for women and girls with disability, and it can flip to easy read, but we have a whole section of resources on the NDIS, easy read videos, stories, video stories from women with disability, about the NDIS experience, all sorts of things.

None of that stuff ever seems to get out through the NDIA. I know that that is probably a big question, and I don't know what the role of the comms area in the NDIA is, but I just think that it is underutilised in terms of showcasing some of the work that is done.

We do stuff overseas on the international stage, one of our ILC projects for example, and yet we are seen as having a leadership role in the international space, and yet the NDIA, there is nothing that comes out.

SPEAKER:

Shannon speaking. I'm happy to take this one. Given that it is literally in my patch. Many of you would know, we have quite a well-established channel, so I think our social footprints now is closer to hundred 50,000 audience reach. I would be really keen to collaborate, arrange content, we have social channels and things like that, but if you have anything that you want us to look at, to amplify, just send it to me.

We have definitely done in the past, so if there is a blockage around doing it in the future I'm more than happy to dive into that. We are more than happy to share good work within our program. So please reach out, because I would be surprised if my social team wouldn't jump at sharing it on our channels, but also be able to provide the Minister to look at content because his footprint is much bigger than ours.

SPEAKER:

And that's one of the issues, is that it's really hard, people change all the time, so to know who the right person is to be sending things to. As I said, we have tried many times before.

SPEAKER:

Shannon speaking you can always bring it back to the Secretariat of this group. I would encourage you to do so. Any others, we are always looking for really great content, that's the term I use, storytelling, information, connection. I am always happy to collaborate where we can. I feel like we have moved. Robbi? Just to be clear, we are closing out any conversation in regards to how we want to collaborate together, and then we can move into discussing any of the key areas of focus that you want to inform Corri for. Robbie? You may be in category a or B.

SPEAKER:

I can offer a segue between the two. The question, which relates to how this group operates this year, someone asked the question, I'll give you a couple of illustrations. How does the NDIA resolve what works on now or does it work wait for the outcome of the review to work? A difference of about 10 months.



I'm really keen, the answer is quite difficult, it's not like it's an easy one. A couple of examples. LAC. We know that there were moves to renew the LAC relationship last year, before the election and was eventually discontinued in August or thereabouts.

The sense was, there was going to be interested in exploring alternatives. Not to say that the alternatives are right to explore, what are the ways in which LAC can be understood and realised in the future, but it feels like nothing has happened since then. Rather than extending the contract relationship with existing providers, which you would understand, there would be some extension if there is work going on to explore the range of possibilities, but in the absence of that, opening to explore the range of possibilities at the worst outcome to discontinue the commissioning process.

So that's one thing, and I think that there is enough being said about the concerns that people have about LAC, I don't think needs to wait for a review otherwise it adds another year to the existing work. That generally seems not to be working for people or the NDIA.

Going way back to (unknown term) commission, unfortunately titled DSO, brilliant demand sector not service providers, and how that is an integral part of the scheme's success. And yet, the funding has been sporadic, fragmented, short-term, project-based, and there is not clear, how it sits with the DSS at the moment. But I'm sure that NDIA has an interest in its future. And we certainly would in terms of seeing proper sustainable investments in (unknown term) (inaudible) as things stand, if you don't currently have an aisle seat, nothing much is happening until (unknown term) and if it is a short-term basis.

I'm just noticing LAC, I'd hate to wait for another 12 months before something can move along hopefully with thoughts of this group involved back to the question. How do we decide what you can work on now because it's strategy design and what you have to wait for the outcome?

SPEAKER:

I think that's the million-dollar question I'll hand over to Corri.

SPEAKER:

Thanks Robbi. They're really important and quite difficult questions. It's Corri speaking. In terms of the review, you will all be very well aware of the plethora of things currently underway, on foot, down the track, in the list to do within the Agency.

We have been working really closely with the Review essentially to try to work through that list. It is really the way that we are handling a Robbi. With a view to progressing worker we can, and then where the review is intending to look into more detail, or is likely to have a recommendation that might change the direction, or significantly alter the landscape, I would suggest probably both of those areas that you have identified, for probably within that category.

Because I don't think it will be any surprise to anyone in this room, that's here too, when not like to call it that anymore, but when I say that everyone knows what I'm talking about! (Laughs) Tier 2 is clearly for front for the Review and that would include the pathway for the LACs as well and the optimal model for LAC is to be working to.



So we have been working through what those are. Where the Review says, we are likely to land in exactly this position and when not likely to give it significance in the report, please proceed. We are doing that. A good example of that is in the work, some of the co-designed work that is happening, supported decision-making in those kinds of things for example. Safeguarding.

There has been significant work underway. Have we given the Review line of sight to the work. They are comfortable with it. There is a real immediate need for it to be progressed. So that is happening and then other things. Whether they are likely to be the focus of the Review, an issue that is, we are very concerned to not press pause, there is some really important foundational work that we can and we really think we should do.

The approach that we are trying to take there is, is to progress with foundational work that will enable us to be in a better position to respond to recommendations of the review. But don't prejudice what the outcome of that might be. So it really is a case-by-case basis, which is challenging both for the review and for us. But I think is probably really materially the only way we can work through it. The relationship has been working very well, it's been very open and collaborative in terms of their appetite also to keep good things happening.

And particularly if they are good things that they are not likely to have two want to make a comment on that would change the direction. On LAC's, I might come back to you out of session, want to get more detail. Madonna savings that aren't true. So I will come back to you on the specific things around that regarding contractual things with LAC is that we need to work through. So I hope that go somewhere.

SPEAKER:

Without wanting to interrupt, there was a group of us working on the LAC's that would be interested in that detail to.

SPEAKER:

I can come back to this group in entirety to do that.

SPEAKER:

Catherine, you have your hand up. Are we coming back to where this group wants to raise a place on this agenda? Where we need to be focusing on with you going forward?

SPEAKER:

You want to set the scene, or are you happy for us to dive in?

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Corri speaking. We are keen to have a conversation with this group that the key priorities in the short term that we really want to dive into. For a couple of reasons.

The first, is to go back to our previous conversation, we have heard clearly that the one-way flow of information that has happened in the past doesn't work and we absolutely hear that and from our last conversation, and the absolutely the last integer to work, the design and governance approach, it does work for the agency, because we are formed of what we're doing. So, that's the intention. My proposed approach is that we would try to crystallise with you from the discussion we had previously about the approach going forward. As Robbi has very



eloquently pointed out this year, there is a huge confluence of effort and activity particularly around October, and the Royal Commission reports, and the Review. The purpose of this session is to really understand in the short term ahead of us, revising and refreshing the government arrangements for the Forum. But we, as a group need to focus on, and how can the Agency better support the conversations is I think the purpose of the conversation.

That maybe deep dives to the DRC, might be workgroups or other sessions, and I'm keen to get the format to work through that. Particularly in light of the Royal Commission, can't remember who raised it earlier, but Rebecca's comments with the perspective of the Royal commission, what do we need for those conversations, and the deep dive, is really important for us to work through in the next conversation.

With that said, note that we raise these things already, can I throw open to the group for issues and any thoughts on the way that we might best explore the key issues that you are raising?

SPEAKER:

So, I will have Catherine and Bronwyn, then we will go to Bob and Carolyn online.

SPEAKER:

Thank you so much, Corri. I had a list, we were faced with the NDIS review, but Robbi addressed that.

SPEAKER:

Stole your thunder.

SPEAKER:

All good. I know Carolyn brought it up earlier, but I want to talk about the NDIS commissions and the Own Motion enquiry, and what is out of scope for the commission itself to resolve.

To talk specifically, I've spoken to health, and the DSS, and one flag is that we have asked all the parties, the NDIS commission, NDIA, health, DSS and advocacy come together to talk about some of the issues, and frost to understand the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies moving forward with particular issues.

In terms of the Agency, I particularly want to bring up one of the issues that has come up, which is, when we went to health, what I call proximal care. The care and the proximity of the person. What we talk about came up a lot in the cover conversations, round vaccination, and where the decision to access health happens. We saw in the enquiry was how awful, and with the 2019 report, the outcomes for people is how premature death, health-related incidents, choking, all the rest of it, what a high prevalence that is, in the fact that the decision to access healthcare sits in the group home, or with families. And that is a disproportionate experience with people, and experienced broadly. The decision to do that sits in the home. Whether it is a group home or not. And it sits within "it needs to be considered very specifically in the supportive decision-making framework, and to say how do we help people to access preventative healthcare, and how they access vaccinations.

And, I keep telling the story of my son, who at the hospital with the oxygen saturation of 70, when he was eight. And, without saying, I can't breathe, never said I can't breathe, and when I



got to the hospital, and they triaged him, they put him on the oximeter, and they said it is 70, it must be broken. He didn't have enough distress, so when they had another thing, he was 70 again, they thought it was weird.

Then they put on oxygen and freaked at Helsinki was. It's a personal story, but my story of "there's a back story that says, my husband went to hospital, we saw the doctor yesterday, he was alright. And so, we learned some lessons about that. But, as the mother, the person who knew the person best, took two days to take him to hospital. What happens if it's a support person that we know? This is why we have preventable death. I would say clearly, the interface with health, and I am saying advocacy, not IA,, DSS have undertaken and Luke Mansfield has undertaken to think about what we need to come together to decide on it.

And DH, disability health, health committee, that might be the ongoing monitor, might be a way of doing the ongoing monitoring, but we should all come together. So, I just want to put that really high on the agenda, and the other one I want to talk about is employment, I won't go into details, and there is a little employment team, and there's a lot happening in the employment area at the moment, and employment is something we would like to have a look at. Thank you for your time.

SPEAKER:

And I asked, on the last point, Corri speaking again, unemployment, is another one that is worthwhile having DSS at the table? I think the intersection of the pathway " "

SPEAKER:

I absolutely agree, we've done a big submission to the Disability Royal Commission, we are in the middle of doing a public report of it, we have a deadline, it's very long submission, 290 pages, and we will share that with you, it's a public yet, we don't have an easy read version of it yet, we don't want to publish anything. But, we start that is in ADE project, and we have it as an inclusion project, but you can't fix the problem without fixing all the problems, and that includes the NDIS, absolutely. Well, I was trying to do all the issues, but while I'm here, education. I don't want to steal skies thunder.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, with the interactions, and online, moving to Bronwyn, thank you Bronwyn.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Shannon.

SPEAKER:

I have one for participant sovereignty, it's really where participants are coping with the service of the NDIS, but they don't ever get to be involved in the design of the service. The codesign of the service. So, the locus of power has not shifted, we change the point of focus, but nothing more than that. It's a real problem, and I think the agency has no line of sight, into what we are funding, and how effective that is. And whether the participant is getting the services they need, providers are very much of the view that they own the service, they designed it, they deliver it, and the participant should be grateful. It's that blunt. That's the first one. The second one is a service development, dedicated groups, codesigned, we do a lot of work with onset dementia and it is a codesigned process with clinicians, family members going into the codesigned



process with the providers were very enthusiastic, but there is a long way to go for them to understand what they mean by collaborative codesigned. That's the other thing I want to mention in the market stewardship area. The other one is a question, I think for me, within the young person in nursing home space, we have regulatory environments for providers, we are aware that some providers are choosing to not reregister with commission, but are coercing is a strong word, they are saying to the residence they need to relinquish entitlements if you want to stay with us.

Some have, in the absence of information, the question is, what are the processes in the Agency, if someone wants to relinquish what happens. I know, in the past, were involved with nursing homes that closed, there was great work done by the Agency to talk to the participant, and see what was behind the desire to relinquish, but at the moment I don't know. So, I'm aware of three cases where people let their NDIS entitlements go, which means these are young people who are now living in aged care for a long, long, long time. So, the other part of the question is how can we bring those people back into the NDIS without any adverse impacts on them? Thank you, Corri and Shannon.

SPEAKER:

And I say, I've heard the same, there is a trend, a whole trend of people being pushed up by providers and people also being pushed out of group homes, and there is a whole thing happening in people being pushed into aged care from group homes, just a flag.

SPEAKER:

Sorry to jump in, Rebecca speaking, but it is with consent, can you give us anyone's details? Because we are aware of the looming deadline, and we had the discussion with the Commission at the time, where we thought it was likely an outcome, and we are assured, and talking to planners as well, we have not seen any so far, so it would be really good for us to try to get that together.

SPEAKER:

I saw this with the community visitors program, so, some of the information is not mine, but it has been flagged with me, and we need to find out, I don't know whether you have?

SPEAKER:

That's an area we need to deal with anyway. We have the door to aged care closed, we have terrific work with the Agency, in helping to do that, this is where providers don't know where else to go. They might wear the regulatory, but it is leading people without any knowledge at all. So, thank you.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, ladies. Dwayne. No? Bob, sorry. You save me from myself. Thank you, Bob.

SPEAKER:

Hi, Bob, Autism Advocate Australia. My first comment is I come out of the meetings not sure what we have agreed. So, I would really like, in every one of these meetings that we communicate, these are the things that the sector find agreeable. And we need to make sure that we have a common agreement about what those things are. And, it would be really good to be explicit about what we don't agree on, and what we are going to do about that. I'm going to



resolve it, disagree, or what? If we can do anything about that, it would be really, really helpful. Because, at the moment, I've been through a number of things where we thought we had agreement, for example, when you get an autism diagnosis, the agency simply refuses to have its software to collect that. So everyone insists, and it is because the software is broken, because the people who wrote it (inaudible). And there is an agreement that that is going to be fixed, I was in a meeting, we had a rare meeting where the chair of the board and the CEO at the time, they agreed that they were going to do that, and it never happened. OK? So, things like that need to be quickly resolved. The other thing is, we talk about getting issues that affect the whole group, but we actually have " in the case of autism, it's possibly less of a problem, because we are big numbers, and we can throw in numbers, but I think, quite a number of disabilities probably have specific issues that need to be dealt with, but we won't deal with them. We need a mechanism to deal with that. If autism doesn't have a mechanism for looking at specific issues, for example, we need to talk about behaviour support.

It's desperate, the stuff is crazy, the AAT is one of the most broken systems have come across.

Had been involved in a while, but I've only heard recently, and at the moment it's leaving families traumatised. Is this what you really want?

Your challenging the AAT to have a context of experts, and the High Court says the AAT is not for that purpose, and yet the Agency is routinely doing that. It is routinely. In the AAT property doesn't have the strength to stand up to the NDIS, and says it won't do that, but results are showing that that is, in effect what is happening. I think, it would be better to have a group like this talk about how we are going to fix that, not dump it on a whole bunch of people who really don't know, trying to resolve the stuff, it's just crazy. We really need to fix early intervention. So, I was pleased to hear that. I don't know what LAC is doing, I have no idea. We used to have things called autism advises, I don't think LAC is these days are required to spell.

I have seen internal documents not shared with LAC's, that don't internally explain autism, so I don't know where LAC is coming, about autism, but I imagine, these disabilities as well, it is tempting for us, and I think you really big problems. Those are some of the issues I want to address.

SPEAKER:

Rebecca here, I agree with you 100%, and the CRC, and another of groups and specialisation. Within the planning cohort, overall, excellent planners and it doesn't exist. As mentioned, we are doing a lot of work, and where the LAC should be, and what they should play, there are a lot of others to get back there. What the PC recommended.

And has been a lot more specialisation, and graduated levels of experience for the planners, so we should talk more about that.

SPEAKER:

There should be more codesigned in that.

SPEAKER:

I have Carolyn online, then Skye, then Robbi. And Jenny. That will be a test for me. I want to say, apologies, some of us need to pop out, Rebecca included. Forgive us for doing that, if we



spillover, Liz can Chair, and we will see you back at the second half of line. But you would have to excuse us, if we have to pop out, to Carolyn.

SPEAKER:

I was going to name drop as well. But I didn't. We have the Minister so we will pop out.

SPEAKER:

We have direct use of our organisation, and we have direct membership, and we have very strong grassroots connection and supports. Some of the key issues coming from members are to do with stuff around assessments, support coordinators, no one seems to know what they are, and it seems to be hit or miss.

Luck of the draw. Confusion over the portal in relation to payments and so on. These are things that our members have raised, and obviously I been raising it for years, and AusAid again, the need for a gender equality strategy, I don't know how we can have a whole of government, the new government developing a national gender equality strategy that will include gender budgeting, and so on. That includes the NDIS, and yet the NDIS does not have a gender equality strategy. The other thing I find problematic, and is probably a deep dive " I hate that term " we talk about supportive decision-making, the work around that, but in fact what we have seen is more NDIS participants being put under guardianship, public guardianship and financial management regimes. We have been looking at getting data around that, but there is no question " and service providers are actually the ones applying for those guardianship orders and they're being granted unchallenged.

So, I think that is a major problem. And I used to raise this with previous CEOs, the issue around guardianship and substitute " financial management systems, I don't understand how the NDIS can't be actually looking at that. It's a massive problem. In the last two, I was get the terminology wrong, I apologise (unknown term) principles. Again, we reiterate that they need to be revised, they need to be motherhood statements open to interpretation.

And if we interface with main stream systems, I don't understand how those have not been seriously reviewed.

I think it is 2017 since they were looked up. The other thing, I don't know why this keeps coming to me, the Australian Dementia Alliance keeps contacting me and saying they feel excluded from groups like this. And, they want to know how they can be more involved in this type of work, and these types of forms.

I must confess, I don't know a great deal about the Australian Dementia Alliance, Bronwyn may know more about me, but I wanted to raise those things.

I have a lot more, but that's it for now, thank you for listening, thanks for the opportunity.

SPEAKER:

What I might do, given it is " we might go to Skye, and then we might convene for lunch, and come back at I think it is 1:15 PM, and then we will continue this dialogue.

I don't want anyone to miss out, Corri needs to depart on time as well. So, Skye, if you are



happy to do that, and you need more time, we can run that into the next schedule as well.

SPEAKER:

Skye speaking, thank you, Shannon. From the perspective of Children and Young People with Disability Australia, things that like to put on the radar for the commission, Children and Young People with Disability Australia do a lot more work with young people outside the education space, so they are still important. But other matters I want to flag with you, I think the establishment of the children's task force is a real opportunity to embed more child centred practice. Around plans. We still hear about this push for medicalising support, and a parental responsibility versus something that should be funded through the NDIS.

That is something we are keen to continue working with you on. Employment. We are increasingly getting feedback from young people, particularly in the small lever age bracket, where they have issues accessing work experience opportunities, or even "not work experience, their first job out of school.

Even supporting the NDIS plan, they would only recruit you through a DES provider, concerning feedback in relation to that.

I'm really keen to have a chat with you about the CALD strategy, it's great that being developed, but wanting to understand how the strategy is helping to support families and young children access the Scheme early. We know how important early intervention is. So we are interested to hear more about that. But something I don't think has received a lot of airtime, but we are increasingly hearing, even in the media is the dialogue around youth justice.

We have seen, in Queensland, the Premier has admitted laws breach their own human rights act, which makes me wonder why put them in the first place, because they are criminalising breaches, and there is overrepresentation of criminalisation in the justice system, and how we can support the agency to try to connect in with those cohorts, because they are experiencing incredible vulnerability, they disconnected from a lot of services, mainstream services, and again, just hearing, increasingly the dialogue around clamping down on youth dialogue and justice without looking at the drivers for the children in that situation. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

We might break now, Shannon is speaking, we will break for lunch, and we will come back at 1:15 PM. And get the discussion, thank you.

(Lunchbreak)

SPEAKER:

This is Shannon speaking, just bear with me, we are giving Corri a chance to get herself settled. If you give us a couple of minutes, we should be getting started shortly.

Sorry about that everyone, Corri is still tied up. I have a note that Robbi is next in line, and I think Jen as well?

OK, well that is another option, is if people wanted to send us a note. We will proceed quickly so if Robbie is happy to take a note.



SPEAKER:

Thank you very much. This is Robbi from JFA Purple Orange in South Australia. If I might just put my psychologist credentials on for a moment. Australia is very undeveloped for positive behaviour support, we have people with the knowledge and skills, and the right support, which leaves us with the problem with SDA robust housing.

It is built on the assumption that the occupant is I was going to be robust, which definitely means that positive behaviour support is not going to have a role in this person's life. So then that is the question around incentives for investors, and shed living. So, we need to look at it as part of a thoughtful, positive behaviour support program.

And lastly, I don't know if I have missed something generally, but group homes hasn't been mentioned yet. And given the Quality and Safeguarding Commission's own review, of the crap that can happen in group homes, and noticing and opinion piece at the time, that the Review did talk about whether group homes were a good idea or not. It could be improved, in the literature review, about how it could be improved, and with group homes, that there is less than six people living in it. Nowhere in that document did it contemplate that maybe this model may be not working. So we could prioritise the thinking around what the home means, in people's lives, rather than a house, or SDA.

SPEAKER:

Did they come and talk to you during the Own Motion Enquiry? No? We continually ask them if they were going to look at the group home model, and they said it was outside the framework of the enquiry.

So when Robbi talks about employment and living supports, we are also talking about group homes.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, I will make sure this is raised with Corri.

BOB BUCKLEY:

This is Bob Buckley, we made a motion to talk about that. The challenge for us is that our people do not get an opportunity to do this. My son joined the NDIA in 2014. He has had supported accommodation in his plan for the entire time and not a thing has happened for him. That is just an example, and I know there are many other people in his situation.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Bob. I now invite Jen Blyth to take the mic.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, I feel a disconnection from many of these issues today, as somebody from the Deaf community. Many of these issues I feel that necessary relate to the same issues that we face in terms of general communication, interpreting access and Auslan. The group home access, I haven't actually seen the Own Motion review, Deaf people, they may have similar experiences, but the issue is that with communication, so I am wondering whether the NDIA is aware of, but



firstly, being able to contribute with communication, we don't have access to information in Auslan.

First of all, there is not a lot of thought given to communication at the forefront with information given in Auslan. So use of Auslan, or access to Auslan, in order to be able to lead fully fledged lives. So, I am guess I am struggling with some of the content from today and I don't feel I am able to contribute fully, so I wanted to like that. I wanted to raise that many of our issues are quite different to what is being discussed here today.

And another issue impacting on the Deaf community, we talked about employment, and education but we often don't talk about the Employment Assistance Fund, EAF. The Employment Assistance Fund for Deaf people is often only \$6000 per year, if they meet specific requirements and criteria. So they have only \$6000 for Auslan interpreting over 12 months and the NDIS doesn't cover the gap for Deaf people who require Auslan interpreting in the workplace.

And if the employer does not cover that gap, we did a survey recently, and a number of Deaf people said they had to choose which meetings they could attend, and were denied promotional opportunities and could not attend various events because interpreting access was quite low, and that is why they a glass ceiling, if you like, and it is not really talked about.

I wasn't sure with this topics whether they are valuable for me to raise here or whether I should conversation in a different setting. And some of the things I have raised, I understand may not necessarily be relevant to you, but I still wanted to raise them today.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, Jen. Shannon speaking. I think they are highly relevant, we can talk to you about some of the issues in advance next time, but we want to make sure that what you are raising is addressed and it does have high value.

SPEAKER:

I have sent an email around, but my point I was going to raise was about NDIS understanding the cultural awareness. People have their sessions and they still go ahead even though the interpreter was set up, but they ring on some other day. All those fundamental frontline issues are still going on, but I thought I would say to save time. To support Jen they are still definitely very, very relevant, the daily operational things.

SPEAKER:

Thank you for reinforcing that, Jenny. We will go to online. People have been very patient. I have David. Mel has put notes in the chat. We will go to David first. Thank you for being so patient, David.

SPEAKER:

Hi, everyone, can you hear me?

SPEAKER:

Yes, and welcome back Corri.



SPEAKER:

My name is David Murray, and I am from Deafblind Australia. I use captioning supports, and I want to thank Deafblind Australia for providing captioning supports. It is important to include captioning in all meetings, and it is important to include that in future. I want to advise the group that it has a bit of a lag in the captioning and at the moment it is about 10 " 15 seconds behind, so that can affect my response or contribution to the group.

I'm not sure whether it is my internet or the software that the captioner is using. So please bear that in mind with the technical aspect of captioning.

In regards to the priority issues for DBA, these focus on the priority areas for NDIA and what we have gathered from our members. With the staff for NDIA and community partners, for every level to have more Deafblind awareness. People are currently to do a certain amount of self advocacy compared to other groups, and the subject of planning are not fit for purpose, with staff making decisions for support, they are not capable of making decisions that are suitable for Deafblind people's needs.

There is a lack of Deafblind awareness, and we constantly consult the NDIA on the needs of Deafblind people and it needs to be improved.

The second point is a lack of consistency around deafblind people's plans, and what is provided, and it tends to be dependent on the staff, rather than being based on the needs of the deafblind people. I guess there is a lack of awareness again, and lack of being able to provide effective plans, and they are not being given the best of what they should be having.

The last point is around, I guess the thing markets, when you are delivering the NDIS, and you have the services and supports to be able to accommodate the funding packages. So, the other point is more specific around supports, in particular we encourage the flexibility around family members, as informal supports.

For example, in regional areas, family members may literally be the only people that are available to do support work, and interpreting roles, and they cannot be paid properly under the NDIS rules.

This is also an issue in the city areas as well, despite the large number of workers available, they don't have the skills and experience to support people with deafblindness. So they still rely on family members to fill the gaps with a lack of skills, and low numbers of professionals working in this space.

So, those are probably the most common priority issues we face in the deafblind community.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, David, for raising those issues. We might close that agenda item and have an update PACE.

Sorry, I just Corri.

SPEAKER:



Apologies for coming back in again late. Just before we close off that agenda item, can I please do a quick wrap up of kind of what the next steps, on particularly the last two conversations might be? If that is OK?

SPEAKER:
Of course.

SPEAKER:
Thank you for all of your contribution, I think they have been important for giving us a very long list for things that us as a group here need to work through. Can I suggest that in relation to the future governance arrangement here for this forum, not just for the governance but also how we want to run the meetings, that we have a first crack, working in consultation with you off-line, at what a proposal might look like as to what we want to bring back as a discussion. We already have some documentation of that, but maybe we could try to pick up some of the strings and strands of what we had heard from the conversation today.

I propose that the NDIA have a first draft to circulate out a document. If the document is wrong, tell us and we will have a further conversation off-line about how we can change it, or start something new if we have had a completely wrong and of the stick. Then with a view of bringing this back to the next forum, at our next meeting which I think is in May, for progressing.

On the issues for progressing, which has been just discussed and is usually valuable, I think it is slightly dauntingly long, but doesn't take away from the importance of any of them on there. Robbi suggested framing, coordination and conclusion, I think that was useful but I don't know if it resonated with other people as well.

If we consider that session as a kind of first issue identification session, again I would propose that we have obviously got notes, that we document that, and perhaps in consultation, particularly with the people who have raised these issues in the first instance, we work through what are kind of the next steps for have that work might be further explored and developed to come up with a list of "these other things and these are the avenues" in consultation with the people who raised them.

Then we can bring them back in May, and prioritising them, and sequence as they need to occur. The people have a view as a next step approach? And do people specifically think that it will give us a pathway for making that conversation concrete and tangible? And getting a clear direction?

SPEAKER:
I think it also goes to your point, Bob, when there are conversations but they are not captured and played back, and nothing happens.

BOB BUCKLEY:
I am amenable to that, however, I would suggest that I think most of us, if not all, have monthly meetings, that we would progress through, and maybe aim for a bit further ahead, then you are suggesting in May. That would be my preference, for moving along a bit faster, in light of how this government is progressing.



SPEAKER:

I am conscious of that, it is the Review timing that is giving me shivers. Absolutely, we will get cracking, and I think some of those conversations we really do want to bring back to this whole Forum, so that it is really together, but I think there is absolutely, particularly in the issues, things we can step through. So, thank you, Bob.

SPEAKER:

Thank you for you for your contributions to those conversations. It was really valuable.

I will now do my Eurovision callout to Garth. Is Garth online?

SPEAKER:

I am.

SPEAKER:

I think you would appreciate my Eurovision reference.

SPEAKER:

(Laughs)

SPEAKER:

If you can take the microphone, Garth.

SPEAKER:

My name is Garth, and I am the GM of Participant Experience Design. I am on the lands of the Kulin Nation in Naarm. I am in an empty room, looking at you all in a very full room, I am jealous, as I am by myself.

I need to talk to you about PACE, and 3P. I thought I would do a quick recap to bring everyone up to speed on the background of what 3P and PACE is. There is a bit of jargon, so I thought I would unpack that and give you an update on how things are going on what is happening down in Tasmania, where we are giving the new IT system a bit of a test.

And I was then going to get into the stage where we are up to, which is we are in the process of conducting an evaluation on the test, and Richard who is in the room with you, is discussing some of the topics and getting some input from you.

As a bit of a late topic in my introduction, thanks for also voting me in as the first and inaugural agenda item, I am flattered, and the envy of David Gifford and Jamie (Lowe) who were not voted.

If I can go forward a slide.

Background to the discussion. Since September 2020, we have been going through a process of designing and building, and testing a replacement system to the NDIA's business system, which is an SAP system. It moves us into a salesforce platform, which is the NDIA's own ICT team you are building it.



The current SAP system we are on, was quite rigid, and we couldn't make the changes we needed to give effect to the legislation changes in 2020, with the participant services guarantee, we couldn't make changes easily to respond to the feedback we were receiving about pain-points. And we were kind of shackled to a whole of government IT solution which was approaching its end-of-life and increasingly getting slower, slower and slower.

But acknowledging that there were a lot of pain-points and the participant experience, provide experience, staff experience and the change in legislation, we decided not to just do a lift and shift of the way that SAP works into a new system, but take the opportunity to think about how do we future proof the new system, so that at its core, it has some of the things that we need to control, and the levers in there to be able to change, or overhaul if new legislation or new policies come into play?

There are a couple of new things that in there now, and new things that ended up in their through the process of co-design, and the NDIS Review was thrown into the mix, so we come up in future changes. So it was probably the right decision to go back and look at the whole architecture of the system. Because we are doing that, we also had participants and the employee disability network and various other stakeholder groups involved, in small groups, through the design process. To also look for efficiencies in some of the interactions with the agency. In November all of that work got to the point where we said that we think that this is OK to safely move out of the laboratory, and into the real world, to start to learn from real experience.

And so we have been slowly implementing the new system called PACE, the new system in Tasmania. We have been doing that since November, and the approach to having participants start to have their activities recorded in PACE, is that as new participants approach the Scheme, or as a system participant comes up for a planned reassessment, those interactions, and then their new plans starts to get developed in the new system.

There have been some other things that have happened, so it is not just about rolling out an IT system. We have also looked at the recommendations in the PSG, and in the (unknown term) review, and so we have changed the way in which we are supporting Tasmanian prospective participants, and people approaching the scheme, and how are LACs, Local Area Coordination's and early childhood partners to support participants through that process. So helping them to submit their access request, which is then considered.

And then we have also been looking around how do we move what was a bit of a mixed experience for people who want participants with community connections and early support plans. So the things which are LACs and early childhood partners were developed with participants either before they came a participant, or (inaudible). And moving those into system, and bringing that in as part of the evaluation and the test.

Just as important as what we have changed, is what we haven't. So the system and the 3P, which is the program that has been delivering it, has not done anything to change the information we ask as part of access, or as part of our planning decisions. We have not changed the way in which we give instructions to staff in the way that they interpret or make decisions around that. And that was quite deliberate, because we need this new ICT system to be flexible enough to now respond to change, and not get in the way of those other



engagements, which are underway such as (unknown term), now the NDIS Review which will tell us how we need to make those changes.

So we have been in Tasmania since November. I have had the pleasure of spending a bit of time down in Tasmania, I really like it down there so that wasn't the reason for choosing Tasmania as the place to do the test, but it is certainly a good benefit on the side.

The overwhelmingly, considering this is the rolling out of the large-scale ICT system across... at least three different workforces and a diverse population of participants. The experience has been largely positive.

There have been some changes that we have needed to make to the system quite early in the piece, and are continuing to make some changes. But nothing which has been what I would call a 'showstopper' or anything that made us think about whether or not we have had to roll back.

There has also been some emerging themes around some of the experience of staff participants, and providers, and I will talk about that in a little bit more. But overall the system is performing fairly well.

(Inaudible) is about a fortnight out of date, so there is now 755 participants who have a plan. In Tasmania, down in the new system. And so that is makingâ€¦ Got us up to about 5% of Tasmanian participants are now in PACE.

We have been able to observe, and start to learn from the end to end process, so people who are working with an LAC, or in early childhood partner through one of their community connection plans or community support plans, and getting to the point where there is a discussion around the need for individualised funding supporting those people and their families through the access process. Having a plan approved, establishing and implementing the plan, and getting payments against the plan.

And so that is really where we needed to get to with the test, is to start to see not just how the individual parts work, but how it works through a real person's experience of the end to end pathway there. We have also been able to start to use some of the additional capabilities.

So, one of the things for those who interact with our current system, one of the administrative nightmare parts which is quite necessary is called service bookings, and this is where a participants plan is segmented up into which provider is providing which service to what value, for what period, and then all of the cleaning rules and then fall off of that.

-- Claiming. We took the opportunity to roll that out of the design, and move this to a provider driven setup of the service booking, essentially providers going in and quarantining parts of the participants budgets, usually on their behalf. To a process where it was a lot more flexible for participants, in terms of how budgets are allocated during the plan implementation.. So not locking it up into the plan discussion.

And where participants had a chance to verify whether or not a provider was providing services when they were unknown to us.



So that is being done through SMS and notification at this stage, and are continuing to look at ways to change that process. But that is up and running, and we are watching that happen now.

We are also seeing a few more participants registering for the portal, that is probably a discussion point, probably not as many as we would like. We are looking at more functionality for self servicing within the portal.

But those are the positive things, there has been some negative as well. So in January we started to get a bit of a backlog of payments for providers.

And this is due to a couple of different elements, there is a few data and system related issues, which needed to have fixes done to them. But it is largely due to some strengthening around the rules of how payments need to be validated. So rather than just cutting them directly off, because it is a change to the system, we were instead holding onto them so we could call the provider to talk them through how their systems needed to be changed. It created a bit of a backlog. The backlog is now cleared, and it is now on a 95% of payments that are being cleared within three days. So it is back down to the levels we would have expected.

But that has been one of the lessons which kind of feeds into the next slide. Which is around the evaluation.

So it is a test, when I have spoken to you in the past, I was promising that it was a test, and that part of this was around evaluating and learning lessons, and the reason for doing the test was around understanding how systems needed to change, how the processes needed to change, and how the rollout needed to change.

The evaluation kicked off in November, so as soon we started to test, and has been gathering momentum, and will continue through to the end of March. And that is the formal end date, the reality is we have built a system which has continuous improvement in its design.

And so evaluation improvement is part of the cycle. But formal evaluation at the end of March. It is a combination of data being collected to inform it.

So we are both using quantitative data which is sourced through the system, and other surveys. As well as qualitative data which is coming in and through focus groups, and interviews, and workshops. A lot of workshops and focus groups going on.

And probably the exciting bit, and a bit new for us, was to have some of those focus groups being coordinated, and hosted by not us. So there is five Tasmanian DRCOs who are running focus groups around general topics as well, some specific things which we wanted to understand more.

And the idea here was around getting some balanced inputs, and some of the things which we don't necessarily hear when we are in the room.

And so what we're trying to learn through the evaluation, is around the experience of participants, providers, participant partners, agency staff, those people who are affected by the change. And to understand how the systems might need to change before we get to national



rollout, they probably more... and this is where we are starting to hear more and more around the early lessons, is around some of the changes that we need to do to support the rollout of the system.

So we have been speaking, particularly in the focus groups around the experience of the community connections plan, and the early supports plan.

Some partners across the country were already doing them, others weren't, so this was an opportunity to understand what it looks like if it was part of the standardised process.

And one of the things that we are keen to understand is that its effectiveness of being a tool for community and mainstream connections and supports.

We are also exploring further around the supported access process, so has that made the difference which the tune review thought that it might? To have people who are approaching the scheme assisted to navigate that process.

We have been implementing the process where the delegate, the planner who is making the decision about the participants plan, meeting with the participant and developing... when they are developing the plan. The idea that it is the person who is making the decision get the opportunity to make sure that they understand the person situation, and to make sure that their decision is understood.

So getting feedback on that process. We are getting feedback around the apps and the portals, and know that when we go down and do these workshops they are probably the most popular of the (inaudible), which I am trying not to take that to personally, because that is not entirely in my project.

But it is exciting for people who are interacting (inaudible) and providing feedback, so I can understand why that happens. Early lessons, which are coming through, early lessons coming through is that there are some things we need to change in the systems, and so those kind of technical things, and there are some opportunities in portals, and particularly in the provider Portal there is a few pain points on the provider side.

But across all of the stakeholder groups, so participants, providers, partners, and agency staff, there is a theme around readiness, and around us needing to rethink around what does it mean to do change management, and understand what it takes to get the front stakeholder groups ready for a change of this magnitude.

And so that is showing itself up in different ways. But largely from the qualitative forums, and so we are hearing from participants that the staff they are interacting with did not understand the process or the system.

All they did not know how the effect of the update would have on their own systems. Our own staff are reporting the same sort of thing. Although the reports are not due until the end of March, given that it is already an emerging and quite large theme, we are already reviewing what are the opportunities, for addressing that, to try and get on the front foot there.



There are other things which are coming through the evaluation that I am doing my best to show a little bit of discipline, and to trust the process. And so, the process itself is that right now we are doing the listening.

In the middle of March, the intention is to start to do the playback to different stakeholder groups, and to publish externally actually in draft form the lessons as we have heard it, to provide an opportunity to make sure that we have heard it right, and get it validated before we publish the final report on the lessons learned from the test.

The lessons learned themselves will largely be problems, and I problems need to be addressed. And from that point on we get into the process of designing, and what do we need to embedded to be ready for a national rollout.

So there is a little bit of activity still going on and we are in the final throes of data collection. The DRCOs are hosting the focus groups are larger starting to wrap up. There's a little bit more of that going into early March. But then after that point we start to engage again around have we had it right and what are the next steps.

I'm going to pause here before I get onto because I covered a fair bit in terms of what we were designing and building for the test and evaluation stop whether questions about that before I introduce the topics that will we were hoping to get more into?

SPEAKER:

With any questions at this point or are we happy to proceed onwards?

SPEAKER:

Thanks Shannon, Daryl here, just a couple of questions around the key areas you had when your previous side. There's a few things that appear to be changes in how the process works around meetings with planners who make the decisions, using the LACs to support families to gather information, and I understand there is a change in how the funds are distributed to participants, all of which on paper sound fantastic but I just wondered what consultation process co-design process was followed in coming up with those changes?

SPEAKER:

Thanks for the question and welcome to the forum. We had participants families through the participant first network in the design of the process, and so that's where we got the input around what should go into a community connection plan. The direction around some of these was not to include it and that was a recommendation that came out of a review of the NDIS. What we did do was work with participants and staff in designing what happens in that meeting. And the reason white showing appear in the evaluation is because you're right, it is something new and different and it's the bit that we want to understand and get further input from people who have gone through the process around what worked, what didn't, is the whole thing actually not worth it with potentially what comes out of that. Does that answer the question?

SPEAKER:

It goes towards it, but the question I still have in my mind is I think on your earliest lady sort of said this system doesn't change the rules on how the NDIS works yet there seemed to be a few things that are absolutely things that have come from other sources, completely understand, but



where is the competence of list of maybe what is different in this new system versus what currently happens, just so there is that transparency?

SPEAKER:

Excellent, we can share that. It was tabled at one of these meetings about a year ago. So there's a lot more detail behind this which has been shed.

SPEAKER:

That would be great, will make sure they gets to you and I just had a nod to my right from Dwayne and then we will go to Catherine.

SPEAKER:

Hi Garth, a little bit of feedback, just when the additional supports your mentioning there for people and families to gather information, and the gathering of further information, just wondering what's been put in place for those people with low literacy levels in this space or culturally diverse people with language barriers and understanding barriers around some of the terminology used. Just wondering what those additional supports in the space for those consumers, if you have anything you can add?

SPEAKER:

Thank you, the additional supports a large human supports so having access to a person who can then help you understand what the information requirements are and then potentially even talk to people if you need help with translating the conversation from being with us to a treating practitioner, for example, so largely human supports, and I think this is one of the things which will come out to the discussions in the focus groups, is around the resources we have available to us is Local Area Coordinators in early childhood support partners who have a connection to the community but may not be able to adequately cover the full scope of diversity that you talk about and you mention there. We have also been working with some of the DRCOs in the room on our booklets and around how they translate across different cultural and linguistically diverse groups or against different segments in society. I think it's fair to say that it doesn't go to addressing all of the pain-points which people experience and there's a couple of other strategies that are live within the NDIA of people who are doing more deep dives into those various diverse groups to better understand how we meet their needs.

SPEAKER:

Dwayne again, I just think the literacy, because a person speaks a language, doesn't mean they are literate in the language I decide quite important. And I think if we look back a couple of years ago to when NEDA and FECA worked together on community connectors across the country, setting up coordination processes in order to help people access the scheme, some of the learnings that came out of that process in every state and territory, and some of those hard to get to communities both culturally and communities that are cloistered by distance, those things are really important and again what I'll do is I'll get our final report which is in collaboration with one of the universities, and I can't remember which one, I will get that report to the NDIA again, because I think there are some learnings in there around this particular aspect around what to these aspects that are being used.

SPEAKER:

I appreciate any information you can provide even if it doesn't change this particular part of the



process in terms of immediately around what is the support provided to probably get access to information, anything you can share is going to help us in terms of how we communicate the new ICT system as it needs to expand out of Tasmania, so we can certainly use that to help us inform our change and comms is an immediate action, thank you.

SPEAKER:

We can feed that in. Over to Catherine.

SPEAKER:

Catherine McAlpine, thanks for that Garth. A couple points, firstly, we've been pretty engaged with the PACE program, project, whatever it is, from the beginning, and I would say to you that even though it meant taking a bit of notice, we were still caught unawares and some of the additional changes, so we would be fierce supporters of the plan a meeting with the person but in fact, that wasn't clear to us that that wasâ€¦ I'm still concerned about the evaluation issues and also, it hasn't been made clear to us on an ongoing basis, is this a pilot withâ€¦ Is this thing that has been tested for continuation or is this something that has just been testedâ€¦ We want to know the purpose of that and what the intent is going forward so that we don'tâ€¦ We don't feel that we are quite up-to-date with that. I would also say to you, Darryl mentioned it, and I have heard too that there were going to be changes to the payment cycles. I did speak to Richard before this and he said that's not true but I want you to know that there are rumours going round about what changes there might be and so some real clarity about what the changes external to the IT system itself would be really helpful in the messaging. For example, and I think you know this in the feedback already, but no one knew there was going to be a new portal on the ground, so even if people knew there were new IT systems, they didn't realise therefore they would be dealing with new portal. It makes sense but actually in the comms that would have been really helpful. And one of the other thingsâ€¦ I'm about to use a piece of data that you haven't given us today but we know from the sessions that we do with Richie it's about 85% of the new people coming in have a cognitive impairment. So in terms of the big groups, people with autism, with intellectual, with developmental disability, with psychosocial disability make up about 85% of the numbers that we go and we have had the feedback from our Tasmanian friends that it's very clear that there are very fewâ€¦ That few people are involved in the planning process is without significant support from a family member or another supporter.

So really thinking about the roles of other supporters when you're talking about now such, again we talk on and on about how 60% of participants in the scheme need support, but that cognitive payment has not had enough focus that that's the thing in terms of all of the columns, and the preparation of all the materials, and I had a... What does that mean, and probably this is for the next bit, but there is high concern about the text messages. I had been told they were about big decisions and in the presentation that was about particularly providers that are not known to you. People feel that the text messages are about a big decision and everyone is terrified of a text message because no one knows if it's real or not. I understand why you are using I'm sure you are getting this feedback anyway but I to say myself, I have not done actions on things about things I've been tested on, because I don't know if it's really not. There is an issue about safety and particularly again to say if 85% of the people and people with a cognitive impairment, then safety is a real consideration. I acknowledge that this is really tricky because in fact text messages so effective in other ways, but also text messages often go to the person and yet a lot of the decisions are being made in conjunction with vulnerable people is also the some stuff to think about there.



SPEAKER:

Thank you Catherine, Garth speaking, an excellent list. I'm just going to take as a bit of a steer around the text messages in the SMSs. I think you are right and everything you said and it some of the stuff we are looking at in the evaluation is looking at other options. I think that the one thing I will say is that that safety thing is one of the things we are worried about as well, so you will never get from us a reply yes to this when it's one of those things where we expect you to do some action in the SMS, because we just don't want to encourage people toâ€¦ Will be very convenient for us, it encourages people to potentially make that sort of mistake to malicious SMS and the like.

I will take as a (inaudible) opportunity to improve the fact that we didn't talk loud enough around some of the things like the face-to-face planning or meeting the delegate face-to-face and look at this is one of the things that we change and outcomes get stronger in around these changes. To your question around for your commentary not been clear whether this is a pilot of the new system, this is going to be our new ICT system, so it Tasmania has a chance to get it right beforeâ€¦ While we are able to wrap around it, all of the national workforce to make sure that it doesn't put at risk participants and the staff and providers and carers who are supporting them.

SPEAKER:

Sorry Garth, that wasn't what I was saying. It's quite clear the ICT system is a new thing but what I was asking about is the things that have gone around it like planners meeting with participants, it's not clear to me whether they are just parting the new system to it, whether they are tests that may or may not continue, that's the bit I was asking that.

SPEAKER:

Right, sorry. The IT system is a continuation. Everything else is up for evaluation, the NDIS review, who does what, all that stuff is quite flexible.

I also wanted to take the opportunity to say that Richie has corrected the record correctly, we are not changing payment cycles and things like that. But there was a theme in the things we knew it bringing up there Catherine, which was a bit of a lightbulb moment to me in that when I come and talk to you, I talk to you about PACE and my program of work, and there are other things happening across the Agency and these things all culminate into having an external change, so although we're not changing anything as part of this IT role anything to do with payment cycles or the way we process payments other than the same validation rules are going to be in force instead of being worked on, there are other things such as point-of-sale technology either through apps or cards which are being investigated to start Turrella to allow participants to pay for services on the spot. There are things around the back of house operating system for payments which may change the way the payments leave our system and then go into bank accounts, and these are the things which are kind of getting muddled around at the moment when you just hearing part of the messaging.

It causes nervousness because we are doing things around, there is a registered plan manager and support coordinator portal as part of 3P and PACE to help to connect those services to the participants that they are supporting. Because we doing some stuff there and as these other things run point of sale, you start to get rumours around this is an early move to try and get rid of this will change that. It's a good one to be raising because we need to get onto it. I suppose

that one of the early clips around the ears I have seen in recent weeks is in around the need for us to get more around just this project and I think what you'll start to see in these sort of presentations is around some of the contacts that this is within before getting into the actual discussion. So thank you for driving it home in the sort of things you are picking up, which aren't actually part of this program, but we need to think about that broader ecosystem.

Last long, long reply but it was a long list. The 85% of people entering who have neurodiversity or cognitive impairments, it spot on, and we are picking that up.

SPEAKER:

I'm just going to say one thing, you can take my complaint as a compliment in that you've been giving us really good " I feel quite well-informed about PACE itself and I think what we are really showing is that the other things are happening around that that may be Garth's responsibility haven't been communicated and because you been doing a good job in the communication, in fact we are relying on you, so take as a compliment rather than a complaint, but for the Agency overall, the feedback is there.

SPEAKER:

I was going to say the same thing, noted. I'm conscious of time and as much as I run a pretty loose ship of the agenda to the day, like to finish on time so we have a question from Bob and the what's the next section of Garth? I just want to manage.

SPEAKER:

We were just going to have a conversation -

SPEAKER:

Richard Honey here, we had a small group of people and we wanted to see whether it needs a focus on change management or ghost and policy lines, it was more of a discussion about how does this group want to be involved going forward.

SPEAKER:

Excellent, so we will go to Bob first then will open up a conversation, Richie.

SPEAKER:

I'm from Autism Asperger's Australia, and this may lead into Richie's point. Being probably the lead data noted in the room, I've got a couple of questions about" I don't know whether there are any issues here but I just didn't hear anything in the presentations, so I want to ask questions about whether the data or the system is better design to collect data to support planning processes, because I have big concerns about that. In the past, that clearly hasn't been particularly good, and I'm not sure what steps are being taken to make sure that there is better data to support planners. On the other end of that what considerations, what design aspects, what things have been done to ensure that we get better reporting of outcomes, especially the outcomes that are the goals of the NDIS itself. There are a number of goals and I haven't really had that there is a specific design to actually report those outcomes, possibly in as much detail, and specifically in the way that is going to inform the people in this regard, which is how that data gets subdivided and reported in the reporting process. Just wanted to ask that.

SPEAKER:



Thanks Bob, it's Garth speaking. Good questions and if I was in the room, I would try to debate with you whether or not you are the biggest data nerd in the room, but as I'm not in the same location, will just have to take that I'm the biggest one in this room.

SPEAKER:

Very confident.

SPEAKER:

The question around planners and what they do, it's a two-part answer. We, as I said earlier, having change the information which we ask for all the way in which we instruct staff to interpret that, because that's really the domain of some of the co-design, in particularly the information gathering for some of the co-designed planning, as well as some of the stuff coming out of the NDIS review, however, we have built the structures within the new system which do a much better job of linking evidence to justification and the decision, and the process which guides staff through considering the evidence, how to interpret that as justification that informs decision. So that's something which is a large change to the way which our current systems work.

And the idea if there is that that sort of thought process is going to be constant, regardless of what the policy of the day is around what we consider evidence or how to interpret it. You are always going to need to be able to give the line of reasoning. In the knowledge management, as we call it, is the guidance provided to staff that steps them through those processes, reflecting the way in which they should be asking for things and considering and interpreting it.

So those are the features which we have built. We are not really going to see large benefits from that until we get the outcomes of co-design, but the system is there waiting for when it gets turned on.

The other bit around goals and outcomes is another one which is kind of similar. We have got capture of goals and plans that we got the capture of that in the parts of the plan which is actually set about so that we can decoupled bits which participants and their supporters, their families, carers, the people that are supporting them to do plan implement and patient support coordinators can manage outside of the planning process so that goals and outcomes are something which can continue to be monitored, refined, tracked against, independent of needing a full planning meeting whether become part of the planning meeting. That's also a bit of a change to the architecture of the system. The idea that goals are something which happens in perpetuity, as opposed to planning which is cyclic and how those two things need to invest with each other. So it's there.

How we use it is one of those things where again it's waiting there for the policy to bed down as to what are the roles of goals in the plan, and what we need to start to do with them. It's a long way of saying we thought about the system architecture, there is a second process which is a slower one which is around what's the design of how we use it.

SPEAKER:

A final question from Catherine.

SPEAKER:

Can I ask a question, one of the key issues as you have been able to record multiple disabilities.



That for instance I don't think needs to wait for a policy change because my understanding is the new system allow that. So I would think that from Bob's question about better recording, I would have thought there was some things that aren't waiting for policy changes that you might be seeing better recording and outcomes but particularly in the cooccurrence of a disability.

SPEAKER:

100%. Might even go into evidence and see whether or not we have anyone who's been recorded so far with multiple disabilities.

SPEAKER:

Corri speaking, just adding to what Garth said, the fact of the system in itself is going to immediately improve a lot about our data collection. Simply by nature of the way that it captures data, and captures data consistently, it means that our data will immediately start to improve. Obviously we are also bringing in a lot of data from the old system that is less beautiful.

SPEAKER:

Bob Buckley again. We probably need to have some conversations about that. My question about goals was not about individual goals but about NDIS goals. There are objects in the Act and I'm just concerned thatâ€¦ I think we can probably improve reporting around those as well as the individual goals.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Bob and thank you Catherine. Thank you to Garth. So Richard Honey who was joined us, he's actually in my Division, so welcome. We might try and see if we can work away to provide feedback, noting that we are three minutes away from concluding. And spoken like a boss.

SPEAKER:

To put it simply, we want to work out how does this group want to contribute to the next phase of this project. If at this small working group that has been extremely valuable for us but we got these big milestones of the evaluation coming up, and it's clear from this group we got some more topics around a policy perspective we need to dive into, maybe from a data perspective as well. So the end of this session was to find out what this group wants to go ahead, but maybe we take that as an action going forward and we put out some of the topics we hear today, because I know that in two weeks time that if a small group of DRCOs is doing a deep dive into the evaluation, and I want to open that invite to everybody if you like to come and be a part of that group, it's a great group. The more the merrier. But I suppose also identifying topics that we can work through, and as we put here, what is the strategic approach. Once we've done the evaluation, they will be a list of improvements and we want to work with the wider disability community and providers as well to understand how we prioritise those and we won your contribution to that.

Whether it's a big forum like this or a meeting with providers and DRCOs all in a room together to not have the priority list, we want to work with you. Opening to comments now recognising a have one minute left.

SPEAKER:

Go for it Simon.



SPEAKER:

Thank you Richard for coming and addressing group. I'm one of the people who's on your small working group at the moment, anything a lot of them have been taken up. I would like to see the group continue to develop a strategic plan as part of the co-design process of incrementing it which is what the agency is doing of everything and in keeping with my proposition that more things be done in a roundtable format, I'd like the relevant CEOs of deputies to attend those meetings and for anybody in this room and the extended group not in this room to be able to attend if they would like to.

SPEAKER:

Thank you Simon, noted and I do want to acknowledge Richie's work particularly over the last six months. I think he has shown a real commitment to showing ensuring we are bringing people along this journey supported by Garth and his space. And if I can speak frankly, in the past, we've not necessarily gotten ahead of things quickly enough to provide the input to land communication pieces we need to support our community. I am really grateful that you're here, Richie, and I encourage anyone with an interest to participate in that, we would be terribly grateful. Bronwyn?

SPEAKER:

Thanks Shannon, Bronwyn Morkham again. I agree with Simon, it's been a great group to be a part of and to handle some of the complex questions that have come up. I think it's important for people to be able to join but I'm just worried we get such a big group that we don't get a conversation happening in one of the great benefits has been the capacity to have a frank conversation about the topics, and I don't know, and identifying the key issues that are coming up, the policy issues perhaps, Rich, that you have mentioned and maybe we can invite to particular sessions or something like that, it's been a really valuable exercise.

SPEAKER:

That's great, I'll take on that feedback and we can share them with the wider group and have multiple small groups while maintaining a continuous group that has been on the journey, so thank you.

SPEAKER:

Excellent, Garth?

SPEAKER:

Richard just stole my suggestions her I'm going to sit back here quietly.

SPEAKER:

Back to me all the time Garth. Alright, we might close that agenda item but thank you very much Garth for bringing updates of the group today and thank you for attending in person here, Richie, it's been nice to have you. So I might close out the meeting. I just want to thank everyone again for their participation with the spirit that they do. I think it's a really solid continuation of where we left things last year and so that genuine commitment to continue to work with you, particularly around design and what have you for this forum itself.

I just wanted to shout out and acknowledge Alex and I think it's Mark who are our interpreters

and also to our captioners, it's fantastic to have a here and also to Jen and our new members as well, welcome. So without anything less to do apart from thank Matt and Alex and Liz for all the secretarial support and they employers do a great job, and we look forward to communicating back of the outcomes of the meeting and having some further discussions in the lead up to May. Thank you.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE MEETING BRIEF

NDIA DISABILITY REPRESENTATIVE AND CARER ORGANISATIONS (DRCO) FORUM – 24 FEBRUARY 2023

Prompt	Response
Hosted by:	NDIA
Primary contact:	Liz Callaghan, BM Co-design and Engagement Branch
Date and time:	24 February 2023, 10am-3pm.
Location:	The event format is a hybrid model, with attendance via the Park Royal Hotel, Melbourne Airport, Ballroom South, Level 5 / MS Teams
Short summary:	The Disability Representative and Carers Organisation (DRCO) Forum brings together CEOs and senior representatives from key disability sector organisations to engage, discuss, collaborate and co-design with the NDIA on important areas of work.
NDIA attendee:	Corri McKenzie, Shannon Rees (Chair), Liz Callaghan
NDIA contact:	Liz Callaghan, s47F - personal privacy
PDMS number:	EC23-000241
Arrival instructions:	<p>The Park Royal Hotel, Melbourne Airport is located on Airport Arrival Drive, Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine.</p> <p>Arrival from 9.30am.</p> <p>Ballroom South is located on Level 5. From reception please take the lift to Level 5. Please follow signage to Ballroom South.</p>

OFFICIAL

BRIEF CONTENT

1. Background to meeting

- 1.1. The Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum is a key component of the NDIA's stakeholder engagement approach. It provides the NDIA with an opportunity to share timely information on the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to the disability community.
- 1.2. The DRCO Forum invites feedback and discussion from the sector on key emerging issues and trends regarding the NDIS and their respective communities
- 1.3. The meeting agenda is provided below (**attachment A**). A list of member organisations attending the 18 November meeting and their biographies are also provided (**attachment B**).
- 1.4. The agenda for this meeting has been designed to build on the very productive discussion at the last meeting, and advance engagement between the Agency and DRCOs about a future partnership approach to working together.
- 1.5. The agenda will commence with **A/g General Manager of Communications and Engagement, Shannon Rees** welcoming attendees.
- 1.6. **You** will then address attendees for one hour. This will focus on a discussion of how DRCOs would like the NDIA and DRCOs to engage together in 2023 and beyond.
- 1.7. We will then break for 20 minutes for morning tea.
- 1.8. **Corri McKenzie, Deputy CEO Strategy & Service** will then lead a discussion about the issues DRCOs are hearing from their members and identify DRCO priority issues.
- 1.9. We will then break for lunch for 45 minutes.
- 1.10. We will then have the item chosen by the DRCO representatives for the afternoon session.
- 1.11. DRCO representatives have been asked about what presentations they would like to hear, and have confirmed their preference for a presentation from **General Manager of Participant Experience Design, Garth O'Brien** providing a status update on the PACE rollout.
- 1.12. This will be followed by a DRCO only discussion, NDIA representatives to leave the meeting.
- 1.13. Finally, **Shannon Rees A/g General Manager of Communications and Engagement** will provide closing remarks.

2. Recent interactions

- 2.1. The last scheduled DRCO Forum meeting was held virtually Friday 18 November 2023 as a hybrid model at The Park Royal Hotel and virtually via MS Teams.
- 2.2. The DRCO Forum Action Log from the previous meeting (updated February 2023) is provided as (**Attachment C**).

3. Issues and sensitivities

- 3.1. The two most prominent themes across DRCOs are the:
 - 3.1.1. boundaries between the NDIA and the NDIS Review
 - 3.1.2. response to the National Quality and Safeguard Commission's Own Motion Inquiry.
- 3.2. Inclusion Australia are concerned about ensuring the recent research the NDIA has conducted into Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) is consistent with their own findings, which concludes that there is negligible transition to open employment and a range of discriminatory work practices.

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- 3.2.1. Communications & Engagement Division is currently coordinating a meeting between the Research and Employment Branches and Inclusion Australia to discuss.
- 3.3. The Co-design and Engagement Branch has worked with 4 DRCO members (Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA); Inclusion Australia; Down Syndrome Australia and Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)) on a pilot model for future DRCO Forum meetings. The model is similar to the National Aged Care Alliance, Key elements of the model include:
- DRCOs lead the meeting and develop the meeting agenda around their interests
 - DRCOs have increased capacity to develop unified positions and contribute agreed policy positions to Forum discussion.
- 3.3.1. Inclusion Australia has asked for an update on progress.
- 3.3.2. Inclusion Australia have provided you with a copy of the DRCO Alliance proposal. Your TPs address future engagement with DRCOs.
- 3.4. A4 are concerned there has been no tangible improvement in AAT matters since the commencement of the Independent External Review (IER). They argue the NDIA is not acting as a model litigant in cases where they are supporting families.
- A4 has also enquired as to the NDIA's involvement in the National Autism Strategy.
- 3.4.1. A4 have been directed to Sarah Guise Disability Support Branch DSS who is the key contact for the National Autism Strategy.
- 3.4.2. Bob Buckley from A4 met with NDIA Chief Counsel on November 17, 2022 to discuss IER.
- 3.5. Deaf Australia is advocating for families of young deaf children to be able to select Auslan in their plan as part of a 'would we fund it'. They have provided a number of case studies where families have been refused Auslan as part of their child's plan. They are also seeking a guaranteed minimum of 3 hours of Auslan support.
- 3.5.1. Communications & Engagement Division instigated and participated in a cross-agency collaboration with relevant internal stakeholders to develop a 'would we fund it' guide for Auslan. The guide has been shared with stakeholders as part of a final community consultation.

4. Communications and media advice

- 4.1. Media themes during the period since the 18 November DRCO Forum have centred on:
- 4.1.1. Challenges for Deaf or hard of hearing students
 - 4.1.2. Disability group homes
 - 4.1.3. People with disability and COVID
 - 4.1.4. Supported independent living
 - 4.1.5. NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Own Motion Inquiry
- 4.2. Positive media coverage received on the NDIA funding boost of an additional \$1.4 million to DRCOs.

5. NDIA attendees

- 5.1. Corri McKenzie, Deputy CEO Strategy & Service
- 5.2. Shannon Rees, GM Communications & Engagement.
- 5.3. Liz Callaghan, BM Co-design and Engagement

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- 5.4. Matt Wright, Director, Co-design and Engagement
- 5.5. Nathan McLure, Assistant Director, Co-design and Engagement
- 5.6. Phillip Wakefield, Assistant Director, Co-design and Engagement (virtual)
- 5.7. Laura Freak, Assistant Director, Co-design and Engagement (virtual)
- 5.8. Louisa Harrington, Senior Events Officer, Co-design and Engagement (virtual)

6. Approval

.....
Shannon Rees
A/g General Manager
Communications and Engagement

[s47F - personal privacy](#)

Date: 22../.02./2023

Prepared by:
Matthew Wright

[s47F - personal privacy](#)

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Attachments

Attachment A: [Meeting Agenda](#)

Attachment B: Meeting attendees

Attachment C: Action Log

Attachment D: Talking points

Attachment E: Attendee Profiles

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ATTACHMENT A

MEETING AGENDA	
NDIA DISABILITY REPRESENTATIVE AND CARER ORGANISATIONS (DRCO) FORUM AGENDA	
Chair: Shannon Rees, A/g General Manager of Communications and Engagement	
24 February 2023, 10am-2.30pm	
PARK ROYAL HOTEL, MELBOURNE AIRPORT, BALLROOM SOUTH, LEVEL 5 / MS TEAMS	
This meeting will be held virtually and in person.	
Join the meeting by MS Teams Join by telephone: +61 2 8318 0090 Phone Conference ID: 752 150 209#	

Item	Time	Details	Lead
1	10:00 am	Welcome and opening remarks	Chair, Shannon Rees, A/g NDIA General Manager
2	10:05 am	Update from NDIA CEO and engagement discussion	Rebecca Falkingham, NDIA CEO
	11.05 am	Morning tea break	
3	11:30am	Introduction from Corri McKenzie and member issue discussion	Corri McKenzie, NDIA DCEO
	12.30 pm	Lunch Break	
4	1.15 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PACE rollout – for discussion 	Garth O'Brien, General Manager, Participant Experience Design
6	2.15 pm	Closing remarks	Shannon Rees

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ATTACHMENT B

As of 16/02/2023

MEETING ATTENDEES		
Organisation	Representative	Attendance
Autism Alliance (Autism South Australia representative)	Jenny Karavolos	In person
Blind Citizens Australia	Sally Aurisch	In person
Carers Australia	Alison Brook	In person
Children and Young People with Disability Australia	Skye Kakoschke-Moore	In person
Deaf Australia	Jen Blyth	In person
Deafness Forum Australia	Steve Williamson	In person
Down Syndrome Australia	Darryl Steff (Newly appointed in January 2023)	In person
Inclusion Australia	Catherine McAlpine	In person
JFA Purple Orange	Robbi Williams (Did not attend 18 Nov Forum)	In person
National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA)	Dwayne Cranfield	In person
Physical Disability Australia	Simon Burchill	In person
Young People in Nursing Homes National Alliance	Bronwyn Morkham	In person
A4 Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia	Bob Buckley	Virtual
Brain Injury Australia	Nick Rushworth	Virtual
Disability Advocacy Network Australia (DANA)	Jeff Smith	Virtual

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Mental Health Australia	Harry Lovelock (Acting CEO, appointed late 2022)	Virtual
People with a Disability Australia	Carolyn Hodge	Virtual
ReImagine Australia	Yvonne Keane	Virtual
Self Advocacy Resource Unit	Melanie Keeley	Virtual
Australian Federation of Disability Organisations	Ross Joyce	Accepted
Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA)	Bill Gye	No response
Deafblind Australia	David Murray	No response
Every Australian Counts	Jean Cotchin	No response
First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN)	Damian Griffis	No response
National Mental Health Consumer Carer Forum	Lisa Sweeney	No response
Women with Disabilities Australia	Carolyn Frohmader	Accepted

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ATTACHMENT C

NDIA DRCO Forum – Action Log Summary

Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum

Park Royal Hotel, Melbourne Airport, Ballroom South, Level 5 / MS Teams

24 February 2023

No.	Action item	Date raised	Action Lead	Status	Outcome
1	Facilitate a meeting between Jen Blyth and Rebecca Falkingham	18/11/22	Secretariat/CEO office	Closed	Rebecca Falkingham, NDIA CEO, is scheduled to meet with Jen Blyth, CEO Deaf Australia on 8 March 2023.
2	Report back at a future forum on how risk assessment data can for 3Ps can be captured	18/11/22	Garth O'Brien	Open	To be discussed at a future forum.
3	Bring the "Plan" case to the next Forum to provide visibility	18/11/22	Garth O'Brien	Open	Currently underway - to be presented at a future forum

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ATTACHMENT D

NDIA CEO talking points for: CEO Introduction**Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum****24 February 2023, 10.05 – 11.05am****Park Royal Hotel, Melbourne Airport, Ballroom South, Level 5 / MS Teams**

Length	1 hour (including 20 min Q&A)
Event	NDIA Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Chief Executive Officer Forum
Audience	CEOs and executive leaders from key national disability organisations

How to use this information

- These talking points are to assist NDIA CEO, Rebecca Falkingham when presenting at the Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum on the 24 February 2023.

Background

- The following key topics have been identified for you to present an overview on:
 - Key updates:
 - CALD Strategy Summit
 - Disability Reform Ministerial Council
 - Agency restructure and co-design
 - Engagement discussion
 - Close

Key messages**Acknowledgement of Country**

- I acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we are all meeting today and their continuing connection to land, sea and community – for me today that is the Wurundjeri people. I pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. I would like to extend that acknowledgement and respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

Introduction

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- It's good to be with you today.
- I'm always pleased to be talking with you all at this important forum. It provides a good opportunity to discuss key issues for the sector, from both your organisational perspective and also that of the Agency.
- I know it's customary for the CEO to give you an update at these meetings, and I'll certainly touch on a few key points, however I really want to use my time with you today having a conversation and hearing from you about how you collectively want to engage with the Agency, and us with you.
- I'm only able to stay for the first session and I want to capitalise on the time we have together so we're productive, rather than me simply talking at you.
- I'll knock over the updates quickly first.

CEO Update

- I'll get the quick update out of the way first,
- It's certainly been a busy time over the past 4 months since I joined the Agency.

CALD Summit

- Yesterday I attended the CALD Strategy Summit and I think it's a great example of the progress we're making, using a co-design approach.
- I know some of you were there yesterday, so please forgive me while I quickly rehash the session.
- This was the second time bringing this group of stakeholders together – primarily our External Advisory Group, with several other key stakeholders involved.
- The Summit was an opportunity to share what we have heard from CALD communities during the 'discover' phase of the strategy development process – primarily the issues that are important to them.
- It was also an opportunity to consult the group on the proposed goals and actions in response to those issues.
- It was great to be part of the Summit yesterday, and to be part of the robust conversations.
- I'm really pleased with the progress we're making - we are working steadily towards the new CALD Strategy 2023-2027 and delivering on our commitment to support participants from CALD backgrounds to access the Scheme, utilise their plans and improve outcomes.

Disability Ministers meeting

- Disability Ministers met last Friday – the first as the new Disability Reform Ministerial Council.
- The former Disability Reform Ministers' Meeting has been upgraded to a Ministerial Council following a review last year.
- The change recognises the significant work being undertaken, and still ahead of us, in the disability reform space.

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- Ministers agreed to a number of priorities for the year including improving outcomes and building evidence base; closing market gaps and ensuring access to quality and safe services; accessible communities; ensuring the NDIS and mainstream system work well together; and delivering the NDIS Review.

New structure and co-design

- A week ago, I announced further appointments to the senior leadership for the Agency and, with it, an updated structure.
- One of our recent Deputy CEO appointments, Corri McKenzie, is with us here today and will be leading the second session with you.
- Corri has been with us just over a month but has over two decades of experience in government and has certainly hit the ground running.
- As I said earlier, I've now been with the Agency for just over 4 months and I've spent much of that time listening and observing so I can get an understanding of pressure points, both within the Agency and for the Scheme.
- We need to have more conversations about what success looks like for participants and the changes to the structure reinforces our focus on participants, ensuring the participant voice is heard and considered right across the Agency, in all aspects of our work.
- To that end, one of the key features of the restructure is that we are embedding a co-design approach in everything the Agency does, not just the identified co-design projects.
- Working with you on co-design and frankly just better engagement, we want to make it easier for people with disability and other stakeholders to have their say on the NDIS.
- I'm looking forward to elevating co-design in the Agency, and improving how we work and engage with you and other key stakeholders.
- The Agency's co-design efforts will continue to be bolstered with co-design funding, announced by Minister Shorten last month, to many of your organisations.
- This funding reflects and acknowledges your shared knowledge and lived experience of disability.
- Your involvement is key to strengthening the overall understanding of the participant experience.

Engagement – discussion item

- Which brings me to our discussion today.
- The last time we met we had a great session where I learned more about your organisations.
- Today I want to take that a few steps further and understand how you would like to engage as a group with the Agency.
- I understand there is a proposal for the development of an Alliance, which has been provided to the Agency in the past and most recently to me, and I am actively thinking about what you have raised, so thank you for the time and effort that has been put into that to date.

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- What I'm interested in is hearing from you all about what that would look like in terms of engagement with the Agency. What does that look like for you all?
- Would anyone like to start the discussion in outlining their preference in engagement, including how this may work with a potential Alliance?

Note only: DRCO representatives to discuss their preferences and thoughts – if conversation stalls, Liz and Shannon can each discuss approaches that may support, and optimise, future engagement.

Close

- Thank you for taking the time to discuss your thoughts on engagement today.
- I think it's a good time to break for morning tea.
- In the next session, Corri McKenzie will keep this conversation going.
- I look forward to hearing more from you – and gain your feedback and thoughts today.
- Thank you for your time.
- I am happy to take any questions if you have them.

Holding lines

Note only: the following holding lines are available if questions are asked about the NDIS Review, the AAT/IER or planning changes.

NDIS Review

- Thank The Australian Government has committed to review the design, operation and sustainability of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, bringing forward the planned 2023 independent review of the Scheme in bilateral agreements.
- The review is an opportunity for a much stronger focus on improving the operation of the Scheme and building a collective understanding of how to maximise its effectiveness for those it supports.
- The review includes two key components which are:
 - Part 1 of the NDIS Review, which will be led by Dr Bruce Bonyhady, will examine the design, operation and sustainability of the Scheme.
 - Part 2 of the NDIS Review, which will be led by Ms Lisa Paul, will analyse ways to build a more responsive, supportive, and sustainable market and workforce.
- The review findings will guide the Australian Government and state and territory Disability Ministers on priority areas for improving the Scheme.
- The Agency has committed to working with the Minister on this review, and we look forward to a continued, collaborative approach as we work on reviewing the Scheme.
- We will review the system to make sure the planning process works better, that it's more seamless, and more transparent.

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- This review will ensure the NDIS is supporting participants, their families, carers and wider disability sector.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)/Independent Expert Review (IER) process

- The Agency is focused at present on our external review processes, to provide a fair, transparent process for participants.
- We want participants to be able to have trust and confidence in these processes.
- We have introduced, as you would be aware, a voluntary, non-binding Independent Expert Review (IER) aimed to assist participants to resolve their matter prior to an AAT hearing.
- The IER is free and confidential, and conducted within the current legislative requirements of the NDIS Act and Rules.
- We have also:
 - reduced the number of AAT cases through a dedicated and intensive review program that is focused on accelerating the resolution of existing cases, particularly those that have been in the AAT for extended periods of time.
 - introduced early assessments for new matters lodged with the AAT. When participants lodge a matter with the AAT for review, we will contact them to better understand their circumstances and the disputed issues so that we can talk about accessible and informal early resolution options before the case proceeds to a formal hearing.
- This has delivered a reduction in overall case numbers, progressively, since mid-2022.
- Almost 70% of the legacy AAT matters active in May 2022 have now been resolved.
- Focusing on this area, we've resolved close to 4000 cases in less than 12 months.
- As our early assessment processes improve, more matters are expected to be resolved and sooner.

NDIS Commission Own Motion Inquiry into aspects of supported accommodation

- The National Disability Insurance Agency's priority remains ensuring participants and their families receive the disability-related supports they need.
- Participant safety and wellbeing while receiving these supports is of the utmost importance at all times.
- The National Disability Insurance Agency has zero tolerance for abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of participants.
- Abuse or neglect is never acceptable in any context.
- The Agency fully supports the NDIS Commission's Own Motion Inquiry to better understand the challenges faced by people living in supported accommodation in exercising choice and control about their supports and as a method to ensure the sector remains accountable and transparent.

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- The NDIA will fully support the NDIS Commission to deliver on findings and improve the quality and safety of supports to NDIS participants living in group homes.
- The majority of the home and living provider sector is professional, committed and respected in providing a caring and nurturing home for vulnerable people with widely varying needs and complex disabilities
- The Agency is currently looking at how to best support participants, particularly those in larger institutional settings who transitioned from state and territory funding arrangements, to better understand their Home and Living options within the NDIS
 - As part of this the Agency are engaging with these providers to understand their plans for redevelopment.
 - This will help support conversations with transitioned participants about their options to explore more contemporary living arrangements, and ensure these participants are living in suitable accommodation that is aligned to their home and living needs and goals.

Home & Living Demonstration Projects

- The Agency is trialling different approaches through home and living demonstration projects, initiated in 2021-22.
- A key priority is to test and evaluate different ways of delivering home and living supports that give greater flexibility to participants and providers, are outcomes-focused, encourage better practice and support Scheme sustainability.
- Demonstration projects will seek to highlight innovative home and living supports that achieve key outcomes including:
 - Increasing participant choice and control over their living arrangements
 - Improving participant satisfaction and experience with their home and living supports
 - Increasing participant outcomes and wellbeing
- The key aims of the first round of demonstration projects are to identify and develop new ways of delivering and funding Supported Independent Living (SIL) supports, to improve outcomes for participants.
- Nine demonstration projects have progressed to implementation and are being delivered across Australia in 2022 and 2023.
- The Agency also recognises the importance of ensuring NDIS participants are aware of the home and living options available to them. Having this awareness is key to exercising informed choice and control.
- In 2023, the NDIA will establish a second round of demonstration projects that will focus on improving access to information, assistance and connections for participants when exploring their home and living options.

OFFICIAL**Planning improvements**

- The NDIA is committed to improving the planning experience for participants.
- To support this improvement, we have moved to deliver a nationally consistent approach to completing partner-built plan approvals.
- This approach has delivered very positive outcomes for participants, staff and our partners.
- Prior to October 2022, the end-to-end planning work for intensive and super intensive participants was completed by delegates from the same state or territory as the participant.
- The only exception to this was participants supported by two branches - the Complex Support Needs branch and also the Young People in Aged Care / Hospital Discharge branch.
- Historically, the work pools containing this planning work were unevenly distributed across our states and territories.
- This meant that staff sometimes had different workload volumes based on the state or territory they were working from.
- Due to this localised approach, the time taken to complete the full planning process varied between different states and territories.
- From October 2022, the NDIA moved to a national work pool for our National Delivery end-to-end planning activities — meaning all National Delivery teams, regardless of the state or territory they work in, now work from a national work pool of planning activities.
- Further to this, we've nationalised our planning activities, including first plans, scheduled and unscheduled reassessments. into this new approach.
- This means our end-to-end teams can complete planning work for participants in any state or territory. This is with the exception of participants who still require a local planning approach, such as those in remote and very remote areas, or those involved in the justice interface.
- By working nationally to approve these participant plans, we are:
 - providing participants with a nationally consistent plan approval process and wait times, no matter where they live
 - delivering more efficient plan approvals for participants
 - delivering on our timeliness commitments under the Participant Service Guarantee.
- The Agency will continue to monitor the success of the new approach and we'll make refinements to ensure we keep delivering for participants.

Disability employment

- The Federal Government has announced priorities for disability employment.

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- Some of the main areas of focus include looking at the education system and how it is best preparing students living with disability for employment; assistive technology and how it is best working; assessing the justice system's interaction with people living with disability; and looking at how workplaces can become more inclusive.
- The Government is also looking at the employment benefits flowing from the Scheme, and we continue to work with the sector, and the Government, to increase disability employment.

MS Teams Chat from DRCO Forum 26 August 2022

[10:00 am] McArthur, Jordan

Welcome to the August DRCO Forum.

Please note with have Ai-media to provide live captions for this meeting. Please use the below URL to see the captions:

<https://au.ai-live.com/CaptionViewer/Join/thirdparty?sessionId=AUNDIA2608B>

[10:07 am] Bill Gye

Hello, acknowledging I am on Garigal Land

[10:08 am] Ellen Skladzien

apologies I was having connectivity problems this morning.

[10:08 am] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Good Morning from Kaurna Land. Having audio issues so cant hear. Just working through it

[10:10 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Bob Buckley Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4) acknowledging from Ngunnawal country

[10:13 am] Maeve Kennedy

Best wishes Mary, it will be a big loss for the sector.

[10:13 am] Bill Gye

OMG Mary, you are amazing, I did not know you are leaving, I hope we can keep some connection.

[10:19 am] Bill Gye

The great damage those scammers do is to trust generally both in across the scheme ... terrible

[10:25 am] Bill Gye

Thanks Lisa

[10:27 am] Maeve Kennedy

Jamie, can I check with sharing this presentation - we have an advisory group made up of reps from our member organisations. Is this something that could be shared with them? As an internal advisory mechanism

[10:28 am] Maeve Kennedy

Thanks Jamie

[10:31 am] Simon Burchill

Looking forward to getting access to the sand-pit.

[10:33 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I'm keen to see the design objectives for the new system. Can we get access to the goals and how they will be tested/validated?

[10:35 am] Lowe, Jamie

Maeve Kennedy

Jamie, can I check with sharing this presentation - we have an advisory group made up of reps from our member organisations. Is this something that could be shared with them? As an internal advisory mechanism

Yes you can Maeve. OK to share internally

[10:41 am] Simon Burchill

Can we please look to using the Participant Engagement Panel more openly for recruitment and activity design? This would be a great way to build-in co-design here and elsewhere.

[10:46 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

What happens when there are no suitable services to contact?

[10:47 am] Simon Burchill

This is good, but what I'd really like to see are the parts that inform plan creation. What information is input and how the calculations are done.

[10:49 am] O'BRIEN, Garth

Simon Burchill

This is good, but what I'd really like to see are the parts that inform plan creation. What information is input and how the calculations are done.

Understand - it's definitely one I'm keen to bring back. Timing was the challenge for today - plan creation is midway through build/test, so couldn't be demoed today.

[10:50 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Does the "funded supports" go through the goals to ensure each is adequately supported?

[10:52 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Does the system compile a progress report for checkins? Does it check expenditure against goals? If not, why not?

[10:53 am] O'BRIEN, Garth

Bob Buckley

Does the system compile a progress report for checkins? Does it check expenditure against goals? If not, why not?

It does. We can show that as part of a checkins demo in a future session.

[10:53 am] Simon Burchill

I think the system needs to allow William to validate the accuracy and appropriateness of any notes made about him and the conversation.

[10:54 am] Mary Mallett

interested in the risk assessment area and also how this new system records whether the person has an advocate (which couldn't be done in the old system)

[10:55 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

From the outset, I've been asking for the system to properly collect diagnostic and assessment information. How has this been improved?

[10:56 am] Mary Sayers

I think it would be good to know what stats you can get from the system such as for children they are encouraged to participate in mainstream community supports and education

[10:56 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Will there still be TSPs? Will they be visible?

[10:59 am] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Jamie: I did not receive this session's digital package. Perhaps Ross did, but I did not. Thanks.
Enter

[11:00 am] Lowe, Jamie

Wright, Matthew and Haddad, Caitlin can one of you send the pack to Mary?

[11:01 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Maybe adults need review when things change, but children may need frequent review. Are both approaches needed depending on the individual?

[11:01 am] Ellen Skladzien

Jamie- in future can all of the papers please be attached to the invite? Gets confusing when there are separate emails but no one place to get all the papers.

[11:02 am] Callaghan, Liz

they are all attached Ellen, in a zipped file

[11:02 am] Ellen Skladzien

Sorry- not showing up on mine- I just have 3 attachments (but maybe an IT issue on my side).

[11:03 am] Mary Mallett

Same for me, I have had to find them all in different emails, cannot see a zip file with all of them

[11:03 am] Jean Cotchin

Ellen it's the same for me too

[11:04 am] Callaghan, Liz

I have emailed to you Ellen Skladzien, and will email you Jean Cotchin

[11:04 am] Ellen Skladzien

No worries Liz- just for next time 😊

[11:08 am] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

Correct Simon Burchill as the CRPD committee noted to Australia in 2019, disability is not a disease.

[11:10 am] Lowe, Jamie

Simon Burchill responsibility for the PEP has now moved to my team. Liz Callaghan's first step has been to look at how and when we have used PEP and how we can improve its use.

[11:11 am] Jean Cotchin

Agree Ellen - and people are used to thinking in 12 month budget terms

[11:11 am] Callaghan, Liz

Lowe, Jamie

Simon Burchill responsibility for the PEP has now moved to my team. Liz Callaghan's first step has been to look at how and when we have used PEP and how we can improve its use.

Yes Simon Burchill be assured we will be acting on the deed asap to ensure things change in the future

[11:12 am] Ellen Skladzien

I think you need to do more testing with us around the communication on this as well.

[11:13 am] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

12 months is what most Participants understand.

[11:14 am] Ellen Skladzien

example- is in slide 23- includes a change to "eligibility reassessment"

[11:14 am] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

"flexibility coming out of co-design"? So it's co-design with conditions as to the ultimate result.

[11:15 am] Simon Burchill

It would also help if participants are employed in some system design positions.

[11:15 am] Ellen Skladzien

that does not seem to be a required assumption for making the tech changes

[11:15 am] Ellen Skladzien

some of the slides suggest changes to policy

[11:21 am] O'BRIEN, Garth

Ellen Skladzien

some of the slides suggest changes to policy

Noted. not the intent - we will start to describe things with more than two words. Apologies for the confusion.

[11:22 am] Mary Sayers

Have patchy internet will be back online after the break

[11:24 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

DRCOs might be considered stakeholders or stakeholder voices.

Maybe ask a basic question - does/can one booklet meet all the needs? It seems to me there are different audiences that deserve different booklets each with relevant information.

[11:27 am] Simon Burchill

Are you also re-doing the self-management booklet?

[11:27 am] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

What about autism, DD andf GDD?

[11:28 am] Simon Burchill

We are PEP but have not been approached

[11:29 am] Jean Cotchin

Will you consult with us on the website changes also? EAC has heard a lot of excellent suggesstions for comms changes like these over the years and would be keen to make sure our community get heard

[11:29 am] Jean Cotchin

Thanks!

[11:30 am] Jean Cotchin

Yes please 😊

[11:30 am] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

Would you be able to share the data/statistics from the participant testing surveys?

[11:56 am] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

Hi everyone, I will in a budget meeting for 30 minutes and back approx. 1230pm

[12:08 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Is it possible to increase the size of the content on screen?

[12:08 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

It would be good to know how long "consent" takes. And how close to hearing

[12:10 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Nice to know if there are trends regarding the reasons for "resolving - satisfied, no appetite for the next step?

[12:10 pm] Mary Sayers

Sorry I missed the start and your start wanted to check over the last year % cases under 25 years and those under 8 years

[12:11 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Does the settled indicate 'satisfactory' or outright exhaustion of participants?

[12:14 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Why wasn't the data collect at internal review?

[12:14 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Is that data in the quarterly report?

[12:15 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Jamie does that mean we can share with our internal members?

[12:18 pm] Lowe, Jamie

Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Jamie does that mean we can share with our internal members?

Jenny Karavolos (Guest) I will seek Matt's clear instruction on that

[12:19 pm] Simon Burchill

What is happening with details of outcomes? are they being communicated to planners and reviewers?

[12:21 pm] Jean Cotchin

That's interesting too about decrease in s100's - would be keen to see your data on that, and theories too thanks

[12:22 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Delaying cases is a standard NDIS tactic. It seems to be aimed at wearing people down. And it's usually an implicit win for the Agency.

[12:23 pm] Simon Burchill

I'm surprised pre AAT mediation has been abandoned

[12:24 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Hi Matthew - what is the timeline for introducing the circuit breaker?

[12:28 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Thank you

[12:33 pm] Jean Cotchin

EAC is in the process of organising one (or more) public forums on all things AAT - give our communities opportunity to be heard on their experiences, share ideas for improvements, that we would hope would help inform next steps - and also offer the Minister and NDIA opportunity to explain what has been happening behind the scenes

[12:34 pm] Jean Cotchin

In addition to inviting feedback via our website

[12:35 pm] Jean Cotchin

Thanks Matt

[12:35 pm] Mary Sayers

This is such a great conversation thank you Matt for the transparency and honesty

[12:38 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Then they complain about the informal help that people get.

[12:39 pm] Jean Cotchin

It's around 70% or more I think Mary, people with no advocacy help

[12:39 pm] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

Too right Mary Mallett re advocacy

[12:39 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Many thanks

[12:39 pm] Robbi Williams

Thanks Matt, very helpful

[12:39 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I thank you too.

[12:39 pm] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

And you're doing a great Matt thanks!

[12:41 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Hi Jamie, Apologies if I missed it and if not gentle reminder - can we share Matt's slide with internal members?

[12:41 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Is anything being done about model litigant conduct?

[12:42 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

The AAT already insists on a ADR process.

[12:45 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Maybe it's a problem for the AAT to solve. Could the AAT fix its processes to better address the needs of people with disability?

[12:45 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Thanks Jamie and Matt

[12:46 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I'd like to talk offline.

[12:46 pm] Jean Cotchin

What David is saying is something EAC (and all of us I'm sure) hear alllll the time - many people, especially those with the greatest needs for support - don't ever even try for a s100, or AAT - so I think maybe what David wants to know (and everyone) is how are the NDIA looking into the causes of the needs for reviews, and how can it be prevented - how can people get what they need basically

[1:35 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

White male on front cover ... as usual! :(

[1:39 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Sound is very echo-ey. Would you kindly slow your speech? Thank you

[1:41 pm] Simon Burchill

Are we primarily talking about participants, support coordinators, providers?

[1:43 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

Are you interested in occasions where the Agency is engaged in fraud? For example, attempts to mislead or misinform the AAT, or the Minister.

[1:48 pm] Simon Burchill

I worry about a lack of resources for the commission. I hope there are adequate resources to respond to fraud and corruption in a timely manner.

[1:50 pm] Ellen Skladzien

I would be interested in your views around the AFR article which tried to link the issue of unregistered providers to fraud. It has created concern amongst some that the NDIA could use the fraud issue to reduce choice and control for participants around use of unregistered providers. Not saying that this is the intent- but just wondering if you have any comments on this issue.

[1:52 pm] Bill Gye

The NDIA must also take some blame for creating an environment where non-compliance can sprout. The NDIS is a very financially stressful environment for providers of quality (unless they gigify their workforce, have little or no internal quality assurance infrastructure in their organisation, etc.), in this atmosphere even the best providers are pushed towards cutting corners. We need a fresh looking at the whole NDIS radical neo-liberal "business model".

[1:55 pm] Ellen Skladzien

Thanks!

[1:55 pm] Simon Burchill

There is a huge bottleneck with getting registration applications through

[1:55 pm] Ellen Skladzien

link to the article for any that didnt see it: [Calls to close NDIS loophole to weed out 'crooks and cheats' \(afr.com\)](#)

Calls to close NDIS loophole to weed out 'crooks and cheats'

Bill Shorten has asked for a review of the \$30 billion disability scheme that has allowed 123,000 providers to remain unregistered and unregulated.

[1:56 pm] Jean Cotchin

Is there any possibility of proactive outreach to participants and or their advocates to help identify things that your systems might not capture easily?

[1:57 pm] Bill Gye

Ellen Skladzien

link to the article for any that didnt see it: Calls to close NDIS loophole to weed out 'crooks and cheats' (afr.com)

Behind a pay wall 😞

[1:57 pm] Ellen Skladzien

oh sorry

[1:58 pm] Jean Cotchin

Haha! Thanks. Can we set up a meeting?

[2:00 pm] Carolyn Hodge

Great point David Murray - thanks

[2:03 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Planner education also required to achieve consistency - eg: purchasing of mobile phones and laptops

[2:11 pm] Carolyn Hodge

can you please put in presentation view?

[2:11 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Sorry, is it possible to zoom in? Thanks you

[2:13 pm] Bill Gye

Great dashboards, and they allow views that allow queries to arise about issues that might not have been so visible. Certainly for me in relation to the dashboard on autism it immediately highlighted why is it the case that 91% of participants in this cohort are under 25? What's happening here?

[2:17 pm] Jean Cotchin

Well said Mary

[2:20 pm] Bill Gye

Is that you Bob speaking up for the white males?

[2:21 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Yes agree Ellen

[2:21 pm] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

Excellent pointy Ellen Skladzien

[2:21 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

To Mary Sayer: As an aside to the purpose of this chat all the very best for your future endeavours and thanks for your active and considered leadership contribution in various forums and in the community

[2:22 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

Could there be option to open subset links for more details/information stats for example disability specific types and not discriminate one disability type

[2:22 pm] Simon Burchill

I think Participant Experience is too broad a category. Would like to see Outcomes and Satisfaction reported seperately.

[2:24 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I'm not sure I understand the age band graph. What is being portrayed?

[2:26 pm] Jean Cotchin

Even if not - just really more useable and bigger spreadsheets would be a great start

[2:31 pm] Bill Gye

Thanks Robbie as always visionary and also without this info (that you pointed to) we are just endlessly reporting on input and processing measures.

[2:32 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I'm happy to get the data in CSV format (or similar). I'm keen to see secondary disability information ... and more on outcomes. Also, what happens for children with DD and GDD as they get older. What are their education outcomes - this is key for autistic participants at this stage.

[2:33 pm] Jean Cotchin

Great point Mary - it would be nice to be able to reference external factors too (ie if timelines during COVID it's obviously important to recognise how life changed for everyone and how it changed more specifically for participants etc)

[2:34 pm] Jean Cotchin

Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

I'm happy to get the data in CSV format (or similar). I'm keen to see secondary disability information ... and more on outcomes. Also, what happens for children with DD and GDD as they get older. What are their education outcomes - this is key for autistic participants at this stage.

Me too Bob, esp because it seems like majority of PWD have more than one diagnosis

[2:34 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

It is likely autistic adults are a completely different population from the <25 yo. This isn't really reflected here.

[2:34 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

To Mary's point agree important spend some time identifying what are the levers should be measuring as outcomes

[2:35 pm] Maeve Kennedy

From Inclusion Australia's perspective, this would be people with an intellectual disability

[2:36 pm] Mary Sayers

I agree Intellectual disability but broken down by those with dual diagnosis

[2:36 pm] Simon Burchill

Are you prepared to fund engagement activities to provide answers to these questions? We can organise meetings and forums as required.

[2:36 pm] Jean Cotchin

yes please to CSVs. Feel a little worried about not releasing all disabilities at the same time

[2:36 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Mary S: On behalf of AFDO, I would add our thanks to others, for your tremendous work in this sector and to wish you all the very best for your journey ahead.

[2:38 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Mary Sayers

I agree Intellectual disability but broken down by those with dual diagnosis

Agree Mary

[2:41 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Maybe we can also get NDS to publicly share what they capture regarding NDIS providers

[2:41 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Third behind early childhood

[2:42 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Thank you Jamie

[2:42 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Yes we would be very interested in this, thank you

[2:42 pm] Simon Burchill

And how it can be used by the Agency to improve practice.

[2:42 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

thats great Jamie - a workshop

[2:42 pm] Mary - AFDO (Guest)

Great presentation Maathu! Thank you.

[2:43 pm] Robbi Williams

Thanks heaps Maathu

[2:43 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

The autism dashboard does not show that 6% of school-age children in Vic are autistic (primary) NDIS participants, 5% in SA and 3% nationally. These are important figures. Things like this should be included.

[2:50 pm] Simon Burchill

And PEP!

[2:53 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

The autism community sought a National Autism Strategy at the last election because the autism community felt excluded from much of the planning in the disability sector. This still applies to Home & Living and Supported Decision Making. What are these projects doing to address our concerns? What is the contribution from these areas, and the Agency more generally, to the National Autism Strategy?

[2:57 pm] Ellen Skladzien

I think it is important that the IGAP is in the early stages of development. There will be many more opportunities

[2:58 pm] Robbi Williams

apologies folks. I dropped out for a bit there because I lost signal

[2:59 pm] Ellen Skladzien

I think we need to be fair to Sam- that they have been trying to engage quite broadly

[3:00 pm] Ellen Skladzien

The DRCO members on the IGAP steering group will also be feeding back to the DRCO group at our meeting on 8 September- and are a way of providing connection with the broader group as well.

[3:01 pm] Ellen Skladzien

Thanks Mary- agree with your points as well.

[3:03 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

consultancy

[3:04 pm] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

Interesting Mary - given that the NDIS is one part of Australia's commitment to implementing the CRPD...

[3:04 pm] Frances Quan Farrant |Women With Disabilites Australia

and of course group homes are not compliant with the CRPD..

[3:06 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

We have had this issue raised before for a number of disability representatives in these forums and not just autism - root cause appears to be that some of us are unclear of the channels that exist particularly if are group that recently invited to these forums and likely because so much is activity is going on. It appears to be clearer to some than others who to contribute/ channel into . Its also hard to communicate back to our communities that there has been representations for our community if we are not aware . I have suggested before of undertaking a stakeholder mapping exercise so I humbly raise that again (while recognising there is many competing activities). Jen K Australian Autism Alliance

[3:09 pm] Ellen Skladzien

Thank you for all your work on co-design Sam and Joshua. Really appreciate the efforts you have been making to work with all of us and to change direction at times based on feedback from the sector.

[3:09 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Liz Thank you for your comemnts . Just to add dont think its an action just on the NDIS

[3:11 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Fantastic scarf Callaghan, Liz

[3:11 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Thanks Sam and Josh for all your work!

[3:11 pm] Robbi Williams

Thanks Sam and Joshua

[3:11 pm] Bill Gye

Thanks Sam and Joshua

[3:12 pm] Callaghan, Liz

Maeve Kennedy

Fantastic scarf Callaghan, Liz

Minus 18

[3:13 pm] Jenny Karavolos (Guest)

Loving that there is enhanced sharing of information, open discussion and many opportunities to contribute

[3:14 pm] Bob Buckley - A4 (on Ngunnawal lands)) (Guest)

If I seem over critical, please understand that I want to be constructively critical. I really want a great NDIS. I am optimistic that it will happen.

[3:14 pm] Leanne Beagley (Guest)

Thank you very much for all your commitment to engagement

[3:15 pm] Mary Sayers

Thanks everyone 😊

[3:15 pm] Maeve Kennedy

Many thanks all

[3:15 pm] Jean Cotchin

A happy last day to Mary Sayers - we'll all miss you very much!

[3:15 pm] Simon Burchill

Can we review TOR?

[3:15 pm] Bill Gye

Thanks for this opportunity and the work that has gone into it.

[3:15 pm] Mary Sayers

Jean Cotchin

A happy last day to Mary Sayers - we'll all miss you very much!

Thanks Jean 😊

[3:15 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

all the bet Mary

[3:15 pm] David Murray (Deafblind Australia) (Guest)

Best

[3:16 pm] Carolyn Hodge

I hope the rest of your day is spent celebrating your achievements Mary Sayers



SPEAKER:

Just letting everyone know in the room that the microphones are voice activated. Everything you say will be picked up on the microphone. It is counter to what you normally have.

SPEAKER:

Don't gossip and say nasty things!

SPEAKER:

You don't have to press, it will automatically come on. Which is great because you know how we always forget to put on our mics. But it means if you speak and you don't want it on the microphone, you need to press the button.

SPEAKER:

It is a mute button.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Alright, I think we might commence. Welcome everyone to our second DRCO Forum meeting for the year. Thank you everyone for attending in person and online. I am Liz Callaghan, Branch Manager of co-design and engagement and I'm chairing today's forum in the absence of Jamie Lowe who is on annual leave at the moment.

So, just before we start, just a couple of things to cover off. Obviously, would like to pause for a little minute and acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the Country on which we meet today and their continuing connection to land, sea, and community.

Today, in this room, we are meeting on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. I pay my respects to them and their culture and to Elders past, present, and emerging and I would like to acknowledge that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders here today.

I would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to people with disability, who are the reason the NDIS was built.

Very quickly, some housekeeping. It is a hybrid event. This is the second or third time we have done it. I think we are across everything we need to be. For those on Teams, if you could place your device on mute and turn your video off unless you are speaking, this will help to avoid any background noise and help with the internet connection.

For us in person, we just went through the microphones. Remember, if you want to say something off-line, keep your hand on the mic. All the mics are voice activated and on. Teams will automatically focus on the person speaking and bring them into view. So, let us know if you have got any problems. We have the tech going as we go on. Put it in the chat and we will pick that up.

If you are unable to use the chat, please click the raise your hand button on Teams. We have got Kate in the room again today, who is the hybrid between questions that are raised on Teams and will bring them into the room. Thank you, Kate.

For those in the room, the toilets are located towards the end of the corridor on your right. I think we have all been here enough times to know where those things are.

In case of an emergency, use the fire exit located in the corridor immediately to your left.

If you need anything during the meeting, please reach out to Caitlin, who can assist you. And we do have captioning for this meeting and the URL to the live captions will be posted in the chat.

So, I think we might skip the rollcall. We will be able to see who is online, I think. Just for those online, we can see you're online, but we might just quickly go around in the room because the video doesn't show who is here too clearly.

We will start with Bill. Just very quickly.

SPEAKER:

Bill Guy from Community Mental Health Australia.

SPEAKER:

Niha from National Ethnic Disability Alliance.

SPEAKER:

Katherine from Inclusion Australia.

SPEAKER:



Caitlin from the National Disability Insurance Agency.

SPEAKER:
Caitlin Hannah from National Disability Insurance Agency.

SPEAKER:
Lisa Studdert from the NDIA.

SPEAKER:
Liz Callaghan NDIA.

SPEAKER:
Good morning, Martin.

SPEAKER:
Robbi Williams.

SPEAKER:
Simon Birchall from physical disabilities or just go.

SPEAKER:
Ross Joyce from AFTA.

SPEAKER:
(Inaudible)

LIZ CALLAGHAN:
Great. Thank you. We do have an action log, which I think we will get you once we have had a session with Martin because I know he is... And follow up the agenda items. We will do that after we have heard some comments from Martin.

It is Martin's last day at the agency. I am really grateful, Martin, that you have come here. It is nice to be in person with you. We have got a poltergeist in the microphone, it is moving on its own. It is a bit scary.

But we are very glad to have you here and we would like to just open it up for you to have a bit of a discussion and take questions. That was what we had planned.

So, I might, in the spirit of time, move over to you if that is OK, Martin.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:
Thanks. I think that should be working. It is great to be with you all this morning. Good morning those in the room. Great to be with you. As well as people on Teams.

I think this hybrid meeting format is sort of the way of the world and we are getting better at it, so I hope people feel fully able to be engaged no matter where they are. As Liz said, this is my very last day in the agency.

I quite genuinely feel pleased that it is by the quirk of scheduling, this meeting which was long set happens to be on that day. I think that is quite appropriate and so forth that we are talking with you as the senior representatives of people with disability, participants on that last day. I very well remember the sort of equivalent meeting back in November 2019.

When we were all in the same room because that is the way we did it then. I think a bit further down the other end of this facility. And that was in the first few weeks of starting, so there is a nice sort of open and closing to that.

I'm going to make a few comments, short-term and looking forward. But as always, I'm looking forward to the questions and discussions you may have. Very pleased to have Lisa here with me. Now to some of you I am sure. Doctor Lisa Studdert will be taking over as acting chief executive tomorrow. It is tomorrow, you can call her on Saturday.

(Laughter)

Lisa will do a fantastic job. But there is a recruitment process starting ASAP. The board met yesterday, got that underway. If anyone wants to put their hand up, you are welcome.



More... I mean that sort of half jokingly, but seriously. Also importantly, if you know of people that you think are appropriate, who might not jump out, might not be on lists, but should be, very soon there will be a sort of, the recruiter and the channel for doing that.

It is, the minister has been quite firm and open on the view that this is genuinely an open recruitment process. And he and the board want to see the best possible candidate.

So, you may well have ideas or thoughts or roles to play in that. Speaking of the government update, I would say you all know Mr Shorten well. You have engaged with him over a number of days. He has started an active way and visited the agency in multiple locations already. Spoken with staff across the country and I'm sure he will continue to do that. As well is continuing to engage directly with participants, the sector, providers, and so forth.

I think this biggest single thing he has committed to out of the election commitments was the Review, capital-R Review of the scheme. It is described as a review of the design, operations, and sustainability of the scheme. Design, operations, and sustainability. Broadly cast.

That will be a bringing forward of the Review that was always committed to for 2023 and the bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and the states, starting that ASAP. DSS is preparing advice on that. Clearly setting the terms of reference will be very important. Settling how it is done. Those are matters for government in terms of Productivity Commission as was original or not.

Regardless of whether it is Productivity Commission or separate, who are the associate commissioners if it is to be Productivity Commission or the eminent persons panel if it is to be done separately.

You will have views on that, I am sure you will make those known. But that is really sought to be put in place ASAP, so that it is underway well and truly before the end of the calendar year.

I think that is a fantastic and necessary thing at this point in time. Today is also the nine years since the scheme started. There are some people who have been working in the agency or the precursors for 10 years now.

Of course, I know many of you have been involved at least that long in the scheme and its precursors.

The other thing I was just going to mention, we were talking about the agenda today. There are some great sessions on that. The system improvements for the CRM business operating system, we will have an update on that. I don't promise that a computer system solves everything, but, gee, it goes a long way. Having a fit for purpose system with case management functionality is super important. Very pleased that we are going to be launching that before the end of this year, probably starting in Tasmania as a trial or first rollout site. Before moving nationally very quickly after that.

I know there have been good discussions about partnerships in the community this morning, and we will keep on working on that. We have the balance between the scheme and contracts finishing next year, and the desire for all parties that all LAC services and early childhood services are done and getting the balance right.

Please continue to lean into that, and getting back into the conceptions of the balance of roles and responsibilities in the scheme. The co-design work, Sam Bennett will talk about that. There has some really good progress that has been made.

I think that Sam will use one of the decks, or they will certainly circulate it, a very good presentation that was given at the last meeting. It really sets out the challenges of what are the actual decisions that we make against the Act and the information that is required for that and how do we do it?

I know that some of you in this room were at the last meeting, and there is really good work being done there. There have been things getting done in the co-design project and all the projects. It's getting that balance, isn't it, between moving at the appropriate pace to genuinely do co-design while maintaining that sense of urgency that comes with dissatisfaction with the status quo that we all share.

It is really about the tortoise winning the race over the hare, so go tortoise. You would have seen the increase in the disability support work in the real and large Fair Work Commission award wage decision passed on.

You have seen other prices frozen, subject to further work particularly in therapy, support coordination, and time management. You have seen the payment to large attendant care providers reflecting costs in the prior year of 21-22. Communications and that went out this week.

Pricing is another one of those tension points, where on the one hand we are very conscious of the feedback that we get from you, directly from participants around the dissatisfaction with the NDIS premiums, and on the other hand, providers are saying that the prices are not sufficient and should be higher.



There is a real tension there between different views, evidence, values, and finding a steering path to do that. Those are just some of the tensions that the scheme is comprised of.

Those are the things that I wanted to talk about that are currently underway and that is important. Going forward over the next few months. Reflecting a little bit on the almost 3 years that I have been in the job, as I was saying with Ross beforehand, with fire, flood, and plague as well as the scheme itself, it has been quite extraordinary what we have all dealt with.

The scheme has almost doubled in that time alone in terms of the number of participants. There is no doubt, or no doubt in my mind, that huge improvements have been made, a huge difference has been made in people's lives, tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people are receiving benefits and huge change has been made.

That reflects the tremendous efforts of the staff and I really have tried to care for the staff of the agency knowing that the very difficult job many of them do. We talk about the scheme and we talk about the policy, and we talk about the Act, sustainability, and the macro. I have tried never to forget that the scheme is about a relatively junior public service in the hierarchy, like the APS 4 or 5 in the public service language.

A regional town having difficult conversations with participants and their families and how the scheme works and how it should work. That's not an easy job to do, and overall, our staff brings tremendous commitment and passion to that.

The thing that I will go away thinking about that we, together, have not really settled still after 9 years, is the fundamental questions around who is the scheme for, what does it provide, and how do we decide that?

This scheme is so idealistic, so brave in its conception. Society would attempt to define, not define, attempt to provide support on what was individually reasonable and necessary for that person. We just step back from the day-to-day, but that is so radically different from the way social services are normally defined, rationed, provided.

It's incredible for Australian society to do disability in that way. Guess what? It's really, really hard. We are trying to do that in a system that is incredibly qualitative in its decision-making. To the extent, this is an outrage, to the extent that the Federal Court has held that reasonable people can disagree on what is a reasonable and necessary support.

As I joke, that's wonderful for lawyers. It keeps them very busy. It's really bad for an agency trying to deliver a fair and equitable scheme and at the end of the day, I think it's really bad for participants because it sets a level of disagreement and dispute even when everyone is acting reasonably.

Everyone being flawed humans, we don't act reasonably all the time. Even if we were, we would have a level of disagreement. Then, you are trying to do it at a volume that is massive. We make over 15,000 decisions affecting participants and their plans every week. These decisions are made by over 1000 different people in over 100 different locations.

That is when they are actually at a location and not just from home. That just adds to this complexity of qualitative and subjective decision-making. We have to find a way forward on that.

The co-design project is a really key part of that. I think, and I said this at the DRM meeting two weeks ago to the Ministers, I think governments need to step up and do section 35 rules, the Act provides under section 30 for capital-R Rules. No such rules have been made.

We have a very subjective, qualitative, and short framework direct to the agency in terms of making operational guidelines and making decisions and those capital-R Rules that reflect the will of government, the will of the people, have not been made. I would urge, as I did tell the ministers that you also turn your mind to capital-R Rules around what is the expectation around SDA living alone in a two-bedroom apartment and so on and so on.

All of the cases that we see that level of disagreement and even disputation. I think it is a big ask for the agency and my APS 5 in Bendigo all having to decide that with the operational guidelines that I have set in the absence of capital-R Rules.

I hope that is useful and of interest as we go forward. The big Review is a chance to open some of those issues and move us forward. I remain, as I said, tremendously proud and excited about what Australia has attempted to do in the scheme. It is radical when you think back and see what Australia can do.

It's only been 9 years. Medicare was extremely controversial, extremely disputed. Governments went into elections trying to get rid of it, but you can't get rid of it now. It's just the way that Australian society works. The NDIS will become part of the fabric in the way that Australian society works. We are not there yet, but in 9 years, perhaps.



I leave with a complete sense of gratitude for the opportunity to have done this job. It's made me a better person, leader, and manager. Extremely grateful for the opportunities, learnings that this job afforded me in this time and, clearly, I wish the participants first and foremost, the scheme itself, the agency, all carers and representatives and advocates, all the very best for the future.

I will stop there, that's more than enough for me now and as I said, very keen to have questions, comments, or reflections. We have scheduled a bit of time, so thank you.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Martin. You can direct the questions.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

Bill?

BILL GYE:

Thank you so much for your contribution, and it was an interesting 3 years to do this work in. As you move out of the role, and maybe also moving out of any limitations that the diplomacy of your role requires...

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

I don't know if I've been particularly diplomatic!

(Laughter)

BILL GYE:

I guess the question is, not necessarily now because it's too much of an ask, to ask you to reflect upon your experience and take the opportunity to feedback from your new position of independence outside on how the scheme can be improved.

The mindset that I have there is what you would have done different which is now baked in, but something that could or should be improved upon? I don't expect you to answer that right now, just putting a question at the end we would really appreciate your input in the coming weeks.

Like if you write your biography or a book or something.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

Thank you Bill, I certainly have a few notes jotted down so I might make a personal, citizens submission to the Review. (Laughs)

SPEAKER:

Thank you Martin and for the work you have done over the last three years. As we were discussing before, what a ! of things you have bought into. Let alone with the scheme. You have presided over getting the scheme in full rollout.

I think as I said to you, there are a number of things that were literally kicked down the road to deal with in terms of complexity. Because there is a big focus on getting numbers through the door and reaching full scheme rollout. I think you did walk in during a challenging time without all the stuff on top of it. The only thing we didn't have was a pestilence.

It was a challenging time for us all to work through that. The other side, when you mentioned the scheme, nine years rollout today, my reflection on that is, it has taken nine years for us to and as of today, we are actually getting some money towards providing our advice. To the agency and to the NDIS.

You know, and obviously, yes, there is ILC funding, but that is very much project funding. Thank you very much to yourself and the team were actually taking that on board and putting that in.

After nine years, we actually get paid for some of the many, many, many hours everyone has put into that. I have only been doing it for six years, but there has been a lot of work put in by everybody around the table and online and others that might not be here. Thank you for that recognition from yourself and the team.

Our contributions are important. We are all coming at it from the right place, along with the agency as well, in trying to get the best scheme you possibly can. For people with disability and their families across Australia. I just wanted to highlight that and say, it might have taken us nine years, but thank you.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

Is anyone online? I can't see any of the little hands? Which is fine.



LIZ CALLAGHAN:
OK. Are there any...

SPEAKER:
Mary. Just another little reflection. Many of us around the room and online were involved as the scheme has been developed. As the Productivity Commission went around the country twice, and I supported people with intellectual disability and held back to sit and tell the Productivity Commission what their lives are like and what should be better.

For many of those people now, their lives are better. But there is still, they are not perfect yet. There is still work to be done, but the scheme has made and is making a huge difference to people's lives and we will of course keep shifting the goalposts, don't we?

MARTIN HOFFMAN:
We should.

SPEAKER:
We have to because that is what advocates have to do. We focus on the bit that still needs to be done. So, we take for granted actually. Because we just expect that this huge, new, brave scheme as you described, ambitious scheme which came about because people with disability in every state and territory and much worse in some than others though, were being appallingly discriminated against.

And people get left on waiting lists for years and years and years and nothing happening for them. And no services being provided. So, it is not that we, we haven't forgotten the shift that's been made and the huge difference it makes. It is just that it is not our job.

It is not our job to pat you or agency staff or anybody on the back and say, "Fantastic, fantastic." We don't have time to do that, there are too many things to fix. We all just focus on the next thing and the next thing and the next thing about how do we continue to make systems better for people. And for all of us, it is not just the NDIS, it is all the other systems. It is everything.

We are all paying attention at the same time to education and health and justice and transport and benefits. Everything, everything is all important because they other things, all put together, is what makes a person's life work. It is not just the NDIS, it is actually how every government system, federal and state, treats and works with people with disability. For us, the NDIS is just a bit of the picture.

So, in our minds, we all have this kind of mind map. The NDIS falls a particular hole, but it is not the whole thing. Sometimes, I am sure, I'm sure we come across as terribly ungrateful and rude and abrupt.

And we hear polite public servants say to us, "Thank you for your advice," or whatever. (Laughs) And we haven't even got time for the polite bit because we have to go onto the next system, the next thing, and we have to keep all that going at the same time.

So, we don't set out to be terribly rude and obnoxious and obstructive. We are like that at times. Individually and collectively. And partly, it is our job to do that.

And also, I think all of us hold in our hearts and somewhere on our shoulders, all the people with disability that we know, family members, friends, people that we have worked with, who died along the way actually and didn't survive to see this scheme.

People who advocated for 20, 30, 40, 50 years for Australia to do better for people with disability. I'm sure all of us know who some of those people were and they didn't get to see the scheme come into being.

They sit on our shoulders and drive us forward as well. As well as doing better for the children that are, you know, born every day that will need this scheme. So, thanks Martin for your three years of contribution to the scheme.

We have enjoyed the robust discussions. I think. And it's, it's just... Something that is part of this patchwork of what is needed to allow people with disability to live full, included lives.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:
I think, I saw Robbi's hand on the screen but you are right here.

ROBBI WILLIAMS:
That's right.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:
Multiple locations. He has got his hand up. And then Mary.



ROBBI WILLIAMS:

Making full use of the technology available to us. My eulogy is short, thank you and good luck. I recognise the challenges you talked about and people can agree to disagree on reasonable and necessary, it is a bit of a bombshell.

I'm thinking around stuff that purple orange is talking about with (inaudible) around something that I thought I had that in New Zealand when I was involved in mental health reform. Which essentially encountered similar issues to the NDIS, albeit on a much smaller scale.

But it was the scale I think. I think one of the things that we learned, when a system presents itself or a set of issues present themselves as being really complex. Sometimes, while one seeks complex solutions, actually that doesn't end up happening. Counterintuitively, sometimes pursuing simplicity can be a way to navigate through complexity.

I guess, it is really to invite any comments you might have, Martin, around, are there ways in which, given some of the challenges that lie before the scheme now, are there ways in which the scheme could navigate through some of the difficulties by leaning into the idea of simplicity?

I know the idea of co-design, there is a very simple idea behind co-design. Which is that people who have got a stake in the system can contribute to produce a better system for the designers itself. That is a simple idea, there is a lot of truth in it. And all the other things alongside it.

One of the things I am aware of, before the UK became a complete basket case around social services, when I was visiting some of the lead authorities involved with social care 15 years ago, one of the things I was aware of that in running a pathway to support people to connect to the essential supports that they needed, there was a focus on simplicity.

Around trying to ask with as few questions as possible, using that to establish the person's situation sufficient to land a draft budget. From there, the person that is able to develop some intentionality, some priorities, things ever like to work on for themselves and their family, then present that back to the funder for consideration and sign off so they can press on with things.

Do you think it's a folly to think about things like simplicity for a scheme like the NDIS?

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

Thanks, Robbi. No, I don't. And the staff all know that I often talk about simplistic solutions are designed or fail, but simple solutions, supposedly Einstein said that he would give anything for simplicity that lies on the far side of complexity.

You have to get to the complexity to get to the simplicity. I think that is right, that the scheme as we operate it today, there is a level of complexity in the decision-making that we expect of our staff. It is just impossible.

No matter how hard they were, no matter how good the management team it is, it is just impossible to make the level of complexity of decisions that we expect in the way a plan is constructed. To the level of what is the design of the bathroom that the home mods will approve or not approve?

In terms of the layout of the shower versus the toilet versus the vanity or whatever. On and on, the sort of, this many hours of this therapy on top of this many hours of that therapy, et cetera, et cetera.

It is just impossible at that level of detail to do it, either efficiently or fairly or quickly. And yet, that is what we ask of them. So, it takes this tremendous leap of faith and togetherness and co-design in order to say, we can all conceive of a system where an overall budget, draft budget, tentative budget, whatever, number, is settled on. And then planning can start, with or without the agency being involved in those final decisions, more potentially with good support coordinators, with the family, depending on the circumstances. With carers, et cetera.

It takes that leap of faith that that overall budget figure is going to be reasonable and necessary. And it's not going to disadvantage people. Which is why last year, we founded, because of the, we didn't have the compact or the agreement or the faith, that you could give up line by line approval in case the total wasn't big enough.

So, we absolutely have to get to the simplicity of an overall budget. That therefore does not require decision-making by a public servant. As I spoke in some of the hearings last year about Phoebe Sundays, it is ridiculous that my staff decides how much support she will get on a Sunday as opposed to a Wednesday. Because sometimes, a Sunday is one half times as costly as a Wednesday. And so forth. Let the family decide the hours of care that best suit their family circumstances and so forth.



That requires us to get to that leap of faith together. It is not just faith, there is science to it. You can work out, you can do the TSPs, you can look at them with different experts in different cohorts and different types of disability and come to a judgement.

But that is absolutely where the scheme has to get to. Or it will just flounder. In my team, we have good operational managers. I think it is extraordinary given the task we have set ourselves, the level of actual performance in terms of against time and against standard, that we actually achieve given the complexity of our task.

I talk to my colleagues running large private sector organisations and the whole thrust of business, be it in telcos, and electricity companies, in any large customer service organisation, is to radically reduce the number of products. Telstra has gone from 50 mobile plans to sort of four. Origin goes from 20 or 30 different electricity and gas plans down to two or three because you have got to get rid of the complexity to it. I say, "That is really interesting, we have got 520,000 products!"

(Laughter)

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

That is sort of what is expected. Anyway.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Very quickly, there are a couple of others.

ROBBI WILLIAMS:

I think that the scheme was hamstrung by the costs. We have had this conversation with John Walsh in the past and with Sarah. I remain convinced that the best of intentions, when the Commission did their work on the disability care and support, the data that they were able to reach for wasn't data that utilised support. It was data associated with conventional supports.

For people to have a fair go at having participation in terms of their choice and control, that create a profile of individualised supports that I think is very hard for the agency to deliver given the funding.

I know that it has moved, somewhat, but I think the assumptions that have sat behind the scheme's funding has been predicated on conventional supports as opposed to what might actually be required for it to successfully connect to community life.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

I probably would have a view that we are now at a level of funding that, yes, it's an investment. But, any investment, we still need to decide how much to invest in it and we still need to decide that in comparison to the other investments that we face. Or, that you have in front of you including other pressing social needs.

The community needs, other wider social needs. I think pretty much now, when we look at estimates, there is a lot of money and we need to look at how to use it better, how to use it best rather than looking at it as going consistently.

Mary?

MARY SAYERS:

Hi Martin, I'm sorry that I couldn't join you today, I'm in WA visiting family.

When I first met you, I spoke about the 54% of participants aged under 25 at that time, but we really need to look at the developmental aspects happening for children and young people as well as the disability related aspects of their life. I think the agency has done a really good job around research and investment in early childhood and thinking about what is needed in terms of a best practice model.

Yet I despair that the agency has yet to look at the developmental aspects for children above 9 to 25. How do we continue to advocate for children and young people, really need an inclusive life instead of setting them up for a lifetime of segregation and othering.

I remember when you first started, there was a lot of blocks for young people getting on the scheme. A lot of that has been cleared up which is really great, but how do we do it where we have advocacy to make sure that the message and advocacy gets through? We need to look at the developmental aspects that children and young people are at first and not defined by their disability. What got in the way of those discussions in the agency? Certainly, to my mind, there hasn't been a lot of progress.

MARTIN HOFFMAN:



I think that is probably fair. My somewhat controversial answer would be one of the things that the scheme, sector, community needs to think about is the balance between choice and control versus effective and beneficial.

I think the focus on... I would suggest, this might be going to Bill's point about wider perspectives, but the overwhelming focus on choice and control as a mantra for plans, those that swung too far from that direction away from effective and beneficial that the scheme should fund things specifically for children...

Audio lost

(Multiple speakers)

MARTIN HOFFMAN:
Thumbs up? Yes? Good.

I think we need to think collectively together around where the pendulum sits in terms of funding things that are effective and beneficial for the early intervention and developmental aspects of children and young people.

One thing that sticks with me is Jim Mullen from Amaze in Victoria now said to me, "Martin, you keep on talking to me about children don't leave the scheme in the numbers that the model said that they should. Well, stop talking about that for as long as you keep on funding things that you know don't work!"

That's the key answer to your point, Mary. I'm sure principled advocacy for those sorts of things that you and others will continue to provide.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:
Thanks, Martin. Just looking at the time before we wrap up. A couple of things that I wanted to say just to let you know. A couple of us met with people from Dubai this week who are very interested in the scheme, so that a real credit.

I just wanted to ask Katherine McAlpine to say a few words on behalf of all of the DRCOs here today.

KATHERINE McALPINE:
No problem. (Laughs) Martin, Martin, Martin, how are we going to finish this? I remember in one of the first emails you sent me, you described yourself as a sunshine and storm personality. Well, we had fire, flood, and plague.

For the sunshine side, we want to thank you for showing up. You have shown up for the hard conversations, we disagree on a lot of things, but you keep on showing up. We really appreciate that. You are rightfully proud of elevating the role of the IAC and making sure that people have a proper voice.

We appreciate your efforts to get your head around the concept and execution of co-design. When it comes to storms, we know that the biggest storm for you has been personal, that the independent assessments debate and the pandemic all happened while your family was still dealing with the fallout of your loss. We want to acknowledge that it happened and that was something that you were dealing with at that time as well. We certainly wish you all peace and happiness.

I think, learning to respect and listen properly to people with a disability is a real struggle for the community in general. For smart, motivated people like yourself, and like your colleagues, it's a real challenge. It's really critical that all of us without disability, and that goes for people like myself, to be brave enough to really name our internalised ableism, and to be aware of our disproportionate power.

It is our responsibility to acknowledge that, be prepared to share and lose some of that power. This goes for everyone, not just experts in disability either. People with disability and their families are the most creative and skilled problem solvers, they have had to be out of necessity.

We hope that the next step forward, with our clever and skilled and sincere bureaucrats stop fixing problems for people with disability but help them as equals.

We are farewelling you from this chapter. It's been many things, but it's not been boring!

(Laughter)

We know that your talent and experience will propel you to much success. You are a very good operational manager before, as he said. But, we hope that you take forward the rights and contributions of people with disability, not to mention this annoying, maybe even stronger adjectives, that we know as civil society.



This does represent a big chunk of the community. We hope very much that your next adventures have much more sunshine and fewer storms. Please, never ever stop showing up.

We have just the tiniest, chocolate and a card.

(Laughter)

We realised this morning that we should have bought you some bright socks. So, all the very best from all of us, Martin.

(Applause)

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

So, I'm going to leave quickly now and let you get on to the rest of the agenda. Is that what is happening, Liz?

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

That is what is happening. All the best!

MARTIN HOFFMAN:

Thanks, Cheers.

(Multiple speakers)

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you everyone, Liz speaking. That was a very good session.

We will just pick up on the agenda items before we started the session with Martin. We know that there are a number of presentations today, et cetera. We have got some action items. We have an action log that attracts all of the action items. This was distributed to attendees from the stakeholder engagement inbox and a calendar invite earlier this week.

Did everyone get the opportunity to review that? The action log prior to the meeting? Yes? Thank you.

We will move on, if that is OK. For our next agenda item, just a reminder for everybody, if you are speaking, if you could just say your name before you start just to help with the captioners, that would be really beneficial, thank you.

For our next agenda item, I would like to welcome Garth O'Brien who is sitting next to me. Garth is the general manager of participant experience design, to provide us an update on the PACE program of work. I believe we have a presentation. There is lots of nodding, so that will come up momentarily.

Thank you, Garth, just to let you know, to mute yourself, you have to hold it down, but it's voice activated, so you will be fine.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

Garth speaking, thank you for inviting me. I would like to acknowledge the Wurundjuri people as the Traditional Custodians of these lands.

I'm here to talk to you about the participant process and platform improvement program. Thank you for inviting me here to give you an update on the progress, and possibly for people who haven't worked here for much I was going to go through a quick recap over what it is and go into a little bit more detail as to what we are up to and what stage we are up to and also going into a little bit more detail around what is under the hood of some of the design.

The end of the presentation, we have a couple of prompts around what you would like me to come back to work with you on and get updates on in the future as well. So, thank you.

I wasn't planning on going through every slide in the pack. But there is a fair bit of information. The intention is that we will continue to attend this, so it becomes a bit of a build on previous presentations and the like.

If you could skip to slide five please. So, what is the program? The program is really intending to do a couple of things. One of them is around changing our IT system. But that in itself isn't a reason to do something.

Our current systems don't allow us to be able to meet the obligations which we have set for ourselves under the participant service improvement plan and the participant service charter. The new IT system and processes which we are looking to clean up as part of that move are around making it easier for staff and partners to do



their jobs. So, less time fighting with the system, less time fighting to try to understand how a process is supposed to work.

More time being spent on participant experience. So, redirecting that effort which is currently admin and burden of system strain into interactions with people.

Looking at those interactions themselves, just picking up on feedback which we have received over the last 10 years. Around ways in which we could improve those, the experience of people interfacing with us.

And so, slide six is a very high level view of the various components we are looking at as part of the program. I will go into a bit more detail today on the participant journey.

I won't talk about that so much, but it is taking a step back and saying, our internal processes, how do they support a participant in their interactions with the NDIS and more broadly?

The system and tools. This is where I spoke most last time. This is where we are moving from services Australia, SAP CRM system, which we have had for the last six years, never been fit for purpose, to an in-house built service sales system. Which is being managed by ourselves. Not being administered for us by someone else.

Looking at our portals, the participant portal, there will be a new portal which will be spun up as part of the new system. And there will be a provider portal later. At the moment, we have guidelines, Practice Guides, bits of research, and that is a formal bits of information which help people do their job and make decisions.

All of that sort of stuff is being consolidated and built into the system so there is a single source of truth for staff. Increasingly, that knowledge will start to come through our quarters as well so that people who are using the portals, our participants, have access to the same sort of information.

And our correspondence framework. That is one where we have an action and on 11 July, I think the date is, we are meeting with a few of you and the invitation is open to others to talk about how we should be thinking about with the correspondence and thank you to those who are attending that.

This is happening in parallel to co-design. Sam Bennett is coming in after the tea break I think to give you an update on that. The co-design is particularly the IGAPS, for information access and planning co-design, is one where the program which we are building here will eventually pick up those outputs.

What is not in scope for the program is to change the way which we make decisions. To change the information we gather. Or any of that stuff which is within the co-design programs. But we are building the system in a way where it can flexibly respond to the outputs of co-design.

As the information gathering for access and planning co-design gives clarity and guidance to what is the information which we should be asking to support an access decision or support planning, we will pick those new policies up and be able to feed them in with our major system overhaul.

If I could skip us to slide 10 please. The slides which I have skipped over give a bit of the business case as to why the current system we have got doesn't support us to do what we need to do. And how it is quite locked.

In fact, because it is so locked up and the cost and time involved in making any changes, we have quite a fragmented way of doing business. Things are off system. We have shoehorned things into how the system is built, which ultimately leads to bad experience and repeating information. Work getting lost, backlogs, and the like.

The new system is being built in a way where business processes are contained within a package of work. That work is allocated to someone. It has a service level agreement assigned to it.

It is able to, it has the ability to do work item tracking. In the portals, in the participant portal, when an enquiry is lodged, you will be able to see where it is up to. When it is expected to be resolved. Be able to place queries onto it. So, if you haven't heard anything for a while, then notification to the person who owns it around questions like "can I get an update on this?"

As well as that, I mentioned the knowledge management, but it really is quite key. Even if I am not changing as part of this, the way in which we make a reasonable and necessary decision all the way we make an access position, we are trying to get more consistent decision-making across our staff by making sure that the information that they need is available rather than relying on them being able to find it.

Not all access is equal, so it is not a sledgehammer approach. There are some things we need to do. There are other things that will come a bit more discretionary. If it is a piece of decision-making that is a need to do, for example, a risk assessment for someone to self-manage, so looking to see whether or not there are financial or



safety risks involved with that sort of decision, then it is built into the system rather than being in an off system piece of guidance material.

As opposed to a decision, knowledge management which might be around various support options for certain circumstances. So, things that will be more contextual. These do not sit in the system, but on the side of the system with more guidance rather than mandatory.

Skill tagging is something that the system has and we are going to start to use. The idea of this is that work goes to the staff member who is skilled to do it. They can get extremely complex and there is a number of views around who is best placed to do work and stuff like that.

We are building the capability at quite a general level to start with. And then, again, as we get information coming out of the co-design sessions, that starts to get more refined. But having it built into the system to start with is one of the levers we have got around being able to respond without having to do major ICT changes in the future.

I spoke a little bit and I will talk about it a lot more in a sec, the reuse of the staff effort which currently goes into fighting the system. We have focused on what are the interactions which we want people to be having good experiences on both sides with.

And so, in the current world, that is largely focused on plans and plan implementation. We have got the opportunity and we have taken it to have a look at people who never apply to access or when they are going through the access process. In the old language, the Tier II sort of world.

Formalising some of those connections in the form of community connections plan and the early supports plan, which already exists, but bringing it in system for people with developmental concerns.

The community connections plan, early supports plan, is really around helping participants, people with disability, to connect to community mainstream. Maximise the supports that are available in the community. Work with goals, similar sort of stuff to what the formal NDIS (inaudible).

What the formal (inaudible). Sorry. Perfect, thank you.

And some of those concepts which we have around goal attainment and the like. Portals, I have spoken about already. I will talk about them a teeny bit on the next slide, which is on user acceptance testing.

This is kind of the exciting part. This is the update since I last spoke to you. Two days ago, we finished the end-to-end access to planning IT build. The thing has gone from being an idea to now we have got something built.

This is where the fun bit starts. All through the design build, we have been working with participants. So we have had a group of roughly 60, 80 participants who have been involved from problem statement through to design a solution. Our staff as well, there is 200 of them, involved in this process.

Now, working off the user acceptance testing. The same people who have been involved are now in the system testing it. The testing process is going to go for at least four months. And from here, we start to refine.

We have got the 200 or so people who have been involved in their testing. Every test case has accessibility versions of that test case as well.

So, the system being tested for a number of people is different ways of interfacing with the system. The group of people who are doing user acceptance testing over the next month or so grows. By the time we finish user acceptance testing in about four months time, we expect it will be about 500 people that are involved in user acceptance testing.

The idea of going it like that means is because it will have to be a national rollout when we do this. There are lessons from the last time we did a system change that there wasn't enough testing. The accessibility was a second priority.

There was zero change management, which meant the thing flopped. Bringing so many people into user acceptance testing is to make sure that the system, A works, B, works for all staff and works for participants and, C, that we have enough people who are familiar with it that when it does nationally roll out, there is localised support for the rollout.

So, I will now just go to slide 13. And just talk, this is a very busy slide. For those trying to decipher it, I won't talk you through at a high level. Feel free to jump into any of the detail that is jumping out to you. It is the way we have broken down the participants end to end journey and their interface with the NDIS. I am not a big fan of thinking about it in a linear way, but is the easiest way to put it on a page.



The bit that I am most excited about is actually box number one here which is, which looks very small compared to everything else, but it is probably the newest bit for the scheme.

Which, it says "learn about the NDIS and other services." We call it partner supported connections. But it is around the two to 4 million people with disability in the community who, most of them, won't ever apply for the scheme or be eligible for the scheme. It is around how do we build the infrastructure around that, build the capability to have a service model.

There is a number of discussions going on around what the model looks like, but in any event, it is a bit of a black box around what happens. So, in the community supported connections, it is where people will first interface with the scheme.

Be able to work with a partner in the community, work within LAC, work with an early childhood support coordinator. Community connector in regional and remote areas. To understand what their needs are. To work through whether or not there needs to be some more intensive support on formalising plans, formalising access to supports.

Starting to capture what those referrals are and the success of them, so that we start to get data points around how good it is, the mainstream interface of services provided by the government and across different communities.

At some point though and for some people, that will be quite quickly in the exchange. It will be evident that the services in the community are not sufficient. There is additional support required, which is best provided by the NDIS. So then, the access process is a supported process

Which will reduce the need for us to ask for additional information. Give a bit more clarity around what happens next. That that person who was working with you on community connections also works with you to approach the scheme and submit access requests.

We are building the process for the access decision, but not touching it. So, as I say, building it, waiting for the levers that come out of the co-design to understand what changes in the process. The process is there.

Number 6 in this box was a positive to come out of COVID-19 and other unfortunate situations. The check ins that we have been doing with vulnerability well-being check-ins have become the norm. It's in the order of 1,200,000 of these a year once we roll it out.

The idea is the check-in becomes the most common interaction between the participant and the agency. It is a check-in on how your goals are going and how your supports are going, what barriers you are experiencing. That is the standard bit but it's also on how to improve monitoring to allow us to be more responsive.

If you're seeing changes in the way, participants having a bad experience with providers, as we are having these check-ins, we want to identify those questions and make sure that everything is OK.

Planning, as I said, we will slowly go through this at some point. After their first plan, some people move towards access. Other people, as part of the check-in or the participant reaching out to us, I have a little bit of a dream that if no one ever has to quote each part of the Act when they are engaging with us, that's a win.

... It is a document, so it should be part of a natural person's engagement. Sometimes I make a joke about not knowing which part of the Tax Act applies to me and then I get shocked when I go to the accountant.

Part of the development plan, this is going into a planner activity. Although partners in the community, early childhood support, early childhood partners help serve to provide information that informs the development of the plan.

The plan itself is something which a delegate will work with a participant to be developed. The skill that I was working at earlier is that the plan will go to someone earlier to make a decision in most cases. It is in the design that a participant will be meeting with the person making the decision, whether or not that is face-to-face, virtual, or on the phone. It's meant to be more flexible, and hopefully that will open up more opportunities.

The construct of the plan, the budget, we are moving towards a more flexible development of the plan and so that means in most cases, the budget will be described in more of the support categories level, so this is funding to assist with core daily activities, not going into the specifics as to which services you can spend it on.

Instead, the discussion is moved into plan implementation and the plan handover. It's doing a couple of things. It is allowing us to have more flexibility in the way a plan is spent and the way that participants can make decisions around how to best support their needs without having to come back to the agency to adjust things.



It is also allowing us to get clearer around what can be spent on. At the moment, we do have the support catalogue and matches to the support categories. It is a bit of a monster of a thing to try and look at. It's hard for us to say and see how each plan is going to be spent even though there is this document that exists.

The reason for that is because each plan is built differently and so the constraints within it at an individual level, moving to a more specific whether the plan is structured, we can be more clear for every person that these are the breadth of supports that can come from the budget.

I'm just trying to get through the main bits here. Having more formal handover processes, so people don't need to tell their story multiple times. The way in which a plan is described is going to be structured in the evidence and makes it easier for it when someone else is looking at it, when someone else is helping a participant understand how that information is going to be consistently represented across all the plans, meaning that people find it easier to consume all the information and do a good job of explaining.

We were fortunate enough to be able to get in the variations in the NDIS Act update. We were building against in anticipation of that, but we don't need to go through formal planning processes to be able to adjust that.

Then, over on the last bit of this one is running enquiry advisement. This is the most frequent type of interaction which people have with us. Planning happens once a year or so. In the future, formalised planning will happen every 3 years or so.

Most people's interactions are the short, sharp ones. They are also the ones most poorly recorded in our system. Formalising this so that they are located on the central record, going to the person who is most skilled to do it, having SLAs associated with it so that they... So that you know how long that it is going to take.

I might actually pause for a bit because I feel questions coming through, I can't see them so. After this, I will get into what are the opportunities for us to work together.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Garth. We do have a break scheduled in about 10 minutes but we will carry it over for another 10.

I will pass it on to Kate to voice the questions.

MARY SAYERS:

Hi, this is Mary from Disability Australia. Hi Garth. I'm assuming the 7 to 9 year olds who might not have a full plan, and I think it's really important that you are clear around what these new plans are as compared to traditional planning particularly when explaining it to other stakeholders.

Also the question around this 'exit' from the NDIS. Again, I think you are referring to children and young people who may not need ongoing lifetime support. I think it is really important, it comes to earlier points around the pathways for children and young people versus the pathways... Because, I think I can imagine this will strike fear into the heart of many people have already proven lifelong disability and there is this reassessment.

I think it is really important, language is everything. I think I understand what is going on, but I have never heard of this community connection plan and I'm pretty close to the work.

Any comments on that would be really appreciated.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

Thank you, great questions. As I said, not a fan of the linear view of the journey because it looks like everyone goes through every step and that is certainly not true. I might start with the transition out of the NDIS.

Yes, there is no intention there at all of having people go through that as part of the permanent disability pathway. It is really around early intervention. And, if it is successful, how do we normalise that some people's journey with the funded elements of the NDIS is time-limited?

And then, what does that look like? The reason why it is on here, though, and I skimmed over it a little bit, but what we really want is for the person who is involved in box number one, learn about the NDIS and working with you to be consistent as much as possible throughout the entire journey.

When you get to box 13, which is transition out of the NDIS, we actually end up in box one which is around that ongoing interaction back into the community. On the community connections plan, you wouldn't have heard of it because we developed it as part of this. It's not intended to be for any specific age group, it's around children and adults.



It documents where those connections are required more formally, things where there is a need for us to be able to make sure that they are working and the like. The only supports plan, we have (inaudible) at the moment for children under six which is what the current policy says around early support.

Is a world in the future really supports are rolled out for other cohorts were that is appropriate and the system is being built in a way which accommodates to those policy changes in the future. That Community Connections Plan is something which the participant groups will be working with and is a good way to formalise what happens in that tier two world at the moment.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We have another question online, and we have Katherine and Bill in the room.

KATE JUDD:

Kate speaking, we have Jenny and then Katherine and Bill.

JENNY KARAVOLOS:

Hi Garth, Jenny from Australian Autism Alliance. Great presentation at the moment. Is this... Not to see if they can break this process, but what is intuitive or logical to someone else might not be for someone on the spectrum, for instance or any other disability?

GARTH O'BRIEN:

That's a good question. I would be so bold as to say that we have to break it. We want to break it rather than when it's out in the real world. We have only just kicked off, but with so many people involved it means that there are people who are going to deviate from the normal path, and it is encouraged.

SPEAKER:

Thank you, we will go to Katherine McAlpine.

KATHERINE McALPINE:

Thank you, I had questions about the Community Connections Plan and am glad to know that I'm not the only one who had questions about it.

You talked about risk assessment and there are groups of people who self manage large plans who have real problems interacting at the moment. I would like to invite you right now to come into community practice and talk to that group. I think that group particularly needs part of it.

There is also the flagging of people covered by grandfathering provisions. People who might not meet the requirements now, or who have been long-standing institutionalised. Some older people, we have heard stories of 60 year old women getting plans cut.

It is a small cohort, but there are no flags in the system. At the moment, there are problems in SDA that I'm aware of where they are grandfathering in the system and there is no way to get that flagged. It's ridiculous. I'm particularly talking about people who have been institutionalised. Not people who have come in since the scheme began. There are very specific things to make sure that they don't get lost in what comes across as the standardisation of things?

I understand from your perspective, this is more consistent to decision-making but for us, what about the people, to Jenny's point, are standardised? I have got some other questions, around people in the complex needs support pathways, but those are the things that come straight to mind.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

I'm not aware of the specifics, but in terms of general capability, 1 of the things that makes those current grandfathering decisions hard for a person to consider when they are making the decisions is that they get lost.

The system we have currently got, it is essentially a long list of every interaction. That list keeps going. He spent years trying to look for something in that list. What comes across as being standardisation in this is that standardisation of where something lives, which then makes it easier for more consistent decisions. That is what I mean by consistent decisions, decisions that would be able to be made over and over again because the information is where it should be.

KATHERINE McALPINE:

You are talking about consistent decisions for one person, as opposed to consistent decisions between people?

GARTH O'BRIEN:

Both. Consistent decisions for people's experience plan after plan, it will be the same information that is able to be found. And then in terms of how staff consider that information, consistent across the decisions that are being made across participants because the guidance material on how to interpret information...



KATHERINE McALPINE:

If I give you a person with complex needs who might have a one million dollar plan and whose family might be self managing, if they get some consistent decisions, they get consistently told that they have to go back and test the market when they have really had service failure, they get told that they can only self managed for six months because when did all this evidence and evidence and all the rest of it... Want to make sure that the group of people are not going to be...

That is a group of people I am particularly inviting you to come and be with the people at the pointy end of the stick. It is not going to be significantly disadvantaged and have an even more workload than they do at the moment, which is astronomical.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

I understand. Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Bill and then another question in the room. Niha and Simon. Bill had his hand up first and then Simon and Niha.

BILL GYE:

Bill from Community Mental Health Australia. Robbi set the standard here. I know we are at the pointy end of time here with morning tea coming out. I have two topics. I think the issue of goals and outcomes is a really thorny one and I think that is still a conceptual mess for us there.

I will bring that up in the Investment Effectiveness Program discussion this afternoon. The question I want to put, and this may already be on the agenda, but thinking of the DRCO Forum as partners in the program, Salesforce offers us all sorts of opportunities in terms of reports – more querying.

It would be great to be able to engage with the scheme to gong query and find out information that is relevant to us if we have access to that. This is identified obviously of course, but at the moment, the way it works is, we went into the quarterly or six monthly reports come out. Which is a hazard but still curated set of data that is useful for us in our consideration.

But that would be great if we could put that on the agenda as a consideration for us to be partners to be able to go into the dashboard, to access reports about the scheme would be really useful for us.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Bill. We will take that as a comment. I wasn't sure who is first, but Simon, would you like to go first?

SPEAKER:

Isn't it really an action to put it on a future agenda?

SPEAKER:

(Inaudible)

SPEAKER:

We will take that as... Caitlin already captured that. ESP, thanks, Katherine. That's an action, thanks, Bill.

SPEAKER:

Simon from PDA here. I am concerned about letters been developed by the CRM and then sent directly to people without some kind of checking by a human being. Much as computers are wonderful things.

The main thing about it is that we get called from time to time by very upset participants who are being told that they cannot have a wheelchair and they are expected to use a walking frame, for example.

And then the only thing that the letter says is that if you are not happy about this, go to the AAT because this is your review and you are stuffed basically.

There is no phone number, there is no email address apart from the 1800 number and enquiries@ndis. That is not good enough. I would like to be part of the correspondence meeting group if I can.

Also, what else was I going to say? I just lost my thought. Can you bring us a sandbox version of the tools? That the planners are going to use, so that we can see how it works. Because if we know how it works, we might be able to help reassure people that things are being done properly rather than just a public servant who was looking to make sure that they meet their KPI of cutting people's plans. Which is probably something that people think happens.

GARTH O'BRIEN:



That's certainly not one of the key performance indicators, but, yes I can. As I said, we just finished the access and planning end-to-end which means that by the time we get to the next one of these, I would like to give you a demo of what it is.

Just a bit of assurance as well on the correspondence. You are very welcome to attend. There is, not every letter is being designed in a way which is just spat out of the system. Depending on what the letter is, it goes through human writing and guidance before getting sent out.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Garth. That is an action, you are going to have a look at access and planning and to end as a sandbox version. Neha?

SPEAKER:

Neha from the National Ethnic Disability Alliance. Thank you for the presentation. Just a quick question. When you mentioned community connections, I just wondered if that would be modelled like the previous community connector model that was there?

And if yes, will that be delivered by the partners in the community? Because the last one was actually delivered by the grassroots level organisations. I know it is still the NDIA, the agency that runs it, just checking if that is still...

GARTH O'BRIEN:

The intention is partners in the community. The system and the process which is being built is really going to apply to what the current way of working is. So, but it is being built in a way where it doesn't, where it can change as policies change, without being a major overhaul.

Right now, the intention in here would be that our current, partners in community doing the community connections, agency planners doing the plan build stuff, in reality, it is all just roll out and systems.

If tomorrow we decide that we want access staff to be doing plan decisions or something ridiculous like that, it is just a switchover of roles.

NEHA:

Just to follow on from that, with respect to community connections, we have access supporters as part of that. As well as having help with every other thing we have done. Mainstream support and connecting them to different services within the NDIA. And for those community partners on the outside.

Have we already have a good understanding of what the partners in the community will be doing with respect to this?

GARTH O'BRIEN:

With our current partners.

NEHA:

Sorry.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

It is not currently captured on systems. It is only through working with them to understand what it is that they are doing and be systems being built around that.

NEHA:

OK.

GARTH O'BRIEN:

Did that answer your question?

NEHA:

Kind of. We can maybe discuss this further.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you. There is no more questions online. We might bring this session to an end if that is OK, Garth. I know you had some more material you wanted to go through, but I think the lesson is we didn't have enough time.

So, do we want to have our break now for 15 minutes and then come back? And, for those online, we will be back at 11:55. Yep. Thanks, Garth, for that.



I think, Garth, you are very open to fielding any questions this group might have around specific issues that we might not have covered on the slides today, is that OK?

GARTH O'BRIEN:

Absolutely. It is easier if they come through...

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Through us. And we will collate them. Let's undertake to do that as well. Thank you.

(Break)

SPEAKER:

Test, test.

(Multiple speakers)

SPEAKER:

I don't think the sound is on, at least here in Zoom land.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We are just waiting for a few stragglers, apologies. Thank you everybody. I think we will make a start, but others are held up having a discussion. So we would like to welcome the general manager of policy advice and research, Sam Bennett, known very well to all of you, to take you through our next couple of agenda items. Sam has a slide deck that will put up momentarily. Welcome, Sam.

SAM BENNETT:

Thank you, Liz, wonderful to be here. Hope you are all well. We've got I think one hour, is that right, Liz? We've got an hour and we can use that time however you would like but we sent some material out in advance and will share those slides and walk through them. I should just say we've also got Joshua on the line, who is our branch manager for strategy. He will be talking and providing some updates on a couple of the projects we've been working on through codesign with the disability community and that is the CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders strategy.

I thought it's probably a good point in time first out in the financial year to give you a full run through and we provided material on that basis, that you've got a good picture of all of the work that is underway. If there are specific things that we don't get to or cover in the level of detail you would like, please get in touch with me outside of this and I will happily do that.

What I thought we would probably do is approach this in a couple of chunks. First, I'll walk through some of the slides that will give you an overview of the approach we are taking, as well as some insight into early thinking we've been doing without codesign advisory group around evaluation of the work. Probably take about 5 or 10 minutes, then we can pause for any questions or comments, then the second and longer piece would be to run through briefly the approach we are taking each of the six projects to give you an update there. And then to provide an opportunity for any questions or comments there might be on that.

I will just check, does that work for you? Does it sound like a reasonable use of time? Good. If you can move on to the first slide in the pack and onto the next, to give you an overview, this is material you are familiar with, just a reminder of the engagement framework that we published at the back end of March this year.

It talks about the different ways that we engage, the attitudes that we want to underpin our approach to engagement and talks about codesign as well, and you will recall our conversations kicked off in September last year that we committed to learning by doing as it relates to codesign and just getting on with some of the important issues that the scheme faces. We did a bit of priority setting, including with this group and our independent advisory Council around the focus of some of that independent learning by doing.

I want to thank you around the table as well for your involvement in that process over the last nine months. It's still relatively early days, I would say, but plenty of learning is being done. I won't labour this, there is only two points I want you to take from it. One is, we are not co-designing everything but trying to reserve this for some of the bigger strategic issues facing the scheme and impacting most on participants, where we confirm with you that there is a high value of working collaboratively on solutions together.

All of our engagement should be transparent and respectful, hope that's how we approach it. Codesign is the way we are doing everything. And the second point I would make, and I hope this is evident as I walk through the projects and Josh talks to you about a couple of the others later, there is no fixed blueprint we are applying here, no one single approach, we are thinking flexibly and creatively about how we codesign these different programs very much on the basis of the issue at hand, and also what stage we are at in the process.



As I talk through some of the latest slides, on policy projects where we've already spread the net wide last year and done significant public consultation and got a lot of feedback, we are starting from a different point and using different processes that we are for the others.

That will give us a range of different approaches to look at to determine as we progress which we adopt and use more widely.

Just a reminder of the governance arrangements that were set around this for you, a number of you have been on our codesign advisory group for some time now, I think it's about 10 or 11 times, Liz? That meeting beginning back in October last year, we also have the three members of the Independent Advisory Council on that group which exist to provide us with advice on how we are approaching codesign and what the priorities on that should be.

As you will see on the next slide, we are moving on to having some initial conversations around evaluation, sorry, if you could just go back. And just the other point to draw out is we have set up four projects we are progressing the individual pieces of work, steering committees, which are doing the co-planning phase up until recently, but the stage we are at across all of these projects now is that we have endorsed codesign and engagement plans by the steering committees that were in the process of beginning to execute. I will talk to you about how we are going about that in a moment or two, but those are bringing together participants and network DCRO representatives, our independent advisory Council, states and territories, DSS and the Quality and Safeguards Commission as well. So an awful lot of energy that's gone into the co-planning, after 30 hours of meetings in those steering committees on the oppressed codesign for each of those individual projects.

On the next slide, how we evaluate this is really important. It's a different way of working for the agency. It's something that we want to get right, something we want to embed in our culture and ways of working for the long-term, and to do that well we think that having an evaluation around the process from the early stages to support continuous improvement of our codesign approach and methodologies is a really important thing to do.

So we've started to have some conversations with our codesign advisory group about that, specifically around the scope of such valuation and how it would be conducted. We are at the point of having drafted a theory of change which we are happy to share with this group, if you would like to see that. It needs further testing and refinement so certainly not finished.

And we've been talking about what some of the key questions are that we want to ask of such an evaluation. I think the two other points I would make from this slide, a lot of the conversations have been around scope and what we want to be clear about is the process of codesign and the extent to which that works in empowering the disability community to be working with the agency to resolve the issues with the scheme. Evaluation doesn't extend, or at least this one doesn't, to each of the individual policies we are working on. There will be a separate evaluation as it relates to those and will come to those in good time once those policies are agreed.

The second point is we will commission this externally, I think it's important we have an independent perspective on this. Our advisory group has been clear on that and we are in the process at the moment of just asking for feedback from organisations that might be approached for such a piece of work.

Once we've codesigned the evaluation framework, which is what we are now doing with our Co-design Advisory Group, will be going out and talking to the group about how we involve people and how we are in line with Commonwealth procurement rules.

I just want to share with you the draft questions that we are posing here on the next slide. Around evaluation. They relate to whether the approach to co-design is appropriate to achieve its intended objectives, whether the process itself as it's being used in each project is operating according to what we know is best practice around successful co-design. Whether the early outcomes from the process are achieved, and there are a few listed there, transparency of decision-making, shared understanding and improved understanding of the issues from different perspectives. Between the agency and the disability community and all of its diversity.

A disability community that feels empowered and has confidence and trust in the NDIS and the Agency, and are desirable and feasible policy solution for key stakeholders, because what we want to come out of this process is something that is desirable and so is feasible for us to implement in the context of the Agency's Administration of the scheme under the Act.

And then finally whether the approach is likely to endure, so sustainability but not in the way that we often talk about it, what it means is that is this something that we can sustain and adopt more widely? So we can co-design more of the solutions we need for the scheme into the future.

I thought I might pause there before we get to the individual projects and just invite any feedback on that. If you have comments on the individual projects, you might want to say that for the next pause we take but very happy



to take any comments or questions now. I've seen a couple of hands shoot up in the room and hopefully someone is monitoring the Teams as well. Simon and then Catherine.

SIMON:

Simon from PDA here. I've got ongoing concerns about the overarching scheme for the co-design project, co-design process and that kind of thing. I think there is far too much focus on steering committees and they are standing in the way of direct engagement between us, for example, who are not on the steering committees and also participants, in that everything is funnelled through steering committees, it's still a very tiered approach and I'd really like some thought on revising that, but it might be too late if these decisions have orally been made.

I'll talk about the IGAP thing, which I am particularly miffed about.

DR SAM BENNETT:

The steering committee's role, for the most part their job is to take us to a point where we've got codesign and engagement plans endorsed and we are now going out and having that what a conversation, and I will talk to you about that in relation to each of the projects. They will have a role further down the track which is helping us to make sense of some of the outputs from those wider conversations and engagements we have, but that is the role they had, which is very much the co-planning phase of the work we've been doing.

And we're kind of beyond most of that now, so that's what I would say to you, is that those opportunities for engaging on all these issues will be coming down the track.

SIMON:

The IGAP one, the steering committee so at the end of the process as well.

SAM BENNETT:

The steering committees help us to get the design right, we talk to everybody we need to and hear the voices and perspectives...

SIMON:

There are key activities just involved in the steering committee.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Which key activities?

SIMON:

I don't want to pre-empt the discussion if anyone else wants anything about it but "the steering committee will consider the findings at, and consider actions to address the problems..." We are not involved in those processes and those are the key ones.

DR SAM BENNETT:

That's the only way we can actually do this. From the constructed Australian Centre for innovation, across all of our projects, and we need a way to govern the work and we've done that in the most inclusive way we possibly can.

SPEAKER:

So does the steering committee include people with a disability?

SAM BENNETT:

It does indeed. We had nominations from this group for members on the steering committees.

SIMON:

I am not one of them, I feel left out.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Other questions?

KATE:

Bob Buckley is online.

SPEAKER:

There is the opportunity in our wider group, which CYDA pulled together. I'm not that concerned, the idea of co-design has a focus where there is conceptualisation that goes out to a range of voices and somehow that has to be synthesised. If you have people bringing a disability perspective to the process that will help with co-design.

DR SAM BENNETT:

What we have tried to do is be inclusive across the disability community on how we establish those.



SPEAKER:

It seems like the old consultation model.

SPEAKER:

I think we will go to Catherine.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

You asked to circulate the theory of change, can I accept that offer? And when you talk about co-design the evaluation of the individual projects will happen separately, well that include a comparison of different projects taking different approaches to co-design? A comparison of those projects? We are happy with some processes but not others.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Within this evaluation, absolutely. When we have a final home and living policy and it is implemented, we would evaluate in a separate process.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

There is different satisfaction in processes. This one is a complex one and might need another discussion. We have an ongoing problem about the way evaluations are designed in terms of accessibility and the participation of people with an intellectual disability. When we talk about the supported decision making co-design process, there is hard work involved, a lot of people with intellectual disability and psychosocial disability.

I would like to have a more detailed conversation about that. If this is a problem with government in general, not unique to the NDIA, an opportunity to have with the most approachable government agency in terms of interest in this, is to say you need mechanisms where people with an intellectual disability can participate in everything including evaluation.

The move and evaluation has become very complex. Fewer questions but they are very complex. There is no easy read version. I want to talk about how we unpick that.

DR SAM BENNETT:

These are drafts, not final. They are not the questions we would ask people, they provide us with a frame for how this might come together. We have heard this advice from our advisory group as well, and when we commissioned this we make it a priority it is accessible.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

I would like to have a deeper conversation. We had a terrible experience through the DES reform process, consultation questions and what have you. It is about the whole design in terms of the way you recruit and other things for it. It's not as simple as making sure the questions are an easy read.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Certainly not seeking to minimise the importance of that.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Kate or Bob?

BOB:

Bob Buckley from Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia. Autism is one of the big groups in the NDIS, but I am not saying that reflected in the co-design process. It is hard to detect our presence in this. I'm wondering why it is like that, and will it deliver the sorts of outcomes? I think part of that has to do with the fact that the issues that are being addressed are not really the ones that confront our community in this process.

The other half of this, we just went through an election and one of the things that got up through the election, we hope to see a national autism strategy emerge. In none of this do I hear any recognition of the reasons why we have asked for a national autism strategy, and that is because we get left out of things like this all the time, and if we don't say we have to be recognised, this is a group that is come from being a disorder 30 years ago to being the most numerous primary disability and the NDIS and yet it is not reflected in most of the processes.

I have concerns about this process in so many ways. I want to put that on notice. Thank you.

DR SAM BENNETT:

All I can say is we are keeping a close eye on the demographics of people we speak to through these processes, with a view to making sure we reach all the audiences we need to. We have participants with autism on a number of our steering committees and we've taken it to the autism advisory group. It is a work in progress but we are mindful of moving all different audiences and autism is very important for the reasons you have outlined.



MARY SAYERS:

I probably want to respond to both the previous comments being critical of the process. An important thing for me is not throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Having to reconvene, CYDA convenes the forum for DCEOs to meet monthly. Interpreters keep getting cancelled. We were meant to have a meeting last week, we would have been able to get prepared for this meeting today so we could say, this is the joint sector view about what is working well and what is not.

The whole challenge of interpreters means we don't go ahead if we don't get interpreters. I wanted to respond to Bob and Simon, we would have been in a better position to come to this meeting had we been able to meet last week. Despite a long-standing booking, we couldn't get Auslan interpreters confirmed.

I want to acknowledge Bob and Simon's position but also be defensive. CYDA is trying to make sure we are keeping everyone in the loop but we are having access barriers that make it hard. We are meeting not next week but the week after, it is after the Codesign Steering committee. Just wanted to acknowledge that Simon and Bob have valid concerns but we have not been able to come back to you as a sector and say this is what is working well and this is what is not working well.

That is challenging for us, as one of the DRCOs. The second point we've talked about the co-design's committee, the difference between the group and the co-design process. The advice that all of us, and I am one of them, who has been on the Codesign Steering Group committee, we need to make sure we have representation of diverse cohorts in the co-design.

I think that has been listened to and I wanted to reassure Bob and Simon, even if you are not yourself on the steering committee, many others are advocating for a wide diversity of inclusion of participants.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Mary.

DR SAM BENNETT:

You are right, the most common conversation we have been having across the steering committees is about wide diversity of voices. Today is one opportunity for you to tell us what is working and what is not from your perspective. We welcome further opportunities to have that conversation with you, it will be a rolling ongoing evaluation that gives us insights into how we improve the process as we move along.

I would suggest we move into the content aspect. That was about process and how we are working and thinking about evaluation. There is some information in your pack that relates to the individual projects we are progressing through some process of co-design. They are quite different and that will be evident to you as we walk through these.

I will talk to you first about information gathering for access and planning, I have talked to this group about that a couple of times previously, but to give you an insight and an update on that and there are members on the steering committee for this project that are part of this group. Obviously, we welcome your perspective as well.

A reminder, this is a task that came out of last July's disability reform ministers meeting where we were tasked to develop a person-centred model of assessment. Our process to do that is starting very much from needing to understand all of the different perspectives that exist across the sector, participants and the wider disability community, about how things are going at the moment, what are people's experience of NDIS access and planning processes and decision-making now?

That is following a co-design principle. We need to have a shared understanding of the problem before we move on to think about how it might be fixed and resolved. A lot of the conversations to date have been about that first stage of work, and there are a number of things we are commencing, have commenced or will be commencing shortly, which is summarised on this slide.

We have been running a number of focus groups, we put the word out through Participant First, upward of 100 participants are working on a series of focus groups that Graeme Innes has been facilitating to ask a series of questions that we agreed with the steering committee about what are the things people find most challenging and difficult with access and planning processes with the evidence requirements that exist as part of that.

We have had three, a further three will be concluded by the end of July and transcripts of those will be synthesised and provided back to that steering committee. We have also got a process underway now where we have reached out to DCRO organisations about how you can assist us to reach different cohorts and population groups and run a series of workshops to hear from your constituents and important stakeholders as to their experience of access and planning processes as well.



We hope that work will commence sometime in August. And to spread the net wider, codesigned with that steering committee a survey which will go out today. That is for prospective participants, applicants and existing participants of the NDIS and carers and family members to provide their view on the same set of questions that are being asked in the workshops about people's current experience of access and planning processes. What is working well and what is not. As Robbi described, that is funnelled into further conversations about what it tells us are the key issues we need to be solving and the short, medium and longer term options for how we do that. This is only the first stage of our wider codesign topic, is going to run at least a further year. There will be other points in the process where again we spread the net wide to talk to people about how we move forward. If you can move the slide on.

What we are really trying to make sure we get from these processes is some tangible short-term improvements where we can, because every single week that passes, there are 11,000 decisions made by the Agency primarily in planning under our existing model. There needs to be some momentum behind our improvement attempts in that context, and making the link back to Garth's presentation previously, there are ways we can improve that. If there are forms for example they could be clearer about evidence requirements, templates that could be made clearer and simpler, we could pick those up as we go, and then the longer term task that we have been given by governments is around what the assessment model might need to look like specifics of the NDIS into the future.

If you can move the slide on. I just wanted to flag this further, I said that would be a survey going out this afternoon, we are asking about things on the slide here, experiences are providing information to the scheme, experiences in relation to planning meetings in that regard, as well as any other feedback that people want to provide us. It will be open until the end of August. As I said, we've taken extensive feedback on this survey, I think almost all of which we've adopted from our steering committee. And we really value any help you can give us by publicising this and getting it out to your network so we can get the broadest response we can through this process.

Moving on to the next slide. Home and living another big issue for the scheme, last you back in December we put out a summary report and feedback, and now we are moving into a slightly more targeted stage on the basis of the feedback we received to look at what design work needs to be done around this policy. There are four key components that we are co-designing around which comes on the next light, but we've established a cortisone group, participants, do CRO representation providers and also four different testing groups.

So we are taking design work to that core group and then broadening out to those testing groups to help us to ensure we've got all the bases covered, including people with intellectual disability, complex communication support needs as well. We have engaged a co-facilitator for our design challenge work in Natalie Wade, who I think is well known to this group, and we are also working with Robbie's organisation to help us to reach out to some of the other important communities we need to hear from as this work progresses.

This is just a reminder of the four components consistent with what we consulted on but further refined through work we've done with this particular steering committee. And the groups that I've just referred to will be helping us to put some meat on the bones of these, we really want this policy to provide much better systematic upfront support to participants to understand their options and think about what home and living solution might work best for them.

We consults on the potential extension of the line item that exist for individual living options to the much broader cohort of people with home and living goals. So that is where we think much more broadly about how we can do that.

And this is a link to IGAPS, and what will enable us to streamline access to participants to a home and living budget, we want that budget to be more flexible so people can use it on a broader range of options. And we also think that there is a strong case for there being a delineated stream for those with home and living goals, so what does that look like? So we're getting access to the best advice and support and specialist knowledge on home and living for the disability in those circumstances.

I'm racing through but there is a lot of content, so just want to cover these off. Participant safety, this comes off the back of the piece of advice from our advisory Council looking at all of the preventative safeguards that exist within a planning pathway, right from access through to check ins and plan reviews. We are also looking on the basis of the Council's advice how we can support people to plan better for their own safety. Obviously, there is a much wider important strategic context here as it relates to implementations from the Robertson review and also the Commission's review of the Quality and Safeguards Framework, which is going to begin later this year.

The early stage here, we've had a research protocol endorsed by a steering committee that's looking at national and international best practice safeguards looking at these issues and we've just started a series of workshops to go out and talk to participants, providers, NDIA staff, planners and LACs about this issue as well. The taxable be to go out through the DRCO network again, potentially using the net participant network engagement panel speaking to your constituents about this important issue.



Supported decision-making is another one we agreed is a key priority, another that builds off the back of excessive consultation undertaken in 2021 and the feedback we received, including from any of your organisations. We have again had a co-design and engagement plan endorsed with our steering committee relatively recently that we've made a start on implementing. And there is a key partnership with Inclusion Australia, who are leading the process to ensure that participants, optically those that are benefiting from supported decision-making, I thoroughly engaged and involved in how this policy is progressed, and there is a bit of an insight there into the approach we are taking, working in close partnership with Inclusion Australia so the people with an intellectual disability are engaged and involved in all of the decision-making from top to bottom about how this will work and helping us to reach out to other groups so that we are covering all of the bases in terms of the diversity of voices that we want to hear from.

If you move the slide on. Just finalising what the key topics will be on the basis of the feedback we received from our consultation last year. Work will kick off very soon and we expect that to conclude sort of end of September, and have a policy position endorsed at around that time that we can then start to move onto a conversation around implementation and what that lets look like.

I think I'll hand over to Josh to talk about cultural and linguistically diverse strategy.

JOSHUA NG:

A context, the NDIA as of March this year we have more than 44,000 participants who are culturally and linguistically diverse nationally, almost 9% of the scheme. Through this work we are asking questions about how we measurably improve outcomes for participants over the next four years. The objectives of this project are threefold, firstly to run the common design process to support CALD participants, carers and organisations. Their families, carers and organisations, and early development action that can be monitored and progressed to achieve goals. In terms of the approach for this work as Sam mentioned, it follows a four-phase approach outlining the NDIA's engagement framework firstly to prepare our engagement, secondly to discover the challenges facing CALD participants, developing solutions with participants in the sector.

If we move onto the next slide, we are have recently finalised the discovery phase, so all the actions we were facilitating through roundtable meetings in over 30 sectors, to develop the areas of focus goals. Through this process we worked very closely with leader as well, and we found five areas is critical which can be addressed through codesign. Infrastructure, front-line capability, accessible communications, markets and data. We also reviewed and finalise the discovery phase report.

We are now in the develop phase with the CALD community to support and improved outcomes. There is also formal governance established for this phase but in terms of focus groups, we have face-to-face activities with participants, families who speak languages other than English, whose voices are not usually heard, and also hard to reach participants who identify as CALD as well.

If we move onto the next slide, similar to the CALD strategy, our First Nations strategy follows a co-design method as well. There is a context here that the current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders strategy was released in March, 2017. At the start of last year we started a process to refresh the strategy and as of March this year we've got about 37,000 participants who are on 7% of total participants who identify as First Nations. And through this cortisone process we are seeking to address the question of how the agency can measurably improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participants over the next four years.

So we are in the preparing stage of codesign, so less progress compare to the CALD strategy. With also conducted a preliminary desktop review but we are also very conscious that this strategy is in the context of other policies, actions and plans. This includes for example the Commonwealth agreement closing the gap, the NDIA reconciliation plan and we've got other strategies that intersect with this work as well, so just a remote strategy and the ECS remote strategy was in development as well.

So today we have reviewed recommendations from a range of government and non-government reviews and organisations working very closely with FPDN, so where we are now.

I'm might pass it back to Liz to field questions.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Josh, Sam. I will open up the floor. I know that's a lot of information, but just looking online there doesn't seem to be any questions in the room. Catherine, we will go to you first.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

, More of a comment than a question, the lack of interpreters meant we couldn't talk about this, my observation about the way we feel about the different projects is different in terms of the level of co-design. The two we are the most engaged with where we say there is a red-hot go happening, it feels like we are doing something that will look like co-design. In home and living that is not what it feels like. It feels like there are moves happening in the middle of co-design and new materials coming out of home and living. Our representative has spoken to you



directly, that feels like consultation around the details, not co-design of the central policy. Just saying that for the record.

DR SAM BENNETT:

I'll come back on that briefly if I may, we are addressing these issues differently

And if you've taken one thing from the presentation, we have deliberately different approaches across the different pieces of work. For home and living the focus is on the longer term reform. It is on big reform of home and living and how that works across the scheme. What we have is an \$8 billion partnership scheme supporting vulnerable participants and making improvements in the short to medium term as well. There is a wider project of work around home and living that has short-term improvements being progressed while also keeping the co-design group focused on the big picture change we want to see.

That is complex, I appreciate, but it is also something that is part of the challenge of running a large, complex service delivery organisation.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

I acknowledge the complexity, but some of the changes are not seen as improvements by the people on the Co-Design Committee, it doesn't feel like... If it was short-term and long-term, that would be fine but that is not what we are getting reported back.

DR SAM BENNETT:

That is good feedback.

CATHERINE McALPINE:

When we talked internally, what is happening in one group or another and I support a difference in approach, but in the early stages, where we are now, it feels like one is working better than the other.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Do we have any other comments or hands up? Giancarlo?

GIANCARLO DE VERA:

I wanted to highlight a few things, in the home and living steering committee, it was alluded to, the longer term and the need for pressing changes now because of the need to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the scheme.

As a group we need to recognise is a tension. I have concerns around the timeliness of some of that, it feels like the design elements in the workshops are predetermined. I have raised concerns around the timeline. I think is a function of the need to meet pressing needs. I raised the issue around the longer term vision, in a larger paradigm of potential future changes, which I raised at the last steering committee.

And what that means for a policy developed in isolation, this time next year we could see a different series of policies coming through from the Royal Commission and the Productivity Commission. The concern I have, while I appreciate the tension between pressing need a longer term vision and the need to recognise the work already happening in public consultations, there is something we need to come together in recognising that if there is a pressing need, we need to identify them. At the moment I would echo Catherine's comments around the elements of the workshop being somewhat predetermined, without necessarily having the chance to talk about that in a way that helps balance the need to meet pressing demand and longer term changes.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Thanks, that is thoughtful feedback and I appreciate it. The tension you described as a real one. We feel that too. We have a pressing need to make improvements where we can in the here and now, but we need to know it needs to look different in the longer term. We are doing work internally to map our short to medium term initiatives in what we think could be the end state vision, we don't want to do things that are not coherent in terms of the progress we have made on that so far.

I think on the workshops, I don't think the outcome is predetermined. I hope that was clear in the slides. To give you one example again, what we will be designing is the question. All of the feedback through public consultation was positive and affirmative about this being one of the right questions to answer, how do we provide much more timely, upfront support for people in their NDIS journey that have home and living goals, to think about what their options might be and to not be on an inevitable pathway to a group home.

That is what we are trying to get ahead of. It is that challenge that will go into the co-design groups. There is a predetermined question but the answer is very much open to the design process now for us to determine the solution.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:



Thanks, Sam. Mary?

MARY MALLETT:

I hadn't had time to look at the PowerPoint that we shared yesterday, I didn't realise the CALD and ATSIEB strategy, we were not thinking about them as co-design. I haven't had time to think about it. Off the top of my head though, there is such a lot of work to be done. Joshua raced through that very quickly.

What is the next further opportunity we will get? I agree, working with NIDA and other groups, we all need to be able to seriously feed into those processes.

JOSHUA NG:

Good question, shortly we will organise some style event where we bring the advisory group together, looking at processes in the design phase to move forward. A series of sum events coming up and individual focus groups that will include meeting hard to reach CALD participants.

MARY MALLETT:

Will those opportunities be circulated to us?

JOSHUA NG:

Absolutely. It will be coming shortly.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Catherine?

CATHERINE McALPINE:

When it talks about workshops with target groups, it seems to me that the individual at advocacy program would be critical to that. It says participants, carers, NDIA staff... You have other people on it but it feels like the purpose is part of safeguarding. It seems astonishing that has not been specifically identified.

DR SAM BENNETT:

Absolutely on our radar. You are right.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Looking for further comments or questions. Robbi?

ROBBI WILLIAMS:

I think the work is interesting and the topics are important. Is there a contextual pathway co-design project that looks at how the Agency might do an upfront assessment that leads to a choice of planner and so on?

DR SAM BENNETT:

Essentially that is IGAP in a nutshell. We make 11,000 issues per week and our data is clear there is issues with consistency in that pathway. We would be looking to streamline how the process works and the potential outputs of that, different approaches to planning.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you. To recap on the actions from this session, we will distribute the theory of change across the membership here. Sam has undertaken to have a deeper conversation with Inclusion Australia around participation of people with intellectual disability in the evaluation process for co-design. Josh has committed to making sure, when the co-design opportunities arise for First Nations and CALD refresh schemes, that will be communicated as well.

Thank you. That was really good. And Sam and Josh, we all appreciate the time and effort you have gone to to make this presentation. We will break for lunch now and come back at 1:30. Lunch is just outside. We will see you all then. This is a comment to people in the room, come back on time because everyone online was on time for this session. Please pay them the courtesy of being back here at 1:30. Thank you.

(Lunch break)

SPEAKER:

We are live again.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We are all back now with better attendance at 1:30 PM by the people in the room at this time than at morning tea, so well done. I hope everyone had a good lunch. We did, it was very nice.



I now like to welcome and introduce you to the NDIA Chief Counsel, Matthew Swainson, who is going to provide an update on the AAT, and Matt and I have had a bit of a chat about this forum. Matt understands who's online and was in the room today. He will be very happy to take questions.

SPEAKER:
(inaudible)

LIZ CALLAGHAN:
Someone has got the microphone on. I would hand over to Matt now.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:
Thank you very much for having me here this afternoon. It looks like I'm living the stereotype of my profession, already been told about that already today, I guess just to introduce myself, I am the Chief Counsel at the NDIA, rapidly getting across the issues going on across the Agency and the sector.

I come from ComCare, workers compensation, I was head of legal there for about seven years. So we hope this afternoon to give you an update about what's happening with our AAT program. I will get straight to the point on that and I don't think I can start talking about that without acknowledging I've been here for five weeks, so we need to acknowledge, I guess, what's going on in the program and the criticism and commentary about the program.

I think we at present have about 4500 AAT matters, and that number has risen quite quickly to that point. It's not a pleasant or nice place to be. It's a disputation process and I think it is incumbent on all of us to acknowledge that a disputation process is by its nature not a pleasant or a place where you want a participant to be. From what I've seen and for what I looked at the agency before starting, I do acknowledge there is an issue there that we need to put some effort into resolving those numbers, is not a sustainable number. And for those participants who want to seek a review, and it is a statutory right that we try to do that as quickly as we can, and what we can to make sure what is inherently a tough process, it does need to be as tough as it is.

That's certainly what our new Minister said after the election, that he wants to make his presence there in that space, so I'm not gonna talk about things will continue as normal. The Minister made an election commitment to make things better and clearly will be working towards dealing with that. And doing what we can to help.

I guess, did you want me to flip through slides or just talk?

LIZ CALLAGHAN:
If you've got a slide presentation, you can use that.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:
I'm more than happy to go through slides. I think there's four ways of looking at what we want to improve in the space. Clearly what goes into the AAT starts with decision-making, so we've got to look at that from a decision-making point, a lot of that is about communication, making sure we are explaining decisions and making sure we are engaging with participants through that point.

AAT is there as clearly a pipeline and we need look at that. I think reducing the number of planning decisions the progress to review, is a good outcome. Internal review, there is another decision-making point. Looking at a number of internal review matters that then proceed to the AAT, and I think I've been a Commonwealth litigator for most of my career and the AAT is meant to be fair and quick and informal mechanism of dispute, that's what it was set up to do. It's not always the case.

So if we can reduce the number of matters going through at the AAT, that would be good, but there are going to be cases that we can't agree on and it is a statutory right to seek that review, so we've got to support that. If you want to come through to the AAT, we've got to reduce the time frame there.

The Minister did make some commitments around this during the election period, a lot of that was about I think reducing the use of external lawyers in the scheme. The quickest way we can do that is reduce the number of cases in the AAT, that's probably quite a focus. But I think he is absolutely invested in us making an improvement on that. Lisa and I met with him and a number of representatives I think last week, on the 22nd, and out of that we came out with some clear commitments that we got a plan, looking at the caseload at a very accelerated rate. I think as of next week we're going to put, in management speak, Tiger teams looking at that caseload and doing an intense review everything before the AAT.

We hope to finish that probably by early October. So we got to make sure we've got some resources on that. We are also looking at what we might be able to do in terms of providing, under the current legislation, so not talking about changing the legislation at the moment, putting in some mechanism as a pressure release valve, and that really is about not so much an alternative review pathway, because that would require some change to the legislation, but at least some sort of mediator or conciliator that is a bit at arms length from the Agency that a



participant could talk to or use or I guess facilitate a discussion between the Agency and the participant that is not an adversarial process but as a pressure release valve.

So we're looking at a model of what that might look like, where it's best place, you know, we're quite conscious that is another administrative process, another thing that the applicants would need to gear up to and deal with. So we are going to need to test that with people working in the sector.

I guess on the good news, some of the work they had already been started on this, I know Lisa and Martin on a weekly basis have been committing some time to sit there and go through cases, and some of the initial work I think that's been happening in internal review space has meant that over the last few weeks the numbers of matters coming in to the AAT have reduced, the matters we are resolving are now exceeding the numbers coming in.

That's a trend we're looking at over a matter of weeks, not long-term, so we just need to make sure we sustain that.

OK, that is the update where I am. I guess another big part of this is the model litigants and ensuring that the NDIA discharges this obligations as a model litigants. In this game we need to go beyond that because we are dealing with a particular cohort of vulnerable people, most will be self represented may not actually understand how to engage the disputation process, so that something will need to look at. It's an obligation I would like to talk to people about.

I will stop there.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Lisa wants to say a few things.

LISA:

Thanks, Matt. If you say to this group and the groups who were in that call, who the Minister spoke to so you could just have a sense of the stakeholders engaged there. In broad terms, legal aid agencies, legal advocacy agencies, a couple of law firms that the Minister has had contact with who he knows are doing a lot of work in representing participants in the AAT hearings. So it was a loose gathering of people who came to the Minister's attention, and some of you may know some of those groups. Because it was an unknown group to us, I have to say, to be honest, but obviously we are stepping up to the engagement there. Did I miss anyone there?

SPEAKER:

You said there was legal aid and then legal advocates, but the other general, a few of them are legally trained but most are not, they just general advocates to work on NDIS.

SPEAKER:

When I say they are unknown to us, my staff and teams know that but I haven't met with them as a group. It's interesting them coming together because it was helpful to us and I learned a lot of things and we are committed to continuing to talk at senior levels with a combined experience in perspective.

MATT:

An there is the NDIA systemic issues working group, which again looks like a bit of a grouping of similar minded organisations and legal aid people in there I think, advocacy groups, Mary might be able to fill you in on that one.

SPEAKER:

Is mostly the appeal advocates?

SPEAKER:

Yes, and it was Tuesday. To give a similar sort of update and start a conversation to hear about what the alternative dispute resolution model might look like. I think I feel we would like and the Minister would like us to do something that we can do immediately under the current legislation.

There is a lot that came out with the Minister and this group, ideas of looking at how we might look at appeals and reviews under the NDIS Act. And a lot of them will require change to the legislation, so not an immediate fix but there will be ideas that come through in other places of the system where we can do something quickly.

SPEAKER:

We do have a couple of questions in the queue and might just, Bob, you had your hand up first. If you could just introduce yourself to Matt, that would be good.



BOB BUCKLEY:

My personal retirement is chockablock full now, over 40 cases in the AAT to help articulate the children with autism through the AAT because they can't get legal aid and they can't get advocacy through the NDAP that actually supports the case. I've run into a massive amount of problems with the NDIA not complying with the model litigant obligations, it's really abysmal in that area, and I'd be really interested if there is any plan afoot to do something about that. Also, some of these cases just go on forever. Yesterday I got a statement fax issue of contention, a matter that's been going on for three years, about the amount of money that the NDIA will pay for drop-off and pickup of a man for his (inaudible). Three years this has been going on. And the arguments the NDIA is putting up I just bizarre, it's ludicrous. So I'm finding the space really challenging.

The charts you put up a really interesting, you said you've now got the number that are being closed ahead of being received, that's only occurred once maybe.

SPEAKER:

There have been a couple.

BOB BUCKLEY:

What it doesn't show is how many are in progress, this is the data that matters. And how long some of them are going, what is the distribution of how long they go in for? The other big concern, the ones I'm doing are young children, in many cases we are talking about significant percentages of the child's life they are in the AAT. The process needs massive reform.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Bob. Giancarlo?

GIANCARLO:

with the numbers it would be great to have a standing reporting item we can request every time we meet in this forum, it would be helpful to see the impacts of the changes of the NDIS Act will flow through. The change to the Act only happen a few weeks ago, it will be interesting over a longer period of time how this affects the AAT case load.

The second, I will start with a comment. You talked about the ADR process and the scope, I would have concerns around the ADR process being as a way to circumvent model litigant obligations, particularly relating to the need to not take advantage of a lack of resources to litigate a claim.

And potentially being misused as a way to stop things going to the AAT. I want assurance that the ADR process would not be looking to do that, because it would be obviously a shame to see the ADR process used in a way that settles things sooner rather than later, as a way of misusing the position of the claimant to litigate a claim before the AAT.

I wanted to put that forward. The follow-on question from that – what is the process in developing the scope of the ADR processes and how can we be involved? The question I have relates to the timeliness points that Bob mentioned. Around the fact that while we have to see how this impacts the caseloads, one of the things we have seen at disability Australia, we are in NDIS appeals provider, we've seen a change of behaviour in how the Agency relates to those who seek reviews internally and externally.

What is required to resolve an issue sooner rather than later to the point now where we are not seeing any engagement with any conversations with clients and people with a disability until they get close to settlement stage. Our experiences settlement is overwhelmingly in favour of the claimant we support. These matters shouldn't have gone all the way to the AAT. A lot of it has to do with lack of transparency about what is required earlier in the piece. I say this in the context of not knowing how the changes to the Act will have impact.

Is there anything afoot to make sure more transparent processes in relation to the evidence required, or rather, making sure the Agency doesn't ask questions they already know about a participant, that draws out the time of a claim?

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

I will start with a comment about the review rights, we are mindful that the right to go to the AAT is a statutory right, and the ADR model cannot disrupt that right. We are mindful of that. I think we need to talk to people about that model before we settle it, I will be working with Liz on what that looks like. We are very mindful of the statutory right and anything we put in place cannot upset that right. I can make that commitment, it will not upset that right.

In terms of the design of the model I will work with Liz to make sure there are no unintended consequences of us doing something we think is a good idea to release pressure that might have other consequences. I think the last question was around what are we doing, it went back to improving the decision-making process, Lisa may have a



comment, I think there is work going on in terms of operational guidance. That helps with transparency in terms of how decisions are made.

The other part about it is putting in place more time and opportunity to engage with the participant in the primary decision-making point and also review decision-making point. That is the time to engage about evidence required. I think the third thing, I did mention what we are doing in terms of the AAT program, I'm focused on getting matters out of the AAT, we have recently re-established an early resolution team in the AAT branch, I think that was in place some time ago, as soon as a matter hits the AAT, that team can contact the participant to see what the issues are and see if there is something that can be done quickly.

I think that goes to communication, it's not complete transparency but I think it will help.

LISA:

There are a lot of reasons why it would be good for us to have more transparency and more support to participants and families and carers about approaching the first planning decision and making good decisions there. AATD is one of the reasons we want less cases they are, it would be inappropriate to suggest that's the only reason. You've all been involved in lots of work and co-design is about guidance, better OGs, better engagement. We are not losing sight of that.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Bill you have a question? Then Ross and Mary and Simon.

BILL:

I will try to be brief. Thanks for the presentation, Matthew. I am from Community Mental Health Australia. If I can quote Mary, to get a sense of this group, we tend to be 5% acknowledging the great successes and 15% coming up with solutions but our role is 80% to talk about why things are not working. And we acknowledge the frustration and trauma of people on the frontline.

Clearly moving upstream to prevent people coming there is important. We want to mention something Martin Hoffman mentioned this morning, an interesting issue for someone working in law, whether it was a particular court ruling, the outcome was both sides of the claim had a reasonable claim, in other words a reasonable claim for the plan and a reasonable claim to reject it. That was weird, in complexity theory the only time that happens is you have a complex situation and partial perspectives, the blind man and the elephant, one of them thinks it is a tree and another thinks it is a leaf. They were both correct. The job is to have a comprehensive picture to see how the parts work together in that way you can resolve the matter. Just a comment.

Pointing to the fact that we still need to continue to enrich our understanding of people and their perspectives and what is happening out there. Nobody at the coalface has the full picture.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Ross?

ROSS:

I support the comments made by my colleagues and in particular it's important we get more accurate information about what is at the AAT but more granular than what we have received before. It doesn't help us if we are talking about 70% of the cases going in favour of the participant, that obviously demonstrates there is an upstream problem because the AAT is the downstream end point.

It would be good to get more granular information on that. I recognise you've only been in the role for five weeks. We have been banging on about this for years. The problems it causes for people with disability and their families to go through the system, I consider myself someone who would not want to go through the AAT process, even though I think I could handle it better than most people.

When you don't have that to fall back on, when you are disadvantaged, and you have to face these significant legal processes that you are not used to, it is terrifying for a lot of people with disability. Some will choose to give up at that point. And that is not what should be happening. I commend you on looking at the upstream issues and I one of the other things to say, we need to get the planning part right.

If it isn't, it's not just a question... We need to find out those things and stop at that point and solve a lot of issues for the Agency and for us, but more importantly, for the participants. They would not have to deal with them over one or two or three years before things get resolved. The other granular things, how long are the cases lodged for, how long does it take to get to pre-decision? And what is the level of funding? Is it a dispute over \$200,000, \$20,000, \$5000? That is relevant because it is about the assets of the agency, if they are trying to save a few thousand dollars on a wheelchair. I know there is the reasonable and necessary clause that's fuzzy for all of us, but I don't think we will ever get around that.



I encourage you to be practical about the approach to that. Of course the Agency has a right, a legislated right, to reject elements of plans. It is the process from that point onwards, taking the approach we are dealing with people and generally disadvantaged communities who don't have the time, capacity or money in their own right to be able to do the review part Justice.

Congratulations on looking at it, it's good to see that Bill is moving on, he promised he would move smartly, that's great. I also think it's important that we see the Agency is now responding to that and taking on those challenges. Thank you.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Ross. (Inaudible) Mary?

MARY SAYERS:

I was getting a bit of echo, sorry, in the background and couldn't hear. Mary says, I am the CEO of Children & Young People with Disabilities Australia. We are the national representative organisation for children and young people with disability.

Given 54% of participants are aged under 25 and the prevalence of conditions like autism and intellectual disability among the scheme, I imagine that a large proportion of cases that come to the AAT may relate to children and young people.

I guess one of the things I am interested in is, A, transparency about that. Transparency around what types of plans are coming to the AAT. If they are settled or they are resolved, are there systemic or policy solutions that need to be made to address some of these claims?

And the problem at the moment is, the AAT and what happens at the AAT is shrouded in secrecy. We are, many of us are part of an NDIS Q working group which we work with the advocacy Centre. There have been freedom of information request. I am interested in how this new environment, we can be much more transparent about what other systemic things that are coming to the AAT.

Because the only way we are going to prevent the number of people needing to go to the AAT is not taking a case-by-case process of settling a case, but actually looking at what other policy decisions, what other systemic issues that need to be resolved to prevent it in the first case.

So, number one, I would like transparency about how many, a bit of a breakdown of the types of cohorts and age groups that are having challenges at the AAT. Or needing to go to the AAT. Because I suspect, and we had old figures that said it was around 1/4 of cases are children and young. I don't know if that is increasing. We had a lot about children's plans getting cut in the last sort of eight months.

Happy for you to respond anywhere you would like to that. Thank you. Thank you, in my time, it is the first time we have had the Chief Counsel come to this meeting. Really grateful to have you here.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

No problem. I think in terms of data, I am looking at colleagues over here. Lisa, thanks, gave me or not. I think we can commit to bringing back some more data.

I think that is a very sensible, reasonable request. (Inaudible) to come back with some more data. I have taken notes. You are interested in the timeliness, proportion of children, et cetera. We will have a think about that and come back on that.

Look, you know, in terms of settlement and transparency around that, I think it is very vexed issue. I take your point about what are we learning when we are solving those matters. They can be confidential, often the participant wants them to be confidential. There is a range of reasons.

That is not to say that we should be more transparent with those settlements, but I think I'll be learning from it is your question. I think that is a good point and something we need to pick up on that.

LISA STUDDERT:

I think I will add to that, absolutely keen to look at some regular dashboard we can view that tracks visibility. We are tracking closely internally and continuing to build out the visibility we have of the caseload.

The number of entities have asked us for reports on specific cases and how they are settled. I am going to be a bit hesitant about that in the first instance. I would like to get, in the days or months ahead if we get to a manageable caseload, then maybe we can commit resources to that. But it is a bit fraught.

Thanks, Ross, you are pulling the right place at the right time for me. I am worried about the resources I would have to commit that.



MARY SAYERS:

I wasn't talking about individual cases.

LISA STUDDERT:

Well, other people have.

MARY SAYERS:

It was more the thematic...

LISA STUDDERT:

Why people would be interested because there is learnings from them and internally, we are taking learnings from them. I personally have been sitting for the last six weeks in a weekly session going through a caseload with the teams.

Primarily to learn, but also where I can use my delegated responsibility helping reach quicker settlements. Also looking for ways where we can reach a quicker settlement, but help the participant onto a pathway where we support them to get more evidence for future decisions and plan reviews.

So that we are not just coming up with a near-term solution, but we are setting the pathway correctly, helpfully, for future plan reviews and decisions, so we don't end up sort of in the same place two years later. So, we're learning a lot and we will continue to do that and feedback as best we can to this group.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you, Lisa, we will move on. Jen Blyth, you are online.

JEN BLYTH:

Thank you. I have typed out some comments on the chat. I will repeat everything I have said, but just talking about the process of AAT. It is seriously inaccessible for deaf people and I would assume for a number of people who have linguistic and cultural needs. Maybe the others might want to add to that, but it is heavily based on English and language and we need to have a lot of support for these people.

A lot of people don't understand deafness and the whole field. So, organisations themselves don't understand deafness. So, it is a real problem. So... And we have requested that we provide information in Auslan and you organise to have that translated.

For example, the statements, the life experience, lived experience. We said that we can sign this in Auslan and hand it over to you for translation processes and that has been rejected. So, it is inaccessible to us and we also want to complain about the timeframe.

Because if you are talking about deaf children. Parents who want Auslan access to learn Auslan, the extended process, the window for learning languages closing for these children and families, so there is a lot of English, a lot of problems with language deprivation for deaf children in Australia. So, this issue is banning Auslan basically and access to Auslan. You are denying parents to be able to learn Auslan and communicate with their children. I had someone contact me with a two-year-old who has been refused Auslan tutoring because the child has hearing aids.

Has no language, this child. The evidence that is required is just ridiculous. I am very angry about the situation and I'm coming across that way, I know. But I just wanted to make sure that it is on the record that the NDIS is causing long-term pain for deaf children and suffering for them and their families for not providing Auslan tuition.

LISA STUDDERT:

Thank you for that feedback. We will have a specific look at that issue in terms of accessibility to the processes and also any matters that we can identify.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Jen. Simon, thanks for your patience.

SIMON:

Thanks for hearing us all up. I imagine it is like stepping into a cage of angry lines.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

You have been very nice!

SIMON:

I thank you for having a look at ADR processes. I used to work in an agency and I can speak to the benefits of getting things under control before lawyers get involved, which we all want to avoid. It has only ever been in my



experience effective if there is a genuine mediation where people are prepared to change their views on things. What I would suggest is that you look at the review process and communicate an intent, communicate an intention to make a certain decision to the participants.

That way, if the participant is really not happy about that outcome, then there is an opportunity for the reviewer to speak directly to the participants and find out what the issues are and maybe come to a different assessment of the situation.

Rather than it being a situation where the mediation is just to help the people understand the supposedly reasonable decision of the reviewer. If there is no capacity to move the goalposts as it were, then it is going to fail. And you will end up in the AAT anyway.

Because as you heard, people are very upset about review decisions that deny them the supports that they think they need.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Simon. I am just mindful of time. We can have three more questions, four more questions, which means we are pushing probably our hold for DRCO items. Which, if we are comfortable doing that, because I think this is a really useful discussion and as someone said, it is a great opportunity.

So, we will go to Jean online if that is OK?

JEAN COTCHIN:

Hello. Thank you. I am Jean. Nice to meet you virtually, Matt. I am a campaign manager at Every Australian Counts. Over the last few months in particular, we have heard from hundreds or thousands, I've lost count, of people who are really devastated with what is going on with AAT appeals, but also section 100 appeals, too.

And just kind of not having an easy time getting what they need or what they might have expected in the past. And so, this is really, it sounds very promising and I think this is a really excellent opportunity to both look at the root causes of these things and try and make very short-term fixes that can clear things up a bit, but also longer term strategic thinking.

I really, I like the idea of more transparency via data. I think it would be really helpful if, I know it's going to be tricky because it might be really difficult to de-identify certain things in that data, but I think this would be a really good time to provide the public and all of us with more sort of raw data than we have sort of seen over the last year or two.

When it's been presented in a way that tells a story. Instead, allow people to identify patterns themselves. If something like that is not possible and what I mean is a spreadsheet with as much raw data as we can get.

Part of the reason why I say that is because, for example, in a couple of the briefings we have had with the actuary office, some trends that were identified there didn't match the trends that I've been hearing about from the appeals advocates.

As well as from the ground. And that's not scientific, I know, but it would be really helpful and I think it would do some good in repairing some of the trust that we are trying to resolve.

And I think, and if that's not really possible, it would be, it'd be nice if you could consider the possibility of doing some, allowing for some more sort of independent analysis of it.

But in addition to that, I think this is also a really good opportunity to communicate like you have all said. That's an important part of all of this and I think we can talk more about this off-line perhaps. But I think it would be nice to have a more direct conversation with people on the ground. And yourselves.

I'm sure you've heard it before... Sorry, Lisa, I didn't catch that.

LISA STUDDERT:

I probably cut you off. I think in your role with the campaign Director, you probably learn a lot. I'm sure Matt would be very happy to follow-up and hear some more from you from that first hand experience.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Jean. Did you have anything else?

JEAN COTCHIN:

Just very quickly, I think, just for me and I think the people I represent would also appreciate hearing more detail or having more of an opportunity to discuss some of the proposed operational changes and processes that you



might be thinking about right now. For the other side of this journey if that is helpful. I'm sure everyone in the room can offer that sort of thing as well.

LISA STUDDERT:

Thanks, Jean. We will go to Robbi.

ROBBI WILLIAMS:

I'm Robbi Williams from JFA Purple Orange in Adelaide. I was on the radio this morning on the ABC because the health committee is meeting in Canberra today. That is something that the South Australian Health Minister (inaudible) these are NDIS participants. There is a process and it is taking time. (Inaudible) is a great idea. What are your thoughts about how that would reach into a third (inaudible) perspective (inaudible) that be a place where some of this resolution might then lead to some improvement in that interface?

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

I'm not sure of the numbers with that cohort. Very small or possibly none. Very small. It might be interesting where that is...

SPEAKER:

I think he was referring to one in particular. Certainly, we have a very high sensitivity to that. AAT, (unknown term), I have flags out on this and want to know about them if they have arrived at the AAT, and I am sure the numbers are very small.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

Lisa flagged that with us pretty frequently. Conceptually, how would that work? We would like to talk about that before finalising the model. The idea is to have a pressure relief valve that facilitates a conversation that needs to be involved in that. We need to know what is going on on the ground before we finally something. That is why we need to talk to people.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you. Bronwyn.

BRONWYN:

I join others in thanking you for coming along and having this opportunity. I'm grateful you are looking at the front end of things, of diverting people away from the AAT and am interested in hearing about some of the mechanisms. My questions are about people before the AAT and we have found that the AAT lawyers have been highly adversarial and I wondered if we could move that to a more collaborative approach to finding an outcome that benefits both parties.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

I think what my four, five weeks has identified, our case numbers are too high and I think these are referred to that earlier. (Inaudible) put in place while we have volume of this type and trying to resources and meeting timeframes, so probably pretty immediate. I guess the other part I would go to and I'm pretty big on this is the primary duty of the lawyer in the AAT is to assist in reaching the correct decision and we need to focus more on that. It is what we are supposed to be doing, and I talked about putting a bit of a model, a framework around what we do and I think, for me, that is probably where it starts. It is a process so they will be an adversarial path. It does not need to be all of it.

BRONWYN PICKFORD:

Good to hear.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Mary Mallett?

MARY MALLET:

The agency is stuck, the appeal is stuck, the processes itself. (Inaudible) from our perspective, we think there is a need for an injection of funding into the appeals advocacy. Appeals advocates are turning more people away than they can help and have been for some time and so a whole lot of people... There is even less funding into legal aid support so people who should be getting funding are getting nothing and either dropping out or are representing themselves and trying to do it themselves. That is an issue that (inaudible) Minister Rishworth and not Minister Shorten. Assuming that the current crisis situation gets reduced and resolved, we would like to see advocates involved early in the process. We have many anecdotal stories and data about the fact that for people who need an advocate, where an advocate can help them in their planning process or at the internal review stage, the matter gets resolved then and does not go... If it doesn't go to an internal review, doesn't go to the AAT. At the crisis, they haven't got the time to be engaged early enough, so that is one issue. With the alternative dispute resolution and process or pilots, trials, whatever it involves, one thing in my mind, who will be involved, who will be involved? You have the participant hopefully with an advocate where they need one. Which people from the agency will be empowered to be the people in the room mediating? I don't know the answer.



LISA STUDDERT:

I don't think we have an answer. (Inaudible) what makes the power dynamic equal and fair but also construct is probably what you are worried about. We need some guidance...

(Multiple speakers)

LISA STUDDERT:

I think we can commit to not having external lawyers being part of that process. I am pretty keen on that.

(Multiple speakers)

SPEAKER:

Sometimes these external lawyers are actually being second reviewers if they are negotiating with the complainant and they say, "We will give you this wheelchair, and that sell the case?" The person says, yes. It is like a third party and not an agency person doing this.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

I don't want to be defensive because I think we have things to fix but I have seen also some examples of a lot of lawyers... Are doing that role, the decision and doing what you say. How can we solve this? I'm not saying they do that all the time and I am not saying we always get it right but if that is a model we can build on, I think that would help. But I think the ADR point, I don't want lawyers involved, so that is your power imbalance point.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

I think we will take the last question from Bob Buckley and then we will draw a line under this session, which I think has been very good. Thank you, Bob. State your name for the captioners.

BOB BUCKLEY:

Bob Buckley from Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia. One issue that I've run up against in this process is when someone is in the AAT, they may be dealing with a particular issue but if they then go back to the NDIS and say, "I want to talk to you about something else," then the NDIS says, "No, you are in the AAT and we will not talk about anything." "OK, I will take it to the AAT," and everyone runs around like headless chooks. You cannot do that. There is this expectation you are not allowed to talk about it to anybody, so I have a client who said, "I would really like to list all the things spent against my plan." He went to the NDIS and said, "Please give me a list of all things." They said they would not tell him that because he is in the AAT. That does not make any sense to me. Ridiculous. They wanted to know, for example, how much money had been transferred from part of their budget to support coordination because they were using more support coordination within the plan and they then needed to know this because when it comes to a plan review, you have to go, "How much do we need to put in this for support coordination in the next plan?"

They are being denied this information. They are being told, "We will not do anything." I do not think that is the way this process is supposed to work and this is clearly the NDIS running around saying, "We will make life as difficult as possible," and that is not what should be happening.

LISA STUDDERT:

That shouldn't happen. I am not denying it does. I believe it does and we need to work together to stop that. It is very clear from our perspective at leadership level, is that participants' plans... Participants need to continue to engage with the agency, have adjustments made to clients, talk to planners while they are in a dispute process so happy to hear from you about particular cases where we are not delivering on that.

BOB BUCKLEY:

We can come up with the same arguments. Let's talk systemically about fixing these.

LISA STUDDERT:

I need to track down where this is occurring.

BOB BUCKLEY:

Everywhere. The other point – we mentioned before about your legal people becoming another review panel. Let me assure you that also happens when it comes to legal aid. When you are a person with disability going to the AAT, you are fighting your own lawyers to get the case put. So not only do you have to deal with the lawyers from the NDIS, but you have to win the battle with your own lawyers first, OK, so this process is really a difficult one and very hard for people to get through.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

What I am hearing is we need to look at a mechanism that does not have any lawyers.

BOB BUCKLEY:



That would be a good start. I am not a lawyer and so far my case record is 100% success, so there is a lesson there.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you very much, Bob, and thank you, Matt, for meeting with the CEOs today. Our actions from this is to make sure we provide a regular update to this group on the progress at the AAT, including if we develop a regular dashboard of data to show going forward, and I think there was a commitment to follow up with EAC, with Jean, to hear about some more examples on the ground.

SPEAKER:

And an involvement with this group plus others.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Development of an engagement process on the dispute resolution model. Thank you. We will just do a seamless transition now to David Gifford.

MATTHEW SWAINSON:

Thank you for having me.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you.

SPEAKER:

Good luck with your next five weeks.

(Laughter)

LISA STUDDERT:

Hopefully you will be back.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, David. We will move straight on. I know that was a but I think it was a very fruitful discussion. Sitting next to me is David Gifford. You probably... He is well known to you all, think, Deputy scheme actuary, to talk through the investment scheme program. Do you have slides?

DAVID GIFFORD:

I do have slides. They will magically appear. Wonderful. I'm conscious of your time. My intention is to talk and no more than 10 minutes and take any questions we can fit into the time. Thank you for having me here, everyone. As Liz said, my name is David and you have probably had presentations (inaudible) and speaking today, the first conversations, hopefully a first of a number, about the effectiveness program, the piece of work we are in the very early stages of, which is around working together scheme expenditure and benefits achieved and understand scheme effectiveness. I emphasise the work is only really at the very early stages. We really haven't really started it. It is very important to come along and talk

Today is about giving you a high-level overview of the program and getting some early thoughts from yourselves about how we can best engage around this piece of work. Thank you. Next slide. Sorry.

So, the overview of what we are proposing to do here as I said is really around linking together the body of data that the scheme has around expenditure on funded supports and the outcomes that are achieved by participants.

We set out on slide three there three very broad stages around the work. The first is understanding the link between funded support and participant outcomes. The second one gets into what does that mean from a policy perspective.

In terms of what do we learn from all of that that then can be fed into, I guess what we describe there is a more outcomes focused NDIS. Then the third broad point on the slide is around what would that mean from an implementation perspective.

I guess the point I would emphasise here is that that is sort of a pretty long-term program. Really, in the next six to 12 months we are going to be very much focused on that first question, which is doing the analysis and understanding those links.

I think I would emphasise here that when we talk about the benefits achieved by participants, we talk about scheme effectiveness, it is really important that that be a view or a perspective that is shared broadly. I mean, it clearly can't just be the agency's view.



So, when we talk about those benefits and how we are measuring those, that is why it is really important that we have a lot of consultation as we go around this piece of work.

Thank you. Next slide please. This slide four, for those following along, gives a little bit of context around this piece of work and I guess what we would regard as the sort of environmental and sort of government motivators for us to undertake this piece of work.

So, we have noted there on the slide the sections of the legislation that point towards the need for us to understand the effectiveness of funded supports.

We have highlighted the, I suppose, government context. Noting the intent of the incoming government or the new government, sorry, I should say.

Noting that this item around understanding scheme effectiveness has been called out previously by the joint standing committee, by disability, previous disability reform ministers meeting.

And lastly on this slide noting that, whilst we within the agency have historically undertaken – there has obviously been a lot of work undertaken historically in relation to scheme expenditure and there has historically been a lot of work undertaken in relation to spending undertaken by participants. The two have not been connected together and that is what this piece of work is about.

I will note, we have been having several conversations both inside and outside the agency about this piece of work. One of the things that has come up pretty strongly is that when we talk about outcomes achieved by the scheme, we recognise that there is no one single perfect view on what they are.

It is recognised that probably some of the data that tells us about that is not data held by the agency. So, when we take a long-term view of the single piece of work, I think ideally, we want to not just consider data held by the agency about outcomes, but to draw in other data sources as well.

That will take time and I think we, our position would be, we don't want to, we are going to start with the outcomes data that the agency has been collecting over a number of years. But over time, we would want to draw in other outcomes data that is held elsewhere. I think that is an important point to make here.

Thank you. Next slide. So, this slide, slide five goes to the point that we regarded as very important to get input. You know, from very early on in this piece of work from participants and from other key sector stakeholders.

And hence, this conversation is one such engagement. Particularly, I think, the question which I have alluded to previously around what outcomes matter? How do we actually measure effectiveness of the scheme?

There is an existing, the scheme or the agency has an existing outcomes framework that was developed in consultation with participants, with academics, with other stakeholders. But that was at the point prior to the scheme entering transition.

That is now six years old. So, given where the scheme is now at, it is timely to reopen the question around what outcomes matter. It is critical that we do that broadly.

So, really, the engagement plan, we haven't yet developed an engagement plan, but as I said, we are in the process of doing that. Discussions such as this one are really important in putting into that engagement plan. We will set out, what are the key questions and really as I said, the number one key question we think we have is what outcomes matter?

How do we consult and co-work with stakeholders on those questions? That question in particular. And who are those stakeholders? We are in the process, as I said, developing that engagement plan and that will be developing that in the next few weeks or months or so.

Thank you. So, this gives a sort of high-level outline of the phases of the program. I have sort of alluded to those on the, a couple of slides back. What I would emphasise is the first, that first phase, that key question which is around what are the key outcomes that matter most.

Building upon the outcomes data that the scheme has, the agency, sorry, has collected over a number of years. But trying to understand whether there are any gaps. So, what they are, and how we would go about filling those.

Phase 2 is around linking together the outcomes data. The data on funded supports, understanding those relationships. Then we move through I suppose, move through phases four and five which are around looking at those, what might a more optimal funding mix look like and then how would we go about achieving that.



The other point I will just make on this slide, it is not actually explicit here and I do apologise for that. We do think, as part of the governance of this piece of work, I think it is really important that we do have sufficient independent input into it.

So, it is not just the agency. As I said, we are the holders of the data, but we think it is really important that we have appropriate external input. We plan to have, we haven't quite worked out the model yet, but the current thinking is that we will have some sort of reference group of external experts, including academics, to guide and oversee the program of work.

Because we think it's really important that those perspectives are brought to the table. So, part of phase 1, which isn't called out on the slide, is the oversight and governance of the piece of work. I think that moves me to my final slide.

This then goes to the sort of very high level view of the milestones around the program of work. At this point, we are sort of anticipating that to do a full assessment of the effectiveness across all the different cohorts or participants in the scheme. I should have made the point earlier, we are not going to be assessing all the participants in one big analysis because we recognise there is a whole range of reasons why that would make sense.

This analysis will be undertaken quite a detailed participant cohort level. Within about two years, we anticipate program of work will have undertaken that analysis across all participant cohorts.

And then stepping back from that, in about a year's time, we would anticipate having I suppose a slightly higher level version of that analysis.

Looking back from that, the first milestone I call out on the slide is that in the, we anticipate that in this year's annual financial sustainability report releasing a very preliminary – I would emphasise preliminary – but indicative set of results.

They are probably just as much about showing that when we talk about sustainability of the scheme, it needs to be about linking together the scheme expenditure and benefits that participants achieve. The intention is that in the ASFR report that will be released in about three months time, that initial analysis will be presented.

We think it is just then, what that does from our perspective then, show that this is the direction we want to take when we talk about sustainability and the analysis would take around that and we hope that then would invite conversation and debate about the topic.

So, that is it for my slides. I'm not sure how I went with my two minutes, Liz?

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Pretty good. We have got four questions lined up already.

DAVID GIFFORD:

I would be a little surprised if we didn't on this topic.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We have Bill in the room, Robbi, Mary online, Catherine, and Mary in the room. That is five. And Neha. We will go to Bill first. Thank you.

BILL GYE:

Thank you, David. Bill Guy from Community Mental Health Australia. Very, very important work that I believe you are working on. In fact, in many ways, possibly the most important project if we could get this right.

I think particularly in relation to people with psychosocial disability, the great shame of the scheme in many ways is that the size of investment has not realised the recovery outcomes that we should have achieved in the scheme.

The data, the evidence is clearly there that the recovery model is based on a reality of people's capacity to improve their social and economic participation and other outcomes, if you have the right inputs in the investment.

What is not working and why is it not working becomes the key question. In that regard, I call as a witness, the proportion of funding that is still spent on core activities versus capacity building.

Part of the problem was to the creation of the recovery coach model, was a great model, it should not have gone to support coordination. Its role is to translate people from Core Supports budget capacity building. Wrong place for it to be.



It also needs to be a more highly remunerated role because the skill set involved is very core. I will briefly talk about this because this is probably more of a statement than a question and other people are keen to go. There are not many contexts where you get to put this out and I want to point to what I think is a conceptual complication but I don't think we have fully wrestled with just yet.

Many people if you asked them as a participant what are the goals and outcomes, won't be able to answer. They don't think in those terms initially.

What is lost really or what is not quite appreciated is that there is a set of competencies that need to be developed in a sequence, in a hierarchy with a lot of people. I guess I am saying this from 20 years of having worked on the front line where I am being paid to assist people through to outcomes and going spectacularly broke and being awake at 2 o'clock in the morning wrestling with this problem. For many, many years.

Some of those core capacities and the ones that are invisible is people's capacity for agency itself. It needs and requires development there. Learned helplessness will actually freeze people in a state of lack of agency and capacity. If you presume that is there and people will be able to identify their goals and needs and you move forward from that, you will presume something that is not actually there.

That needs to be a pretty early part of the decision support system. And skilled workers intuit this and know that this needs to happen. They are very good at doing it. But they are few and far between and the competency and remuneration that you need to attract and retain them I don't think is appreciated. Without that, we won't have those economic and social participation outcomes and the independence that that actually brings and with its implication for scheme sustainability.

I am not saying there is a simple solution, but I do think this is something that has been missed and somewhere that we need to talk about a bit more. My intention is to bring it up now from a 5000 feet distance. Pointed out.

DAVID GIFFORD:

I think as you said Bill, it is probably more of an observation than a question. The comment I would make is, and I will be, I want to manage expectations. As I said, it will basically be a years work to cover the breadth of cohorts across the scheme.

I guess I would hope that if this piece of work does its job properly, it would be a central place where we are looking at all cohorts across the scheme. The outcomes they are achieving and the relationship we can see. I would hope that it is doing its job properly, but suddenly my intention, that the points you made around, either it is particular supports such as recovery coaching or I suppose the sort of model more generally, it will highlight some of those gaps. And it will give it a bit more evidence to the extent that there is a lack of effectiveness in the current model. It will call that out and it will be more, it will be hard data to that effect. So, that is certainly the intention.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We will go to Robbie. Say your name again for the captioners.

ROBBI WILLIAMS:

Robbi Williams from JFA Purple Orange. We have had involvement in this space for a few years. I would probably go back about 15 years. We have been trying to understand outcomes, how to measure them and how that relates to investment. I remember having conversations with John Walsh and Sarah when they were at PricewaterhouseCoopers. I think... I'm a fan of social insurance and so... I think about outcomes. A fundamental challenge of the scheme is that if we want to measure impact, essential to what we are doing is gathering two sets of data, so outcome data is really the second dataset. The first dataset is the assessment and so to me, there is a compelling logic that the two sets of questions should be the same. When we think about outcomes, it is a bit... No one's fault, the phrase of social and economic participation because what passes for social participation might be someone taken by their support coordinator to a cafe and have no engagement with anyone and yet that will count that in the data as spending more time in the community, but it is pretty thin, an outcome (inaudible) the scheme should be satisfied with. When we think about scheme outcomes, I think we are thinking about outcomes important to us all, like the opposite of learned helplessness, the opposite, which is about hope and self-belief and personal agency and autonomy of my decisions, support for my decision so those ideas, very transformational outcomes but also things like work, friends, a home of my own. These are the outcomes I think the scheme would want to pursue and be proud of and want to know what types of investments best support that. I think a hurdle of the scheme is to try to change the balance in thinking about assessments from trying to assess disability to assessing the consequences of disability. Because there are many questions around how disabled someone is. In PEDI-CAT, there are questions like can you climb a ladder? Can you walk a kilometre with a 7 kg bag? What is seven Ks? We should only think about those questions in terms of outcomes. It doesn't make sense. With a scheme the size, there is nothing to stop the scheme, given outcomes are for half a million people that it should have its own instrument delivering on outcome data and a certain data. Because



otherwise what you have is a disconnect because you have a bunch of questions being asked about people's situations that lands (inaudible) investments but may have nothing to do with outcomes.

I will give a quick example.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We have eight people waiting.

ROBBI WILLIAMS:

People know what I am like. People have a 13 year old. Parents know what will be right that the child has a circle of supportive built friendship (inaudible) and other things that are meant to be helpful like therapy. They don't want kids to have therapy but friends. The danger is we ask the wrong questions at assessment and measuring disability, not consequence.

DAVID GIFFORD:

We have the data, it is broader, I'm sure you are well aware of that. I think that has been the body of data we have collected for six years. This is the point which I think we need to reopen, that question, and I'm sure... I have already heard a number of inputs. I have heard a few more from you. I think we need to be realistic that, to sort of build upon or to systematise collections of those outcomes data across the whole population and to then have that longitudinally, there is a (inaudible) we would need to make to that. We absolutely have to do that. I suppose it is a question of we want to get started on the work with our existing body of data to emphasise how important this is while at the same time really genuinely we are asking the question about whether we have those outcomes captured. A point well made.

MARY SAYERS:

My question is like Robbi's in terms of are we measuring the right outcomes? Obviously, for children and young people, sometimes we need to go by a theory of change rather than outcomes, so if children experience a high quality early childhood education, they are more likely to have a better transition to primary school. If they attend a mainstream school, they are more likely to have better outcomes than if they are segregated. So, I think we do need to have another look at the outcomes we are measuring because, under the NDIS, and we spoke about this earlier in the day, children in segregated education settings have actually increased rather than decreased and the evidence is very clear they have better life outcomes if they are fully included in Inclusive Education, so I think sometimes we are measuring the wrong things and calling them an outcome, and particularly the children and young people with disability who make up – I will say it again – 58% of scheme participants, I think now there has never been a better time now to look at outcomes of this cohort given they make up such a large proportion and if we look at lifetime investment, if we get these things right at the key transitions between preschools, schools, school to secondary school, post-school transition, the lifetime impacts will be so significant, so I would encourage you, David, to convene a special group to look at particularly children and young people because the outcomes are going to be different than for adults who the outcomes... There might be overlap but there will definitely be... And of course the data that is collected is often... That shows impact is often going to be outside the NDIA, things like education, jurisdictions.

If we look at children, for example, in out of home care, for example, you would hypothesise the children who have an NDIS plan would have a better transition to out-of-home care. We know that is not the case. I think there are nuances we want to look into in this outcomes discussion, so thank you.

DAVID GIFFORD:

Thank you, Mary. I'm repeating myself to a degree but hearing both the general support for considering the outcomes and some of the specific views for particular participant groups, that is an important part of this. I think what you have raised and proposed around just getting that detailed input, that is absolutely what we plan to do. Thank you.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Catherine Alpine?

CATHERINE McALPINE:

Catherine McAlpine. CEO of Inclusion Australia. Some people have said... There will be themes. Some people have said it more than me, but about bloody time! It is wonderful to hear you are doing this work. I would comment again – I completely agree with the questions about what are the outcomes? So, we would talk about links with Australia's Disability Strategy and UNCRPD. Definitions of social and economic participation not consistent with article 27. It's not economic participation if you are not earning a proper income and that we met at the moment your outcome, are you in paid employment? We have to look at definitions and what we mean by social and economic participation. We want to make sure you have a decent... It is representative of the participant mix. We don't hear enough voices from the people in the segregated settings for the people in the group homes, in ADEs, which is a huge expense and in the scheme is not the people you are hearing from directly so we need to make sure you have mechanism so you can hear what those might be and just the back of Mary in terms of the... And I know this is convex but the interface of the system. One thing Mary and I both talked



about at the Disability Royal Commission is how early childhood early intervention practitioners in the NDIA impact the choice of schools and part of the increase toward segregation is an interface between the NDIA and school systems and what can we do about that? Understand all of that is very complex but just really backing in the theme that you are hearing and to talk specifically of course about people with intellectual disability and particularly people in segregated settings.

DAVID GIFFORD:

Again, really appreciate the point. I think the point around how we sort of consider aspects of participants' environments and assistants other than the scheme and the scheme's funded support is an important question and we don't want to pretend it is part of the funded (inaudible) and it is long-term. I'm being idealistic. We are able to grapple with that together. The reality is that takes time but we have to start somewhere, starting now, and I think you're only at the start of this journey. Those firm views, I guess they only strengthen the commitment to make this as holistic and as meaningful as it can be for everyone, so thank you.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We will go to Mary Mallett in the room next.

MARY MALLET:

Thanks. A plea for all the engagement and communications about this has to be done so carefully or there is a really significant risk what will happen is people will leap to a conclusion that what this is all about is... It will make people really know this and they will think there are good participants achieving the goals and bad participants who do not achieve goals. And the ones who think they might be in the bad participants, obviously, this will not be anything coming out from the agency, but that is how people might see and perceive and feel it, that if they never get to be one of the good ones, they will kind of stay quiet and hide away and why would you participate in anything to do with having outcomes measured? They will be petrified that, "I am a bad one and did not achieve my goals and all my money will be taken away and I will not get support." That is a huge risk. There is sophisticated communication required around this process and including translating some of those lovely economic terms that you had in there and very early on as soon as you can, you need the right people in the room to turn that stuff into plain English and Easy Read version and see what it looks and sounds like before it goes anywhere out into the public arena.

DAVID GIFFORD:

It is. I think the way I have I have presented (inaudible) is not as broadly accessible for a broader audience. Thanks.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

We have three questions left.

NEHA:

Neha from the National Ethnic Disability Alliance. I have one question and two comments maybe. With respect to this, (inaudible) as well. I know you have been collecting data for six years. At what point are you starting to look at the data that has already been collected to analyse this investment effectiveness to look at it?

In terms of like, I think like Mary and others have mentioned, there will be a few factors that will change all the time like policies and service delivery design that will lead to different outcomes for people.

In that regard, how is that change reflected in (inaudible) and how are you looking into it? That would be one. Another one is, when you speak about economic outcomes, are you also looking at social outcomes? If yes, I looking at different cohorts and what those social outcomes mean two different cohorts and being able to tangibly in a way record it?

DAVID GIFFORD:

OK. I think in terms of their economic and social outcomes, absolutely. I think the domains, the outcomes that we currently collect are sort of under the, there are eight domains collected. I won't listen more, but economic and social participation. There are debates about whether social participation measures are the right ones. Health and well-being, lifelong learning, home and living.

I would say they are both economic and social participation outcomes. Social outcomes. That said, I will again reiterate what I have said previously. They need to be perceived by stakeholders as the right economic and social participation outcomes.

In terms of your question about using that data that we have, yes, we asks of effectively starting roughly as we speak that analysis. Using that six-year body of data that we have.

As I said, it is the work that will be taking place over the next 12 months. Alongside this really important question around what is the sort of, what is the next phase of the outcomes that we need to be collecting?



We sort of, we don't want to, if we waited to ask that question to collect more, to potentially gather more outcomes data and analyse that, we will be waiting a couple of years. We feel we have got to do both. But it definitely has to be both. It is not just using the data we have got. I think I missed your second question.

NEHA:

I think you got them. Am I right that you are developing a model now that will be ongoing?

DAVID GIFFORD:

We are building a mathematical model that links together the funded support and the outcomes. There is a pilot phase that we will be reporting in the annual financial sustainability report for a cohort of participants.

That will be the first, I guess the first set of results. As I said, I think the emphasis will not so much beyond the results themselves, but more around the fact that when we talk about sustainability, this is now what we mean.

We are really trying to flag that this is what we are undertaking without I suppose initially at least focusing on the results. It is probably that analysis that will be delivered in about 12 months time, which we will be building on the body of data we have got. But as I acknowledge, we will use the outcomes we have that will be that modelling.

As I said, that modelling between funded supports and the outcomes data.

NEHA:

Apologies, one last thing. This is the bit I am having a talk about. There will be factors that will change over time, like policy and service delivery design that impacts outcomes. Is there a scope for that to be taken into consideration when you are developing that?

DAVID GIFFORD:

I won't go into the detail of the models now. I guess, we are intending to have a very academically rigorous methodology. As I said, we will definitely have external academic oversight of that. It is certainly not just a sort of, obviously we are looking at participants who have been in the scheme for different time periods, who have received different levels of funded support over that time period.

We need to have that dimension over time and what changes over time absolutely will be part of the models.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, Neha. If we could go to Bob online, you have been very patient. Thank you.

BOB BUCKLEY:

I guess these are sort of as much comments as questions really. My first concern really is, in a piece of work like this, you really need to have highly multifaceted outcomes.

There is not one sort of model of outcomes. One of the things that we really have to do is show for the whole community, not just for participants, what the benefits are.

One of the biggest challenges is working out how we describe the outcomes of the NDIS for the whole community. Now, legislatively and economically, we are probably going to be thinking primarily about participants.

But when it comes to messaging, it has to be the whole community and the politicians. It is really important that we do that. So, we sort of look at economic goals, which are things like employment.

But then I haven't seen much measurement of independence or reporting of independence, which is probably a pretty important goal for a lot of participants.

To get both of those things, you actually have to have education outcomes. So, you can't just look at the employment and independence outcomes without looking at how you get there through education.

And underlying all of this, you actually have to measure rights outcomes. So, the rights of people in so many areas. All of this comes down to a whole bunch of things around quality of life.

And how you choose which ones you make your sort of object function in your modelling varies depending on what your perspective is. So, it is actually a really complicated piece of work.

We need to be looking not only at these things, but health, we need to be looking at the outcomes for formal and informal carers. All of these things come into it.



So, there is a really challenging piece of work and I guess my really big question is, is what steps are you going to take to make sure that you don't just focus within the silo of the NDIS. What are you going to do to make sure that you look across all those other areas of government that cover all of those outcomes areas?

It is a really essential thing that we measure way beyond just the sort of simple to measure things for participants. That is what I wanted to ask.

DAVID GIFFORD:

Look, hopefully it is at least a partial answer, Bob. We are currently in – the very initial work we are doing is around I suppose scanning and gathering at a participant cohort level, both outcome measures that are collected elsewhere that on, that complement what the scheme collects. Also, going to the point you just made, what other supports, funding elements, system components that contribute to the outcomes that participants achieve, other than those that are delivered by the scheme.

It certainly is, there is a recognition I can say genuinely upfront that the scheme is one part of a broader system. What that actually means from a sort of modelling and data point of view is complex as I think you would appreciate.

Because the data that we have most readily to hand is the sort of scheme data. But what I think is really important when we present results for the first time is to provide clarity that where we are aware that there are other funding, there are other inputs, funding sources that we recognise what we are doing is only a subset of all of that.

And that we have a process and a path to get there towards that broader perspective. So, as I said, I know I am reiterating this point. The purpose of coming along and having this conversation early is to hear that input and to, and so that the next time I come and talk to you which I hope is not too far away, will give a bit more detail so you can actually see something on paper. It is not just me talking. That shows that path to sort of recognise the broader data, the broader ecosystem that we are operating within here.

So, hopefully that is at least partly adjust your question.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, David and Bob. Just go to the last question now before we wrap up. Leanne?

DR LEANNE BEAGLEY:

I am the CEO at Mental Health Australia. We cover the whole sector and that includes people with lived experience of mental illness and those that love and care for them. Just a couple of issues. There is a cohort issue that has been raised.

There is a cohort issue though about the intersectional issues, particularly from our perspective, children and young with mental illness. Or, you know, LGBTQI people with mental health issues et cetera.

I am hoping that your model will be able to understand or address that. It is people are not in discrete cohorts. The second issue is that when there is a recovery aim as Bill talked about earlier, people living in the community, we need to grapple with what the client themselves longs for and what they want to see.

The model somehow has to grab that and I think that is really challenging. A recent conversation I had with someone with that experience was that they wanted a house. Something to love and something to do. What do you want, Leanne?

Sector sustainability is a big issue in mental health. I'm sure it is in other sectors, but I am just speaking from the mental health sector. The workforce issues, the capability in the workforce, that might be turning over is a real problem around sustainability.

And a challenge that hopefully can be picked up in this model. The last issue is around transparency of what you learn. So, we have more probably interface engagement with the department of health.

They are good at consulting us up front, but not sharing what they learn. We need to know what you learn. And what we can contribute going forward to solutions that are identified through the model.

There are 140,000 people who have severe, enduring, persistent mental illness who do not access the NDIS and do not get state funded services. So, the states and territories, PHNs, and the water sector could learn a lot from the model you are developing. So, understanding the model and outcomes would be very important. Thank you very much.

DAVID GIFFORD:



Thank you. I will comment. Suddenly, the principle around transparency and sharing this early and often I think is a really important one.

You know, I think the point, the other point you made around cohorts not being really discrete is a really important callout as well. Thank you.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

I got it wrong. Ross is in the queue. He is the last person in the queue, so we will take a question from Ross Joyce.

ROSS JOYCE:

Thanks for the presentation. I will start off by saying I am alert, not alarmed. The reason I would say that is I am happy always to get involved in a process to look at outcomes measurement. I think that is a responsibility all of us have in any program or thing that we may be doing.

Certainly, in this one, which was a lot of money goes into that. A lot of money from taxpayers. And it impacts quite a lot across communities.

But I suppose my alert bit is just about, I think we need to be really clear about, you know, you are working on it, we need to be really clear about what are we doing this for. The end result. What other problems we want to store by that and work towards that as part of what the framework that is being put together.

And colleagues have mentioned a few things. I would like to reinforce Leanne's. I think workforce and how that development is happening is another underlying issue with the outputs and the end result you can get.

So, there is quite a few things in there. It is not a simple case of looking at the participant data that we might have. We have to drill into that a lot further and look at the nuances of what else can impact on those outcomes.

Because I think Mary mentioned, we don't want to end up in a situation where people with disability are feeling like you are either in the bad lot or a good lot. That is not what it is about. It is about looking at, what do we need to do to stop those blockages and encourage and ensure putting in other means that we can ensure better outcomes for the participants.

That has got to be reflective of where they are as well and we know that is a big issue. It is a big issue for getting supports and services here in Australia, but particularly for rural and remote and very remote stuff.

And finishing up point was... I need a coffee. The finishing up point was asked being more involved in the process and working on that. Which I know your intention is to do that. The other one though me to say was, it is not all just about data. Sorry to disappoint you, David. It is not all just data. It is about the stories and case studies that we do know and I will put that in the context of the good, the bad, and the ugly.

I think it is also about pulling that into the report as well, any sort of reporting that is going on. To reflect what is happening for people in more than just a data outcome context.

DAVID GIFFORD:

The pedant in me would say it is data. Qualitative, rather than quantitative. I'm not trying to be a smart Alec. I agree. It is qualitative data that brings it to life. I think we need the best... I guess, academics will have their own views, but in my personal view, is that the best research is mixed methods. It covers both. If all we have is a quantitative model, think it doesn't really fully... Doesn't fully go to effectiveness. I guess... A piece we haven't really thought through... There are a couple of levels which can provide qualitative value. Do it with case studies but you can do more formal, qualitative research that accompanies that. I think that is something we need to have a think about.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thanks, David and Ross. I have taken a lot of notes that each person made starting from it is complicated work, right down to being clear why we are doing this and the communication has to be done really carefully and lots of interesting (inaudible) might be involved. Thanks a lot, David. It is 3:15 PM now, so we will move to Lisa's last spot if that is OK. And... Can you see Lisa online or does she need to sit on the side? Can someone put something in the chat? Can see Lisa. Brilliant.

LISA STUDDERT:

I won't say very much. It has been really wonderful to be here in the room today with some of you, and I'm glad I could talk to some of you but not all of you and I of course am missing people on the screen but I'm intent on engaging with you more in coming months. I thank you for your genuine contribution, robust advice, honest feedback and that is very much welcomed. As Martin said at the beginning, I step into the shoes of the CEO from midnight tonight, acting CEO, for a period of months whilst CEO recruitment is underway. A bit of a daunting task. I feel the weight of the responsibility for such (inaudible) important scheme and for an agency full of colleagues



and professionals that I have an enormous amount of respect for at this time, but I also know I'm well supported and I would ask the same from you in terms of honest and frank advice as we go forward as to what is working, what is not, what I can help with, what I cannot and I would like to do what I can with the full responsibility in mind. I have been saying to my team, I have in my mind three key objectives for the coming months given where we are at with the scheme, nine years old, the agency and the context of the current day.

I want to support the agency and the government by ensuring we support the new Minister and the new government. It is a time of change in Canberra, as the saying goes, but I think we feel that broadly across Australia and there's some optimism, probably helped by the long tail end of the pandemic but we could work collectively to bring that spirit of renewal and change to the scheme and agency for participant benefits. It doesn't serve any of us to feel sombre and negative about the future. So I would like to work with you all to support the Minister to do what his ambitions are and obviously, he is the elected official and he is who we serve and I would like to work with you, the sector, to deliver on the optimism and sense of renewal there is and of course my responsibilities are also for the agency to ensure it remains highly operational and CEO-ready for the next leader. So, I will have to do the things that have to be done as the CEO to keep an agency of over 5000 people to keep it running as it needs to.

So, that is my agenda, and I look forward to working with you to deliver that, but most importantly, continuing to improve the scheme and make it the best it can be for the participants and the Australian community. I will leave it at that.

LIZ CALLAGHAN:

Thank you, Lisa. Lots of comments in the chat wishing you all the best and smiley faces.

We have some actions that have come out of today, quite a lot actually, which the team will distribute among the group after the meeting and I think we captured them all. I will not go through them now because I don't want to (inaudible) play with the words a little bit but Garth has offered to go through the Community Connections, Community Practice about the community risk and Sam offered to provide a sandbox version of the PACE tools. Sam Bennett's had a couple of actions around the theory of change and commitment to meet with Inclusion Australia and really identifying the codesign opportunities for this group, for the First Nations and CALD strategy refresh. An important session today was the AAT session and a strong commitment there to providing regular updates to this group including data and development and of course engagement processes for the model with this group and then with Dave just now, we have got a very clear message, everyone is keen to be involved so we will set up a process for that as well.

Thank you for everyone's time today. It has been a long day for people online, so thank you for hanging in there. There are a couple of things in the chat about different summits and requests for speakers for conferences and things, so have a look at that. That will be good. And we will catch up and I am aware that we did have our future of the DRCO Forum discussion, we committed to doing strategic planning. We really need to talk to the Minister's office around his preferred approach as well. We probably, realistically, would be looking to something in August, July's school holidays and everything is getting away and it is 1 July today, but we will do our best, and as always, the stakeholder engagement team led by Matt Wright is an open door, as am I. Thanks to the team for organising the meeting today. Matt is unwell, so could not join us, but he was online and listening intently and messaging me all the time. And to the captioners, of course. Thanks, everyone, and thanks, Mary, for starting so early over in Perth. Enjoy the school holidays.

ALL:

Thanks.



SPEAKER:

Hello.

SPEAKER:

I think we might start. It's 11:04. Welcome, everyone and thanks for attending today's session. To talk about the future of the DRCO forum. As most of you know, I am Liz Callighan, Branch Manager for Codesign. And Jamie is an apology today. I will chair today's meeting.

Just to start off, I would like to pause and acknowledge the Traditional Owners on the land on which we are meeting. I'm coming to you from the Ngunnawal lands in Canberra and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. In all the Elders from other communities, who may be here today. And acknowledge who you are coming from, across the country. I would also like to pay respect to people with disabilities, which is the reason why the NDIS was built.

You would have received the meeting materials. We try to have it in March, but we put it off. I'm keen today to hear what people want. This was the future, was tabled in the last meeting in March. We had put a bit of a paper to talk about the current state of the forum. From the agency's point of view, the main aim was to consult with all of you. We have had workshops on occasion, to give DRCO opportunity to deep dive into issues. We do have a couple still in train. They are really useful when we want to deal with a broader audience. And the establishment of the Co-Design Advisory Group and steering committee, which is another mechanism for you or to provide advice on both scheme reform and policies. Many of you are involved in the work.

That paper that we send, it's not too long to look at. Matt took a couple of soundings from as many people as he could, to see what people wanted. The most frequent thing suggested was perhaps regular guest speakers sourced by DRCO, regular presentations to showcase current projects you are working on. I think that would be really useful. To share any insights on emerging issues that you are hearing.

The main one was to strengthen the focus on discussions, of a strategic nature, with the CEO and senior agency executives. I might just say, Martin committed yesterday to come to the DRCO Forum on 1 July, as his last thing. That is his last day. He has highly valued the DRCO Forum, and going forward, Lisa will also be there. Going forward, there's a b commitment from the CEO to continue engaging with this groupz.

One of the suggestions with developing the agenda jointly, so it's not just one way. And to maybe broaden the topics on codesign. That was a broadbrush thing. I'm interested to open it up, and see what you want. Not necessarily how you think it is working. You can if you want to. You are more than welcome to. Just trying to look to the future, and trying to build some consensus of what you want to change, what we need to do to facilitate that. It's a really important time at the moment, in the scheme. There's a lot of change and we have a new government. We have a very engaged Minister, which is terrific.

Simon, first one up. Why don't you go first?

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Liz. I don't know how my colleagues feel about this. Get the feeling that the agency doesn't understand exactly what codesign is at the moment. It seems to be more focused and extended consultation and a tweaking of the details process. I would like there to be a regular section of the agenda, which talks about the issues that are emerging for the agency at the time,



before you come up with a policy and solution. And recruited staff to deal with these issues. So that we can provide our input at the start, rather than tinkering with something that you have come up with. That is a huge problem with IA's. It will happen again, unless we are involved early on, from my perspective.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Simon. Definitely that would be something useful to do, to have that as a standing item on agendas.

I need to put the people caption on. Mary?

SPEAKER:

Thanks very much, Liz. I don't know if it was a deliberate strategy. The challenges, there are service providers stakeholders and represented organisation stakeholders. Previously, we had people like NDIS and the like. I'm not suggesting we change the format, but we need a way to bring together the feedback... I'm not sure what other consultative processes, if you have a similar forum as well. Because some of the problems and resolutions will require service providers input. And we need to be able to have input on service providers and they need to be able to – they are part of the solution, moving forward.

I don't know what the best format is. I'm not trying to derail. We are all stakeholders in the improvement of the NDIS. How do we think about bridging some of that divide. Others may disagree.

SPEAKER:

I think that's a good observation. There is a provider forum that sort of replicates this forum, if you like. Not exactly. A couple of times a year we could bring them together. Without having providers involved in the DRCO for all the time, we could identify a few times a year.

That is coming out in some of the codesign work. You have to have everyone in the room, including participants, to be talking about some of these big issues. Good one, Mary. Thanks. Yvonne?

SPEAKER:

Gosh. I'm trying not to be too sombre, because I'm feeling really sombre off the back of the announcement yesterday. As an advocate, probably everyone in the room feels the same. I feel like we are on a hamster wheel, of trying to inform and engage with CEOs. Finally, we prosecute our cases and we get some traction, then we get a new CEO.

We start again. Meanwhile, there is valuable time and traction lost. In our area, as children, and generations of children will be affected and more disabled than they need to be. I'm feeling very sombre. A bit devastated today, that we are on this hamster wheel.

I understand the reasons behind the restructuring, I really feel like the voice of young children and their families as being lost. I don't feel like there is a place for me really, to have a voice. We know that so many participants are children. The numbers are quite astronomical. And they are only going to continue to grow.

We have a targeted action plan now, finally. Explicitly for children under the Australian disability strategy. But we don't have a codesign group for children or early childhood in particular. I think



that's important and I feel like we have lost the traction. Most forums that I sit in, our adult focus. I think we need to clearly call out that there are different needs in early childhood, and to support children and families in those early childhood years. I would like to see a focus on that in the codesign process, rather than feeling like we are tacked on.

Like I said, I'm feeling sombre and melancholic this morning. I feel like a voice has been lost and diluted in this effort to streamline the process and make it more effective.

SPEAKER:

Thank you for sharing that. I think everyone will have very... different feelings as well. We will take on board what you have just said. I will leave it there for now, we will know that. Thanks, Evonne. Good reflection. Robbie?

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Liz. I have long haul travel brain, I flew in from London yesterday evening. I came in from the direct flight, London to Perth. 16 hours on a plane, a new experience. No COVID as yet.

With the future of the forum, it feels like it's about how you get a successful relationship between the NDIA and the demand sector, particularly in the light of the difficulties around navigating certain scheme issues. Like for example, independent assessments. That has raised the question of relationships and trust. While successful relationships are important, that's not the goal. The goal the former is not a successful relationship between the NDIA and the sector, for its own sake. It is in the context of how it can work together, to advance the outcomes of the scheme.

That is surely why we meet, otherwise why are we here? I think the future mechanics of the forum need to have that clear as its context. That in some way, this forum is designed to advance the design of administration of the NDIS, in support of the outcomes and values that it is charged with. Along the way, raises questions around how we support the exchange of information, between the NDIA and the participants representative community, so that both are mutually well-informed. That contributes to it.

In terms of the future mechanics of the forum, it needs more focus as its context. It needs clear commitment to neutrality of information, in the way it conducts its work. It comes down to, what does the methodology look like? Build that into the forum. And how is the work coordinated? There is a range of issues that fee NDIS is trying to navigate.

There is a need to coordinate that. We know that you can't run those issues within a CEO for a meeting. There's no way you can do that, this too much discuss, too much to say. You can't transact it all, in that space. The question is coordination. For me, aside from the neutrality of communication, part of the role is to serve as a clearinghouse, if you like. Which goes to your Yvonne's point around kids. How do we make sure that if it's around a particular issue, that the forum is coordinating work so that the right voices are in the room, to actually advance those matters?

Which goes to the point... codesign. Who mentioned it?

SPEAKER:

Simon.



SPEAKER:

There is codesign, but also coproduction, consultation. And also process design. One of the key challenges that we have at the moment in the scheme and the forum, the DSS is doing something similar. In the headlong rush better codesign, we are in danger of losing sight of while codesign is a way to get everyone in the room, what it may not have in it, is process design methodology.

I think that is what has been happening with the DSS. With the DES mechanism. They are falling over themselves to involve people from sector. Whilst we might be concerned about the shortness of the timeframe, the intent has been authentic. What is missing is process design. To me, there is a hamster wheel. We have a risk of trying to be good at codesign, but not moving forward to solutions. Because what is missing is process design.

For me, part of the future success of the form is how it runs a body of work. How that information is being transacted, and everyone feels mutually well-informed. So that the right people in the room, and running the most appropriate methodology, for the work that needs to be done – whether it is consultation, codesign and process design. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Robbie. I don't think you have long haul brain at all. That was very comprehensive.

Interesting because I have been talking about process design this week. You are on the money there. We are taking everything down, can tell you. Alan?

SPEAKER:

It's interesting, we have had this discussion from time to time about what it is for. When it started, it was really that the CEO had no formal link with the sector. It was cobble together and called the CEO group. It survived and here we are.

We now have this codesign process. We have these four committees, who are doing work in segments. As Yvonne said, there is stuff left out in these areas, and there is more that needs to go on. We now have the strategy, a group advising the strategy. Who knows what advisory structure the minister will create. There was the people with disability and carer counsel, the last time labour was in.

What is it that we need as organisations? I think there is a danger of us missing out on the stuff that we really care about and are working towards. There is the dilemma, we come along with policy outcomes or systemic change campaigns, and we want to talk to the scheme about this, and they don't want to listen. Because there is no capacity to do policy work.

So, we have the codesign work that could be focused on scheme administration. We don't want to meet and talk about what forms to fill in. That is basic scheme administration, which is not of interest to us. Whether or not we could involve DSS somehow. The other thing is that the bilateral is being renegotiated. We've been talking with the health department was taking a lead on some of that. There's some fairly critical things about how the scheme interacts with the health system and education. That's the stuff we are really interested in. There's a crossover with the strategy.

Given that we are working in a different context, because of the codesign committees and the strategies that come. Going to Robbie's point of outcomes. We actually need to... rather than



having meetings that are lily pads. And the next meeting goes ahead as a last will never happen. It's just another chance to get together for a cup of tea and talk. We need to have some change outcomes.

The scheme, up to now, have not been an advocate and player in the disability space. Maybe with this new government, the scheme may get some teeth and energy around that. That is what we are wanting the scheme to do. Whether it's about the universal design stuff. About education.

The Royal Commission is going on. There some stuff that is coming out, that is devastating. But there is no capacity to talk about it, and I think... Obviously a lot to think about. I want to steer us away, as far as possible, from scheme of administration.

We have been on parallel tracks where we are having one discussion, and the scheme wants to have another one. And we are working towards some serious systemic change outcomes, to the point where we can have discussions, to advise DSS on what to say. Because the last one was about funding splits. Let's actually pin them down, for the national insurance scheme. We need to have more like national partnerships, then just funding deals.

That's the stuff we can contribute to. I think we need to actually lift our eyes a bit with this group.

(Multiple speakers)

SPEAKER:

I was nodding, well said. Nodding so furiously, I think I have neck strain.

SPEAKER:

Definitely a strategic plan of work. So you can see what is coming.

Bob, you are next up.

SPEAKER:

Wasn't expecting it so quickly. (Laughs)

I want to start by thanking Yvonne for her comments, about the need for children's representation. I think this not a real understanding of the fundamental difference between the NDIS for children and adults. I will completely disagree with her of the turnover of CEOs. If they keep appointing bankers as CEOs, turn them over as fast as you can.

SPEAKER:

I am with you on that, Bob.

SPEAKER:

One of my big concerns about the codesign area, is that there is a whole lot data, with no codesign. We are not even been consulted about this, not talking about it. In the space of children and autism, you can even collect the diagnosis properly. Not that I can see anything inside the system, it is supersecret and definitely not transparent.

My other big concern is that culturally, the whole organisation, we are dealing with a whole bunch of IAT cases. The NDIS disbelief's absolutely everything that is said by the participant. You cannot negotiate with an organisation that doesn't believe in word you say. It is just impossible.



Another thing is, the national autism strategy. I haven't had a word about this, and where that fits with this DRCO forum. I can't even imagine. I just wanted to raise these issues.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Bob. Katie?

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Liz. Two points. Firstly to the cross championing government role of the agency, absolutely would love to see what is being put their by others before me. Also with my carers hat on, we now sit across 10 different ministers and assistant ministers. (Laughs) I can see Yvonne laughing. You have seven.

A lot of us will be working in this complicated, messy ministry space. That is another reason why it be great to see the agency become more of a positive champion, across governmental space.

My second thing is, I can't remember which iteration of this group of people it was discussed in. At some point, we sit in the codesign process, we need to be both up skilling people in agency and sector. I know there was a lot of enthusiasm, but we will need to be on the same page and be working towards the same framework. Everyone needs to be on that together. I was expecting to see something like that under 3.3, suggested changes. Just putting that back on the table. Thanks.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, Katie. Mary? Good morning.

SPEAKER:

Hi, everyone. So, my camera is not working.

Just following what Katie was saying there and others, about the intersection between what the NDIA does in other parts of government. There is a role that our organisations should be playing in the work that should be happening between the NDIA, DSS and NDIS commission. There should be a clear and obvious, ongoing, b partnership, and working through vicious between the DDS, NDIS policy, and the commission and agency. I don't see that it happens well behind the scenes.

Many of us are involved in either/or the commission and agency. It appears to be impossible to get them to talk to each other properly. So, they sit in meetings as observers as part of steering committees, and maybe at some level they do talk to each other. But we are not allowed in the room when they do. There's so much that needs to be done there. I keep asking them, at all levels, and I am not making any inroads at all. I have to say. All this siloing is really significant. And should be looked at, with us in the room. I don't have the solution to that, because honestly, I have an trying and failed miserably. Completely and utterly.

Some sort of strategy to tackle that, I would love if we could be part of that. That's my bit for the day.

In the past, we have had bits and pieces, having people from DSS present. But that's not the thing. They come in presentation mode, they're not listening and open. That is not the solution,



bringing them in one at a time to do presentations.

For the agency to be brave enough to raise, at an early stage, when there is a significant problem. The same kind of thing, the DSS people and commission need to do the same thing. To have all the heads together, to know about the potential solutions. It's not just about the agency.

SPEAKER:

That's a good point, Mary.

I'm trying to turn my mind to the DRCO Forum. And the CEO forum. And how it can work to best pickup some of these issues raised. Particularly the intersectionality. That's a big thing.

I think some started off by saying we need a lot of time to talk about the emerging issues. That's where some of the stuff falls in presumably. We need a work plan for the future.

We don't want to be caught up in being presented to, in terms of scheme admin issues. I heard that loudly from Alan. Not so interested. We want to get the meat of everything.

How are we going to do that? I hear everything. How does this work? I want to hear more. What would that look like? If we do that well, what would it look like.

SPEAKER:

Mary, again. I dived in.

Why couldn't we have those meetings, an active facilitator of those meetings. And we have a white board, the visual stuff happening in the room. These days, it's always going to be hybrid meetings, some people online and some in the room.

Capturing as things are being discussed. This is something that the NDIS absolutely has to be involved in, the solution to this. I'm struggling to work out how you could have a work plan for this group. Maybe we build it. Start at the next meeting, and see what comes out of it. What kind of actions do you build? Including these other stakeholders.

So, that's not a real answer. I think there are some things we could be doing better...

SPEAKER:

Mary, is that that the next DRCO forum is a mapping exercise? Who is involved from a structural point of view, within the agency, health, DSS... and work plan and approach falls out of that. Is that what you're talking about, Mary?

SPEAKER:

Yes. And Yvonne has made a similar point in the chat.

SPEAKER:

So, haven't looked at the chat. Alan? You are on mute.

SPEAKER:

Part of our issue is the whole advisory structure is immature. We are still stuck with it, six years down the track, all there is officially. We are an unofficial group.



Looking at the key issues, I wonder if we could be helpful in working with the agency, to look at a more mature consultation framework. Going on at the CEO level is fine for us, but a lot of the key decisions, we need to have entry points. Not as necessary, but we need some connections with the agency at each level and state. If we assume, as the scheme goes, we won't have a one size fits all approach. Whether you are three or 40. There should be cohort specific responses to different things.

But it won't, if we only have a couple of very high level groups advising the scheme. One at the board level and executive level. Below us, there is nothing. Nothing at a state level. I think we have to be get serious, you know. I think stakeholder mapping is a good idea. As well as the work plan issues.

SPEAKER:

You mentioned earlier, Alan, the fact that there was... what did we call it? What was the council that the carers...?

SPEAKER:

Jenny's Advisory Council. It put in submissions to Senate inquiries, and wrote to government. And as a group...

SPEAKER:

Bringing it back to the DRCO Forum, that could be something at the next meeting.

Sorry, the light.

And advice is provided through to the agency. On preferred advisory structures going forward. And making the links to state and territories. And having the teeth to make a difference. You were saying, if I heard you write, we have this DRCO Forum and then nothing. It also doesn't have an authority, if you like. That sort of thing.

Exploring that at the next forum...

SPEAKER:

As well as issue-based stuff. We need to do some work around the advisory structure and what the scheme needs, in terms of being outward facing. Apart from you and your team.

SPEAKER:

Yeah. What else was I going to say? It was gone. Too many things in my head.

What else does success look like? To not waste your time. What does that look like? Anyone?

SPEAKER:

It is Katie speaking. I thought I would read Jenny's comment. Jenny, you are there?

SPEAKER:

I thought I better start talking. Hi, everyone.

I was thinking, to do a great stakeholder mapping exercise and work out our action and to be a clearinghouse, does anything prevent a working group putting up their hand, to then workshop together in the next DRCO Forum. I'm not being impatient or anything. But there are a lot of



stakeholders to work through, at a subsystem level and at this level. Because we know that there are disability strategies, autism strategies, health roadmaps, everything going on at the same time.

To then work out, what is our role? Where should we be involved? Where are the intersections? I think that is what the group is keen to do. It's hard to move forward, without an action plan. There's a lot going on. It's hard to work out the purpose and role of this group. I agree with Robbie's comments. This group, when it gets together, is almost the governance clearinghouse for whatever its purposes. What I'm saying, the arms and legs, coming back and presenting as a group, and agreeing what that looks like. We are forever revisiting... are we here to review communications, are we here to address policy issues? It's so dynamic. We need outcomes. Things are happening a lot faster than every three months.

We can form some working groups to take traction of the work. And this should be the clearinghouse, to bring it back and see if we are on track. Because everyone can't be in every working group. I hope some of that make sense.

SPEAKER:

Thanks for that, Jenny. I'm wondering, we could do that between now... obviously, the agency has a lot of stakeholder mapping available to it. I hope I can say this, because Jamie is not here, but we could do it together. That would be great. Let's do that.

Anyone that wants to volunteer for that, we could do that. Thinking maybe the DRCO Forum on 1 July is a strategic planning session. It's about going into more detail. We have an hour and 1/2, we really need a structured process, through a whole day, to build a consensus that we are after.

So that everyone's needs are being met, we have a clearer forward plan. Whether that is a work plan or we clearly understand what the process mapping is that we need to do. And all those moving parts. I'm sure the Minister would be very interested in that as well.

And maybe, I don't know... I don't know if I will get into trouble for this. That's what we should do. Because we want to reset a bit, is what I'm hearing? I'm hearing that it's not meeting your needs. I think a lot has changed over time. We have tried to meet that need, but I think things have changed quite significantly over the last couple of years. And we can make it better, probably.

I don't know. What do people think about that?

That's what I want to do.

SPEAKER:

I think it's a great thing. Jenny has nailed it. To be used more effectively and efficiently, to deliver more agile solutions, to represent the people.

I can't see the chat today. I can put my hand up, I can't see anything.

SPEAKER:

I will go through the chat in a minute, Yvonne. Jenny has a hand up.

SPEAKER:

It would be fantastic if the Minister was able to drop in. If you can't, do a recording. I know he is



speaking at the DSC forum. So we get a picture, a regular update of what he is thinking to do. I know as the Australian Autism Alliance, is a strategy and a six-point plan, all these things. How these all come together. And DSS has roles, Royal Commission. As his group comes up, how that might come together. And maybe we can be the group in the workshop on 1 July, to be mapping where the stakeholders fit and how intersect with it.

Maybe he wants to give us that task.

SPEAKER:

I think that would be good information for the Minister in his office. If we did that.

Yvonne, just to look through some of the chat. Jenny had suggested about the stakeholder mapping exercise. We have talked to that. Act as a clearinghouse, as Robbie suggested. That will identify work that can be done off-line. Simon said, he would love the opportunity to raise opportunities direct to senior management.

You can always do that, Simon. There is an open door, to Matt's team.

SPEAKER:

I understand, but I would like to do it in a public forum.

SPEAKER:

I understand that now. Just looking...

Bill and Robbie had to leave. Now they are back. (Laughs)

And Lisa said that she would like to see a clear articulation of the purpose and scope of the group and any of the associated working groups. That sounds good.

Bob, did you want to say something? No?

SPEAKER:

I will, actually.

Groups like this are always very difficult. How to make it work? People often put a whole bunch of topics, and then we prioritise. Some will be at the bottom, that never gets done. I think that is a very broken model for getting anything done. A group like this needs to identify problems, and there needs to be a timeline for addressing.

An agreement about what the outcome should look like. That is what this group needs to focus on. What are the issues? What is the timeline for addressing them? And what is a successful outcome look like? It's actually up to the people who implement it. It's really a broken model for doing things.

The people who are going to do it, are going to come up with the solutions. And the people who know the field, can say that these things may need to be addressed as well. There is a whole culture around how you do this stuff. And not what we normally do. It needs to get more into the nitty-gritty than what we normally do.

SPEAKER:



I think that's been a consistent thing over time. Being able to use the forum and the 26 DRCOs, to problem identify. Really identify what the issues are.

You are saying, it's not coming to you for solutions necessarily. Yes.

SPEAKER:

It is coming to us in saying that this might work, and we are committed to doing it. That is the only way that will get commitment to dealing with these outcomes. They have to be open to listening to what the problems are. There's a bit of a process challenge around this, it's a big culture shift to go that way.

It's quite difficult. That's if it can be done.

The other thing is, this model means that not everybody has to be committed to every item. We can have subgroups. You are looking for a model where all these people can have the input, and actually deliver outcomes. We need a structure that will do that. And the conventional ways don't work.

SPEAKER:

I do recall... 12 months ago or 18 months ago, that was definitely one of the things. Not everyone wants to be involved in everything. The scheme is so big, you can't possibly be.

Yvonne?

SPEAKER:

Thank you. This isn't something that you can take up and talk to, through this forum. While I have everybody in this room, I wanted to mention, just to clarify my earlier concerns about the churn of CEOs. I was thinking about how we might be able to raise our voices collected, to try and prosecute the point that we don't want any more political appointments in these roles. Still important, to churn in and turn out, based on the political government of the day. They deserve continuity.

So we can influence an outcome where it is not a political appointment. It someone that will stay with us for the long haul, and be able to enact the change that we need to see in a timely manner. It's serious stuff, and it can't be at the political whim of the government of the day.

(Multiple speakers)

SPEAKER:

I am a public servant. Is that David Murray?

SPEAKER:

Yes, I am David Murray. I want to concur all the comments that have been set in the room. And Jenny's points – to be updated with the ministries strategies about watching projects are going to do, with the work they would do with NDIS. And include us in the discussion. Because some of the things that NDIS have done, we didn't know about that. That it included the deaf blind community. We are the census group.

There is something around data that needs to be looked at. To include groups like the deaf blind community, among others. Autism in children.



In terms of the CRM system that could be looked at, how they can make sure that all the groups are included. Because even system doesn't have the community listed on there. Had engaged with all the participants? Those are the gaps that we have with NDIS. We have listed a couple of recommendations to the CEO, Martin, at the time.

We are still continuing not having our issues addressed. I wonder if the CRM can be looked at and updated. In strengthening the NDIS scheme.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, David. I'm pretty sure that Garth presented at the last DRCO Forum about plans to update that CRM. Maybe ahead of the forum, we can get an update on that. I know he is very keen to speak with everyone and keep everyone informed, and get some input into the design. We will take that as an action, David.

OK. I don't have any other hands up at the moment. I will just doublecheck the chat.

I think where we are at. Look for some nominations for a small working group to do some work ahead of 1 July, in terms of stakeholder mapping. Recognising we have a lot of that information as well. Is that what we talked about an agreed? I see Jenny nodding. No one disagrees with that.

Just put in the chat. We will make that work.

We will think about... does anybody have any suggestions on who would be a good facilitator?

SPEAKER:

I support that point that Mary makes. You want to focus on people contributing. While none of us want to see a plethora of consultants, if you have someone that can have a specific role. And then synergise the conversation. That can be an important investment. Doesn't have to be an expensive one.

SPEAKER:

Let us sit with that. Simon, do you still have your hand up?

That's great. OK. If we look at the agenda, we are looking at a consensus. We haven't got that yet, but we need to do some work to move forward.

Is there anything else anyone else wants to raise? At this point.

So, we've got a couple of nominations for the stakeholder mapping. We will follow-up individually and get to that ASAP. We will take the outcomes from this meeting take them to Lisa, go through it. I'm sure it will be fine. And look forward to that first of July, to be quite productive. I think.

It is hard to get consensus in a short period of time. But through the day, it will be a hybrid meeting. We'll make that work. It worked OK, both online and on person. We will be in touch.

Is there anything else anyone else wanted to raise? Before we get (inaudible).

SPEAKER:



This is David speaking again. You talked about work plans. I'm assuming the approach we take, moving forward, how we can prioritise issues. Also, looking at inclusion. I think inclusion is making sure people with disability have a voice. To have the input.

If you have people with disability in the room, that will change the culture of how we see things and address issues. If you don't have people with disability who can understand the cultural implications. I think it's important that we have guidelines and information around that.

SPEAKER:

Thanks, David.

SPEAKER:

Is anyone else seeing two Bobs?

SPEAKER:

The more the better!

SPEAKER:

It disappeared off my screen. Don't know why.

SPEAKER:

Cool. Alright, thanks very much for your time. As always, reach out to Matt or I with anything. If you have further thoughts after talking today. We will be in touch with the people who have nominated. And will communicate back to you the plan, going forward. Great to see you all.

(Multiple speakers)