
COAG Disability Reform Council
TelePresence, 12 December 2014
Communiqué

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Disability Reform Council (the Council) met today via TelePresence. The meeting was chaired by Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, Assistant Minister for Social Services.

Transition to Full Scheme

The Council is committed to a full roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and is considering approaches to transition to full scheme roll-out.

All governments agreed that a key consideration will be ensuring that transition results in a sustainable scheme with high-quality supports for people with disability.

All governments endorse the aim of being fair to both existing clients of disability services and those who are not yet receiving support.

The Council acknowledged the transition arrangements being developed will not apply to Western Australia (WA). In WA, a comparative trial of the NDIA and My Way models will inform future decisions about roll-out of the NDIS.

All eligible participants will transition to the NDIS in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) trial in 2016. ACT transition is agreed and supported by the Commonwealth and the NDIA.

Queensland is getting ready for the NDIS and will transition to the scheme between 2016 and 2019.

The Council agreed there is much to be done by governments, working in consultation with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Board, Agency, service providers and participants, their families and carers, to get ready for full roll-out of the NDIS.

The NDIS represents an enormous transformation. The Council agreed the transition needs to be managed carefully to avoid unnecessary risks and ensure high-quality supports to people with disability.

Governments acknowledged the importance of expanding the market carefully, so providers of support are ready and a high-quality workforce is in place as the sector expands during transition to full scheme.

Each jurisdiction's approach to transition and the phasing in of clients will take account of their local circumstances and promote the best possible outcomes for people with disability.

The Council asked officials to continue work to consider the feasibility of options for transition.

The Council agreed that operational plans for each jurisdiction for the transition to full scheme will be agreed by the end of June 2015, excluding the ACT that has already developed transition plans.

All governments will ensure that the transition to full scheme is achieved, consistent with the timeframes and funding arrangements set out in the Heads of Agreements already signed between the Commonwealth and State governments.

In the meantime, many people with disability are already accessing supports in the NDIS in the trial sites across Australia, and the roll-out of trials will continue as planned.

Policy Framework

Ministers considered a range of supporting policy matters as part of the transition to full scheme.

The Council discussed advocacy and the NDIS. The Council noted that further work will be undertaken on the relationship between the NDIS and advocacy, including a review of the National Disability Advocacy Framework.

The Council agreed to the policy framework for the provision of NDIS information, linkages and capacity building (ILC) supports, formerly known as Tier 2, for people with disability, their families and carers. The Council noted consultation may be required with stakeholders on the implementation of ILC in each jurisdiction.

The Council agreed to a consultation paper and approach to the development of a nationally consistent, risk-based quality and safeguards framework for the NDIS. The paper will form the consultation element of a COAG Regulatory Impact Statement. The Council noted external consultation will be undertaken in early 2015 and that it would be asked to endorse the framework by the end of 2015.