



Independent Advisory Council

An Easy Read meeting bulletin

10 August 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 28.



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.

What's in this bulletin?

What happened in the last meeting? 5

What did our IAC Members share? 12

What important updates were in the meeting? 22

Our next meeting 26

More information 27

Word list 28

What happened in the last meeting?



Leah van Poppel ran the last meeting.

She is the IAC's Principal Member.

She's also a member of the **National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Board**.



The NDIA Board is a group of people who make decisions about all parts of the NDIA.



The meeting was held on 10 August 2023.



Leah told IAC Members that the Minister of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will soon share who the new members of the IAC will be.

A **minister** leads an area of government.



Leah gave an update on our work with the NDIA since our last meeting.

This includes work to:



- put together our advice on behaviour supports for the NDIA Board



- get new members for the IAC **Reference Groups.**



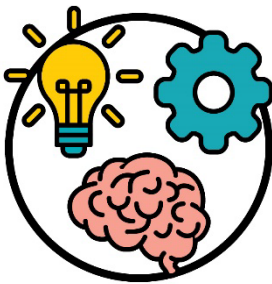
A Reference Group is a group of people who give us advice about a certain topic.



The goal of getting new members was to have more people in the Reference Groups who are:

- young
- and
- have **intellectual disability**.

An intellectual disability affects how well you can:



- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.



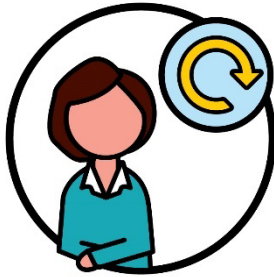
The IAC will also share who the new Co-Chairs for each Reference Group will be soon.



Leah thanked Ms Belinda Epstein-Frisch AM for the work she has done for the IAC.



She will be finishing her work with the IAC in October 2023.



We will look for someone to take over Belinda's role with the IAC soon.

What Mr Kurt Fearnley shared



Mr Kurt Fearnley AO is the Chairperson of the NDIA Board.

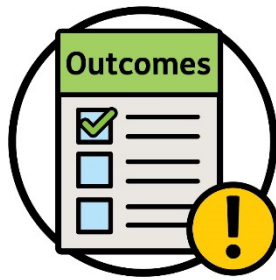
This means he runs the NDIA Board.



He thanked the IAC for waiting for the new members of the IAC to be shared.



He talked about the work the NDIA Board has done to make a new group of people that check the NDIA's decisions.



This group looks at the decisions the NDIA make about the **outcomes** of people who take part in the NDIS.

Outcomes are important results we want to achieve.



He also shared the work Fraud Fusion Taskforce has done to stop **fraud** against the NDIS.



When someone commits fraud, they do something that is not honest on purpose.

Fraud is a crime.

What Ms Rebecca Falkingham shared



Ms Rebecca Falkingham is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NDIA.

This means she runs the NDIA.

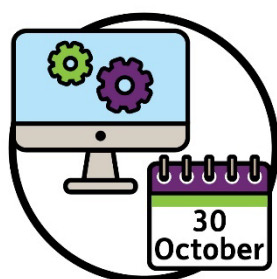


Rebecca shared that the NDIA has improved the way **participants** can contact the NDIA for answers.

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



For example, making sure that participants get the right answers the first time they call.



She also shared that the NDIA will start to use their new computer system across Australia from 30 October 2023.



It's important that the NDIA communicate and work with participants when they do this.



And the NDIA must also communicate and work with **providers**.

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



She talked about how the NDIA will work with other organisations to protect participants' information.



She also talked about the work the NDIA has done to make changes to how they run the NDIA.

This includes new people the NDIA has hired to run parts of the NDIA.

She shared with members the work the NDIA plans to do to:



- hire more people with disability



- improve the experience of people with disability who already work for the NDIA.

What did our IAC Members share?

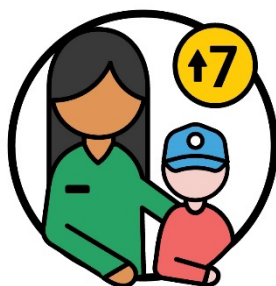


Our IAC Members connect with the community to find out about issues that affect them.



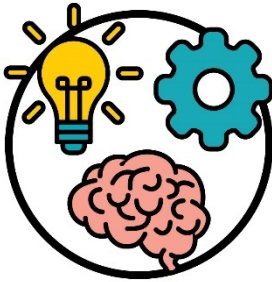
Our IAC Members shared these issues with the NDIA.

NDIS plans

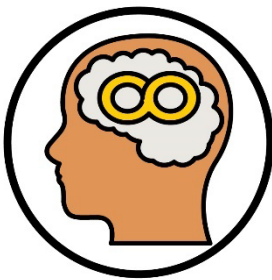


IAC Members explained that some people don't understand how the NDIS will support children over 7 years old.

This includes children over 7 years old that doctors have not told they have:



- intellectual disability



- **autism.**

Autism is a disability that can affect how you:



- think
- feel
- communicate
- connect and deal with others.



IAC Members also explained that sometimes the NDIS will only focus on one disability.



But this can cause issues for participants who live with more than one disability.

For example, they can have issues with finding the right supports for them.



IAC Members shared that they want to know if there is enough first-year **funding** for children who need more support.



Funding is money from your plan that pays for the supports and services you need.



They want to know this because some families shared they spend most of this funding on **assessments**.



Assessments help us work out:

- how your disability affects your life
- what supports you need.



Some families use these assessments to get more funding for their child in the second year of their plan.



IAC Members also shared that participants worry about how long it takes the NDIA to change participant's information.



IAC explained that the NDIA has stopped some participants from managing their own plans.

And that the NDIA has not told participants why they have made this change.

NDIS services and supports



IAC Members shared that families are happy that children must be 9 years old to use a **local area coordinator (LAC)**.

An LAC is someone who helps people with disability find and use supports and services.



Families are happy with this change because they believe **early childhood partners** understand what children and families need better.



Early childhood partners support:

- children with **developmental delay**
- children with disability
- their families.



Some children might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.

They may need extra help to do everyday things.

When this happens, we say they have a developmental delay.



IAC Members explained there are not enough **occupational therapists** in the Northern Territory.

An occupational therapist helps someone find ways to do everyday tasks.



IAC Members also explained that occupational therapists should not offer supports over a video call.



This is because some children need these supports in a place they know well.

For example, children with autism.



IAC Members shared that while children develop, it's important they get to play with other children.

Some people worry that providers see other supports as more important than this.



IAC Members also shared that people still worry about participants who are in hospital.

They worry about how these participants can find and use supports when they are in hospital.

Home and living



Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.



The NDIA have **reviewed** how much SDA costs.



When the NDIA reviews something, they check to see what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



IAC Members worry that the NDIA's review of how much SDA costs doesn't include housing for one participant.

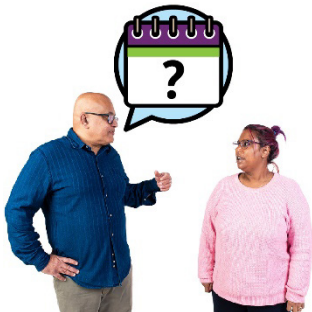


This includes housing for one participant in places far away from cities and towns.



IAC Members shared that it can take the NDIA a long time to make decisions about home and living supports.

And sometimes these decisions take longer than the 28 days the NDIA said it would take.



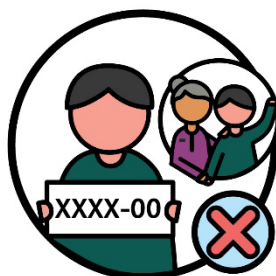
IAC Members want the NDIA to update participants on how long these decisions will take.

The community



IAC Members explained that some people in prison don't know how to use **Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)**.

JLOs support prisons to understand how the NDIS can support people with disability in prisons.



And some people with disability don't know what supports they can get inside prison.



IAC Members shared they worry the community might have lost some trust in the IAC.

They worry this is because the community has had to wait to know who the new members of the IAC are.

Providers



IAC Members explained that some early childhood providers do the wrong thing.



For example, they offer supports to participants that they don't need.



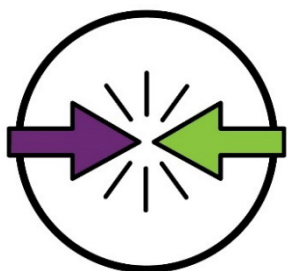
IAC Members also explained that the NDIA should have a way for people to share information without the NDIA knowing who they are.

For example:



- people who work for providers
- participants.

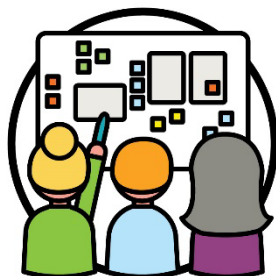
This means these people can share information about **conflicts of interest** to the NDIA.



A conflict of interest is when someone could affect a decision so the result is better for them.

What important updates were in the meeting?

The NDIA's co-design work



The IAC got an update on the NDIA's **co-design** work to improve outcomes for participants.

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

This includes their work with:



- participants



- the community



- organisations that speak up for people who support people with disability.



IAC Members agreed that NDIA staff have different experiences with co-design.

But the NDIA has done good work to support co-design so far.



IAC Members explained that the NDIA should share information about co-design in ways that everyone can understand.

For example, in Easy Read documents.

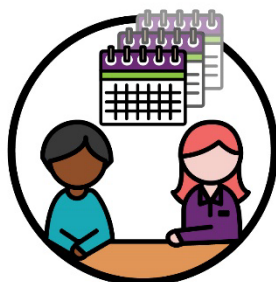


IAC Members also explained that co-design means everyone has agreed on what issue to fix.

The NDIA should not pick projects to work on with co-design without the community having a say.



IAC Members shared that the NDIA need to make sure that older co-design projects support what participants have to say.



This includes making sure that the NDIA check in with participants when projects take longer to finish.

The NDIA's 10-year strategy



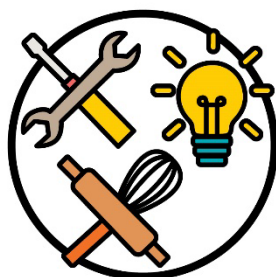
The IAC got an update on the NDIA's work on their 10-year **strategy**.

A strategy is a plan for how the NDIA will do things in the future.

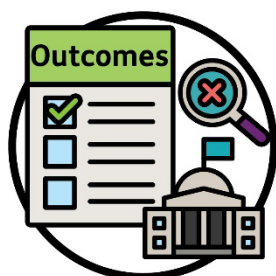
IAC Members talked about how the goals for this strategy should support the NDIS to offer services that:



- work well for all participants



- build participants' skills to do things themselves.

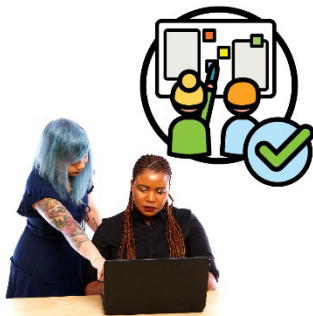


IAC Members explained that the goals of the NDIS should not just focus on outcomes for governments.

It should focus on outcomes for the Australian community.



IAC Members shared that more people should understand the outcomes and goals of the NDIS. And the NDIA should work to support this.



IAC Members also shared that the NDIA should make sure their work connects with their other co-design work.

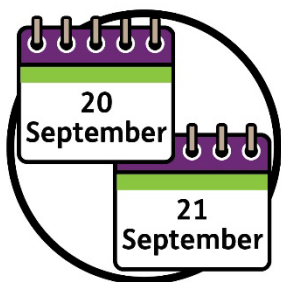


IAC Members explained that the NDIA need to make sure they have enough people in their team making the strategy.



This will help make sure the strategy will be ready to share with the community.

Our next meeting



Our next meeting is on 20–21 September 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



You can send us an email.

advisorycouncil@ndis.gov.au



You can visit the NDIS 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.



Assessment

Assessments help us work out:

- how your disability affects your life
- what supports you need.



Autism

Autism is a disability that can affect how you:

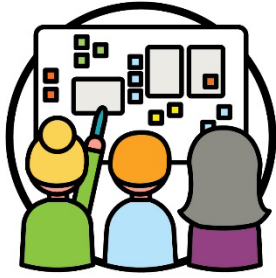
- think
- feel
- communicate
- connect and deal with others.



Bulletin

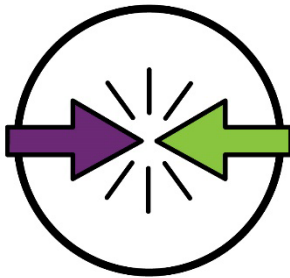
A bulletin is an important news item we share with the community.

It explains what we did in our last meeting.



Co-design

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



Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is when someone could affect a decision so the result is better for them.

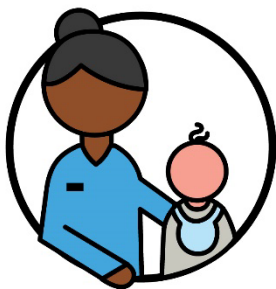


Developmental delay

Some children might not develop at the same pace as other children of the same age.

They may need extra help to do everyday things.

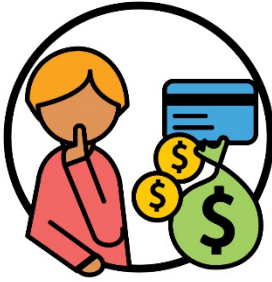
When this happens, we say they have a developmental delay.



Early childhood partner

Early childhood partners support:

- children with developmental delay
- children with disability
- their families.



Fraud

When someone commits fraud, they do something that is not honest on purpose.

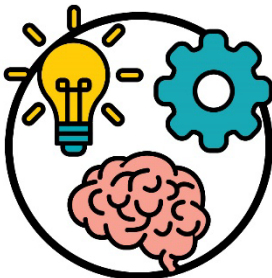


Funding

Funding is money from your plan that pays for the supports and services you need.

Intellectual disability

An intellectual disability can affect how you:



- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do some things on your own.



Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)

JLOs support prisons to understand how the NDIS can support people with disability in prisons.



Local area coordinator (LAC)

An LAC is someone who helps people with disability find and use supports and services.



Minister

A minister leads an area of government.



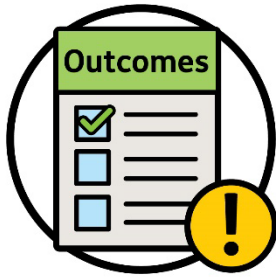
NDIA Board

The NDIA Board is a group of people who make decisions about all parts of the NDIA.



Occupational therapist

An occupational therapist helps someone find ways to do everyday tasks



Outcomes

Outcomes are important results we want to achieve.



Participants

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



Providers

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



Reference Group

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

Review



When the NDIA reviews something, they check to see what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



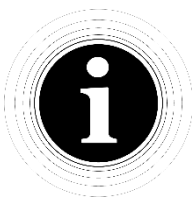
Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

SDA is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.



Strategy

A strategy is a plan for how the NDIA will do things in the future.



The Information Access Group created this Easy Read document using stock photography and custom images. The images may not be reused without permission. For any enquiries about the images, please visit www.informationaccessgroup.com. Quote job number 5264-A.



**Independent
Advisory
Council**
to the **ndis**



ndis-iac.com.au