

Final report of Independent NDIS Review released

08 December 2023

On Thursday 7 December, NDIS Minister the Hon. Bill Shorten MP announced the release of the final report of the Independent NDIS Review.

Minister Shorten announced the NDIS Review in October 2022 to look at the design, operations and sustainability of the NDIS. It was also tasked with looking into ways to make the market and workforce more responsive, supportive and sustainable.

Twelve months on, co-chairs of the Independent Review Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM have released their final report outlining recommendations to help restore trust, ensure the Scheme's sustainability, and deliver a better NDIS experience for participants.

The recommendations from the Independent Review include:

- **Legislation:** The Review recommended a range of legislative reforms to return the scheme to its original intent and improve the experience of participants. This included legislation to improve eligibility and access, as well as an early intervention pathway for children.
- **Foundational supports:** The Review recommended disability specific supports that would be available to people with disability and, where appropriate, their families and carers. The Review said these supports should be available to all Australians with disability, whether they are on the NDIS or not. Foundational supports would interconnect with existing mainstream services like childcare and schools.
 - **Early childhood intervention:** The Review said there is not enough support for children in everyday settings, where they live, play and learn. It recommends children with disability and developmental concerns or delays are identified early, and get the support they need. This could include earlier checks and screening to pick up developmental concerns and provide support.
 - **New approaches to psychosocial disability and mental health:** The Review recommended a new, dedicated approach for people with psychosocial disability that better meets their episodic needs and is focused on personal recovery. It recommended that access to mental health services should be improved and there should be a strengthened interface between mental health systems and the NDIS.
- **Service navigation:** The Review recommended the introduction of navigators to help people with disability, find and access all services available to them across mainstream services, community supports, foundational supports and the NDIS.
- **Fairer housing and living support:** The Review recommended consistency should be introduced to housing and living support budgets to make it fairer for NDIS participants. The



Review recommended a more flexible and innovative approach to housing supports to help people access solutions that suit them better.

- **Registration:** The Review recommended all providers should be enrolled or registered, with the level of regulatory requirement being determined by the risk and complexity of the different supports they provide.

In an initial response to the Independent NDIS Review, the National Cabinet met a day prior to the release of the report and confirmed that it intends to work together on delivering the following points:

- Implement legislative and other changes to the NDIS to improve the experience of participants and restore the original intent of the Scheme to support people with permanent and significant disability, within a broader ecosystem of supports.
- Adjust state and territory NDIS contribution escalation rates, increasing from 4 per cent to be in line with actual Scheme growth, capped at 8 per cent, with the Commonwealth paying the remainder of Scheme costs growth, commencing from 1 July 2028.

The Government has announced that it will provide a full response to the Independent NDIS review in 2024.

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For more information, please contact Hawker Britton Directors Simon Banks or Emma Webster [here](#).