

First Nations Reference Group

Easy Read meeting bulletin

28 August 2025



Acknowledgement of Country



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples of Australia.

We also use the words First Nations people.



First Nations people have always looked after **Country**.

Country means the land, water, sky and everything within them.

We respect the important connection that First Nations people have with Country.



And we respect their Elders from the past and now.

How to use this bulletin



We are the Independent Advisory Council (IAC).

We give advice about ways to make the NDIS better.



We wrote some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There is also a list of these words on page 23.



We wrote this **bulletin**.

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

It explains what we did in our meeting.



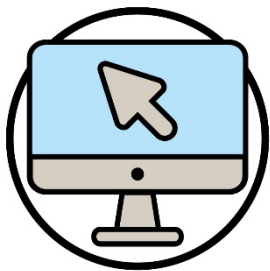
You can ask someone you trust for support to:

- read this bulletin
- find more information.



This is an Easy Read summary of another bulletin.

It only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other bulletin on our website.

www.ndis-iac.com.au/meetings

What's in this bulletin?

About this Reference Group	6
What issues did the community share?	9
Update on the Garma Festival	15
Update on the NDIA's First Nations Group	17
Update on advice about the justice system	19
Our next meeting	21
More information	22
Word list	23

About this Reference Group



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

The Reference Group shares their ideas with the IAC about how to support First Nations:



- communities



- **participants.**



Participants are people with disability who take part in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Reference Group's ideas are about support for First Nations participants to:



- live how they choose



- take part in the community



- use supports and services that are **culturally safe.**



When something is culturally safe, people feel:

- respected and heard
- safe to be who they are.



The IAC use these ideas when they write their advice for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Board.

We just call them the **NDIA Board**.



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

What issues did the community share?



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



This includes issues that affect participants.



Members shared reports about these issues with the NDIA.



People from the NDIA also shared their response to some of these issues.

Skills of health professionals



Reference Group members said people are worried that some health professionals don't have the right skills.



Members said this is a bigger issue in places far away from cities and towns.



Members said participants want to get help from health professionals who have better training.

Funding



Reference Group members said people are worried about **funding**.



Funding is money from your **NDIS plan** that pays for the supports you need.



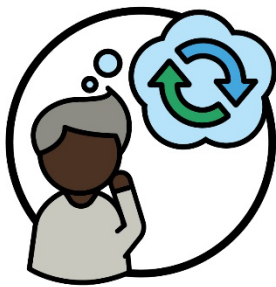
An NDIS plan has information about:

- a participant and their goals
- what supports a participant needs
- what the NDIS will pay for.



Members said there isn't always enough funding to pay for the supports they need.

Changes to autism checks for children



Reference Group members said people are confused about the changes to **autism** checks for children.

Autism can affect how you:



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



People want clear information about the changes to autism checks for children.



This includes information that uses:

- easy words
- videos.

Barriers that First Nations people face



Reference Group members said there are things that make it harder for First Nations people to join the NDIS.



For example, First Nations people find it hard to share details about themselves.



The NDIA said it will try to make things easier for First Nations people wanting to join the NDIS.

Support from First Nations people



Reference Group members said it's important for First Nations participants to get support from First Nations people.

Members want First Nations people to support participants with things like:



- using their NDIS plans



- planning how to use their supports.



Members said there are programs to support First Nations people to get skills in healthcare at school.



The NDIA also said it's working with businesses run by First Nations people.



The NDIA is working with these businesses to:

- understand their experiences
- learn how to help them grow.

Update on the Garma Festival



Garma Festival is Australia's largest First Nations event to celebrate:

- Yolngu life
- Yolngu culture.



The festival is run by the Yothu Yindi Foundation.



It's an important meeting point for the clans and families of the area.

The festival shows First Nations:



- art
- song
- dance
- storytelling.



Reference Group members heard about the festival from people who went.

Members enjoyed:



- hearing about the festival



- seeing photos from the festival.

Update on the NDIA's First Nations Group



The NDIA works with a group of First Nations people.

They call them the First Nations Group.



The First Nations Group shared information about the work they are doing.

They are:



- working with First Nations people with disability to make the NDIS better



- helping the NDIA get more First Nations providers to join the NDIS.



Reference Group members learnt that the NDIA is hiring more First Nations staff.



This includes a team of people that First Nations participants can contact for support.



Members also learnt how changes to the NDIS will include ideas about cultural safety.

Update on advice about the justice system



The IAC and Reference Group members are working on advice about the **justice system**.



The justice system makes sure everyone is treated fairly and follows the law.



The justice system includes:

- prisons
- courts
- police.



This work is part of their **Work Plan**.

A Work Plan is a document that explains the work someone will do in a year.



Reference Group members got a document to explain what the advice will focus on.

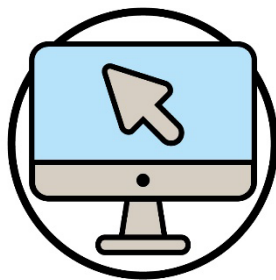


The IAC and Reference Group members will talk more about this on **4 September 2025**.

Our next meeting



Our next meeting will be on
26 to 28 November 2025.

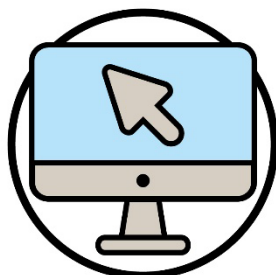


You can find out more about our meetings
and bulletins on our website.

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.



Autism

Autism can affect how you:

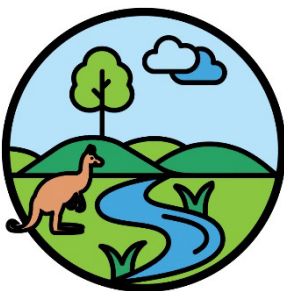
- think
- feel
- communicate
- connect and deal with others.



Bulletin

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

It explains what we did in our meeting.



Country

Country means the land, water, sky and everything within them.



Culturally safe

When something is culturally safe, people feel:

- respected and heard
- safe to be who they are.



Funding

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



Justice system

The justice system makes sure everyone is treated fairly and follows the law.

The justice system includes:

- prisons
- courts
- police.



NDIA Board

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

NDIS plan



An NDIS plan has information about:

- a participant and their goals
- what supports a participant needs
- what the NDIS will pay for.



Reference Group

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



Work Plan

A Work Plan is a document that explains the work someone will do in a year.



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 6212-B.



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



ndis-iac.com.au