

Equity and Inclusion Reference Group

An Easy Read meeting bulletin

23 June 2023



How to use this bulletin



A **bulletin** is an important news item we share with the community.

It explains what we did in our last meeting.



The Independent Advisory Council gives advice about ways to make the NDIS better.

In this bulletin, we just say IAC.



The IAC wrote this bulletin.

When you see the word 'we', it means the IAC.



We wrote this bulletin in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

Not bold

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 29.



This Easy Read bulletin is a summary of another bulletin.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other bulletin on our website.

www.ndis-iac.com.au/meetings



You can ask for help to read our bulletin.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

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What is this Reference Group about?



A **Reference Group** is a group of people who give us advice about a certain topic.



The Reference Group gives advice to the IAC about how the NDIS can:

- be fair
- give **participants** the same chances.



Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.



This includes making sure the NDIS is **inclusive**.

When something is inclusive, it means everyone can take part.



It also includes making sure the NDIS thinks about **diversity**.

Diversity is what makes people different from each other.

People can:



- come from different places



- speak different languages



- have different abilities



- live their lives in different ways.

From the Reference Group Co-Chairs



Ms Leah van Poppel is the IAC's Principal Member.

She is also the Reference Group Co-Chair.

This means she helps run the Reference Group.

Leah shared the work we have done since the last meeting, including work by:



- the IAC



- the IAC Reference Group.



She also shared that this meeting would be the last for this Reference Group.



The Reference Group members will change from 1 July 2023.

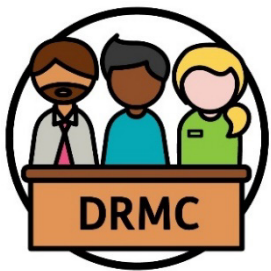


Leah shared the work we have done on the advice called 'Improving Equity in the NDIS'.

She shared this with:



- the Minister for the NDIS – a minister leads an area of the government.



- the Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC).

The DRMC gives advice to governments about how to:



- support people with disability



- make **policies** better.



A policy is:

- a government plan for how to do things
- where rules come from.



Adjunct Associate Professor Jennifer Cullen is also the Reference Group Co-Chair.

She helps run the Reference Group.



Jennifer shared that the meeting would focus on:

- certain supports participants need
- supporting participants to make their own decisions.



She also gave an update on the work of the NDIA's First Nations Advisory Group.



They are a group who will give advice to the NDIA about issues that affect First Nations peoples.

Our reports



The Reference Group connected with the community to find out about issues that affect them.



The Reference Group members shared these issues with the NDIA.

What did the reports talk about?

NDIS access and planning

Reference Group members shared that there are issues with:



- home and living supports



- NDIS plans.

This includes issues with:



- not enough housing for participants



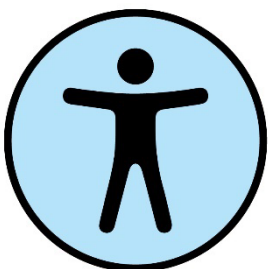
- **providers** not doing their work the way they should.



Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



Members explained there are issues with how **accessible** some parts of the NDIS are.



When the NDIS is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use services
- understand.



For example, the NDIS will ask someone close to a person with physical disability to sign forms for them.

They do this instead of letting participants sign with their own stamp or sign.



Members shared that some people find it very hard to join the NDIS.

This includes:



- people with disability that affects their mental health
- and
- are at risk of not having somewhere to live.



The Minister for the NDIS shared that they plan to keep improving the NDIS for participants.



But some plan managers say that participants have lost more funding in their plan.

NDIS services and supports

Reference Group members explained that sometimes information isn't always the same from:



- local area coordinators – who help people find and use supports



- NDIA planners – who make new plans.



And that sometimes they blame plan managers for this information not being the same.



For example, information about how much supports cost.



Members shared that participants want the NDIA to tell them why they are doing a 'check-in'.



For example, the NDIS will call some participants for a 'check-in'.

And then change when a participant's NDIS plan ends without them knowing.

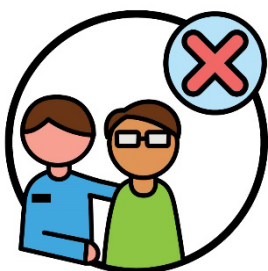


Members explained that some participants find it hard to find good and safe support workers.

This means participants:



- are more at risk



- don't have the support they need to live their day-to-day life.

NDIS providers and the community



Reference Group members explained that some providers give other providers a reward.

They will give providers a reward if they tell participants to use their services.



Members shared that people want more providers who focus on supports for **LGBTIQA+** people with disability.



The letters LGBTIQA stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning and asexual.



The '+' is for people who are part of the LGBTIQA+ community but don't talk about themselves using a word from this list.



Members also shared that people want the NDIA to provide more safe supports for LGBTIQA+ participants.



This includes supports for LGBTIQ+ participants who have experienced **trauma**.

Trauma is something bad that happens to you that can make you feel:



- scared
- stressed
- worried.

Members explained that there is a need to look at how NDIS providers communicate with participants.



This includes making sure NDIS providers are supporting **intersectionality**.

You can be different in more than one way.

And people might treat you differently for each part of who you are.



We call this intersectionality.

NDIS Review



The Australian Government is checking the NDIS to find out what:

- works well
- could be better.

They call it the **NDIS Review**.



Reference Group members shared that people want the NDIS Review to work more with the LGBTIQ+ community.



This includes making sure LGBTIQ+ participants can have their say as part of the review.



Members explained that it is important to work towards making life fairer for people with **psychosocial disability**.

A psychosocial disability affects your mental health.

It can affect how you:



- think
- feel
- deal with other people.



This includes work that supports people with psychosocial disability to speak up for themselves.



Members shared that groups who speak up for LGBTIQ+ people with disability are important for the community.

For example, Inclusive Rainbow Voices.

Supported decision-making policy

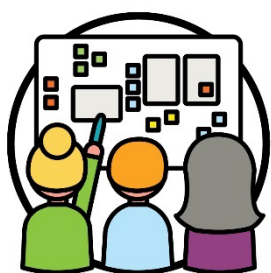


Supported decision-making is when someone helps you make important decisions about your life and how you will live.



The NDIA updated the Reference Group about its work on their supported decision-making policy.

The NDIA will start to use the policy this year.



Reference Group members agreed that the policy is good because it was made with **co-design**.

Co-design is when people work together to plan something new.



Members explained that the NDIA should share information about its:

- short-term goals
- and
- long-term goals.



Members explained that the NDIA needs to look at what stops people from taking part in supported decision-making.



Members shared that the policy should focus on intersectionality.

And should let people make decisions about the risks they want to take.



Members shared that further work should support people with disability to have more choice and control in their community.



And this work should include co-design with people from different backgrounds.



Members shared that there should be a focus on supporting people who live in group settings.



This includes support in building the skills they need to:

- make their own decisions
- have their own say.



Members explained that when a decision is made for someone, that person should understand how that decision affects their:

- NDIS plan
- day-to-day life.



Members shared it's important that people with disability have different support groups they can share different issues with.



Members also shared that they wanted to know if the NDIS supports participants who face issues when making their own decisions.



For example, when **guardians** stop participants from making their own decisions.

A guardian is a person who acts and makes decisions for you.



Your guardian might be:

- a member of your family
- a friend
- chosen for you by the government.

NDIA's Complex Support Needs Pathway



The NDIA updated the Reference Group about its work on the Complex Support Needs Pathway.

We just call it the Pathway.



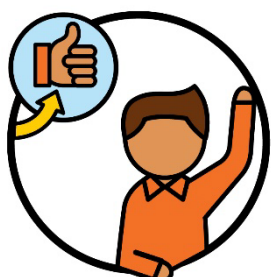
The Pathway offers support for participants who have different challenges that affect their lives.

The Pathway started in 2018.

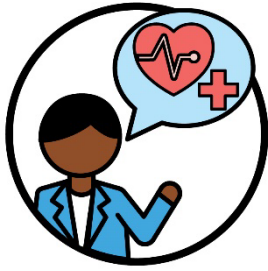


Reference Group members agreed that the Pathway helps people to:

- find and use the NDIS
- manage their supports.



It also helps participants to have a better experience.



The Pathway has a team that gives them advice about health care.

Members agree that this team are good at how they manage the way some things are handled.



This includes:

- behaviour support plans – a plan with steps for improving behaviour.
- **restrictive practices.**



Restrictive practices are actions that stop people from:

- moving
- doing what they want.



For example, making sure people use restrictive practices:

- to keep people safe
- only when they need to.



Members explained there is a need to look at information on how different people are supported in the Pathway.

This includes:



- First Nations people



- people from different backgrounds.



The Pathway should work to build trust with people from these communities.

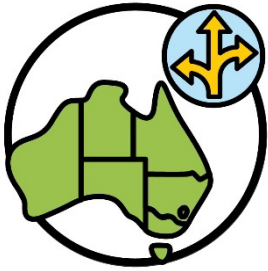
And the Pathway should do this in a way that:



- thinks about the trauma they have experienced
- makes sure they have support when they have experienced trauma.



Members shared they want more information about how the Pathway will communicate with other government supports that are not part of the NDIS.



Each state and territory have different:

- rules
- governments.



Members explained that this is a challenge for participants across Australia who want to use the Pathway.

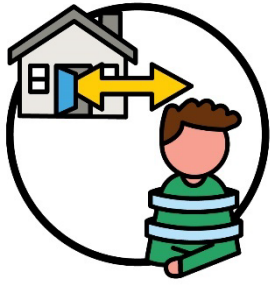


Members explained that it's important to make sure that children are safe in the Pathway.

For example, **transgender** children.



If you are transgender, your gender identity is different now to what you were given when you were born.



Some children:

- live in and out of homes
- experience restrictive practices when they should not.



Transgender children are more likely to experience these things.



Sometimes a person behaves in a way that is seen as bad or wrong.

Members explained that these behaviours should instead be seen as a way for people to show who they are.



Members also shared that it's important to have plans that support people to have good relationships.

Our next meeting



Our next meeting is the 24 August 2023.



You can find out more about our meetings and bulletins on our website.

www.ndis-iac.com.au/meetings

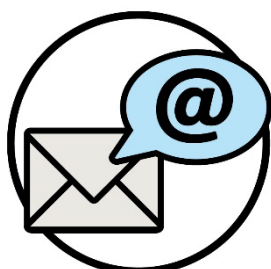
More information

For more information about this bulletin, please contact us.



You can visit our website.

www.ndis-iac.com.au/meetings



You can send us an email.

advisorycouncil@ndis.gov.au



You can learn more about the NDIS on their website.

www.ndis.gov.au



You can call the NDIS.

1800 800 110

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Accessible

When the NDIS is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use services
- understand.



Bulletin

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Co-design

Co-design is when people work together to plan something new.

Diversity

Diversity is what makes people different from each other.

People can:

- come from different places
- speak different languages
- have different abilities
- live their lives in different ways.



Guardian

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Inclusive

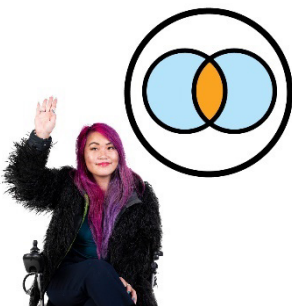
When something is inclusive, it means everyone can take part.

Intersectionality

You can be different in more than one way.

And people might treat you differently for each part of who you are.

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LGBTIQA+



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A policy is:

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- where rules come from.



Providers

Providers deliver services to people with disability.

Psychosocial disability

A psychosocial disability affects your mental health.



It can affect how you:

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Transgender

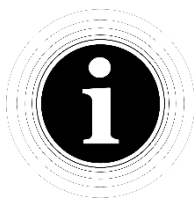
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