

Communiqué - Provider Advisory Group Meeting

March 2025

Introduction

The Provider Advisory Group met online on Wednesday 19 March 2025. Chaired by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Acting Deputy Commissioner Complaints and Engagement, Jan Fermor, the meeting included information sharing and presentations from members of the NDIS Commission (the Commission). The meeting focussed on four areas:

- 1. Mandatory registration of platform providers, support coordinators and providers of Supported Independent Living (SIL)
- 2. Price differentiation for services (where NDIS participants are charged more for the same services)
- 3. Discussion of the Commission's future consultative arrangements and feedback from members of the current Provider Advisory Group
- 4. Proposed NDIS Commission Disability Action Plan

1. Mandatory registration of support coordination and SIL

In September 2024 the former Minister for the NDIS, The Hon. Bill Shorten MP, announced the mandatory registration of all platform providers, support coordinators and providers of Supported Independent Living (SIL). The changes to registration were based on concerns about the risks associated with these supports and the need to safeguard people with disability receiving these supports.

The NDIS Commission is consulting with the disability community to ensure the changes to registration includes the input of people with disability who access those services, as well as the relevant providers in the sector.

Further information on the changes can be found on the Commission's <u>website</u>, including how the Commission will work to ensure so they are understood by the disability community.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) is already subject to mandatory registration. A review of the practice standards is underway to see where there are gaps and to consider how they can be improved to help providers understand what good services look and feel like for Participants.

The NDIS Commission is prioritising work on delivering practice standards for SIL, which is one of the commitments the NDIS Commission made as a result of the Commission's Own Motion Inquiry.

2. Price differentiation for services

The Commission sought feedback from Provider Advisory Group members about changes the NDIS Commission would like to make to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018 (NDIS Code of Conduct Rules). The changes will mean NDIS providers will not be allowed to advertise or charge a higher price for a service (such as physiotherapy) for a NDIS participant, compared to any other member of the public, without a valid reason.

In December 2023, the NDIS Commissioner made a change to the NDIS Code of Conduct Rules to stop NDIS providers from advertising and charging a higher price for goods (such as a shower chair) to a NDIS participant, than a person who is not a NDIS participant. For example, advertising that the price of a shower chair for NDIS participants is \$200 while also advertising that the price for the same shower chair for other people is \$100. Where the NDIS Commission finds a NDIS provider has been charging more with no valid basis, they may be subject to regulatory action.

Before making the proposed changes, the NDIS Commission is seeking stakeholder feedback, including from NDIS providers and States and Territory governments. If the changes are made, the NDIS Commission will let everyone know about the new rules.

3. Future Commission consultation arrangements

The Commission sought feedback from members about their experience on the Provider Advisory Group, including what they thought had worked well and what might be changed. This feedback will serve as input into the planning process as the NDIS Commission considers its future consultative arrangements when the current Provider Advisory Group term ends in August 2025.

4. Proposed NDIS Commission Disability Action Plan

Work has commenced on the NDIS Commission's inaugural Disability Action Plan (DAP), a five-year internally and externally facing strategy for the NDIS Commission to become an employer of choice for people with disability.

The DAP will detail the NDIS Commission's disability inclusion priorities and focus areas. The Commissions is looking to continue to develop relationships with disability representative organisations to improve outcomes for people with disability. The Commission will embed the voice of people with disability in all work areas.

Consultation will occur over the coming months and the Commission seeks input from the Provider Advisory Group members on general themes and suggestions of focus in the immediate to medium term.