

# Independent Advisory Council

An Easy Read meeting bulletin

13 April 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.

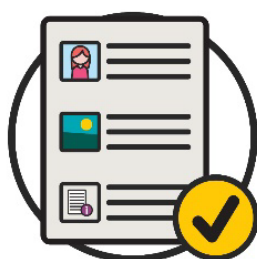


The Independent Advisory Council gives advice about ways to make the NDIS better.



The Council wrote this bulletin.

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



We wrote this bulletin in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

# **Bold**

## Not bold

We wrote some important words in **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 38.



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](http://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?

How to use this bulletin	2
<hr/>	
What happened in the last meeting?	5
<hr/>	
What did our Council Members share?	11
<hr/>	
Important updates	28
<hr/>	
Our next meeting	36
<hr/>	
More information	37
<hr/>	
Word list	38

## What happened in the last meeting?



Leah van Poppel ran the last meeting.

She is the Council's Principal Member.

She's also a member of the **NDIA Board**.



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



The meeting was held on 13 April 2023.



Leah shared there was a meeting in April about the NDIA's new computer system.



The meeting was with organisations from Tasmania who work with:

- people with disability
- carers.



They shared their experiences when they took part in testing the computer system.



Leah thanked these organisations for sharing their ideas in the meeting.



Leah explained that the Council will share these ideas with the NDIA.

## What did Mr Kurt Fearnley AO share?



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

This means he runs the NDIA Board.

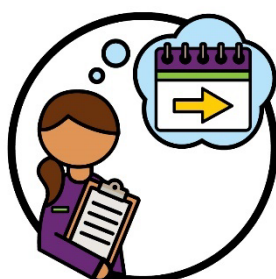


He explained that the cost of goods and services have gone up this year.

And how this:



- affects NDIS plans



- is something the NDIA will think about going forward.



Kurt also shared that NDIA staff should have more training to better support **participants**.



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

## What did Ms Rebecca Falkingham share?



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

This means she runs the NDIA.



She shared that the NDIA is working with the community to think about how to change the structure of the NDIA.



Rebecca explained that the NDIA should be leaders in hiring:



- people with disability



- First Nations peoples



- culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people.



CALD people:

- come from different backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.



She also explained that the NDIA should be leaders in hiring workers from the **LGBTIQA+** community.



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.

## What did our Council Members share?



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



Our Council Members shared these issues with the NDIA.

## How the NDIA works



Council Members explained it's important to keep supports that help people with disability be safe from COVID-19.



They want these supports to keep coming from the:

- government
- NDIA.



Council Members shared that the community is happy Dr Richard Fejo joined the NDIA Board.



Council Members explained there are issues with services in the Northern Territory.

This includes services from:



- **local area coordinators (LACs)** – who help people find and use supports



- **support coordinators** – who help people manage their plans.



And includes issues with the skills of people who support people with disability, like support workers.



The NDIA is working with the community to check the prices of NDIS supports.



Council Members shared that people need more time to:

- look at the information
- share their ideas.



Council Members shared that the NDIA should look at the best way for **providers** to deliver supports in areas far away from:

- cities
- towns.



Providers deliver services and supports to people with disability.

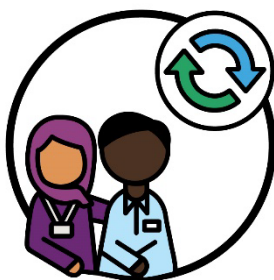


People also want the NDIA to think about the best way to support workers.



This includes how to support a worker's cultural beliefs.

For example, if something is important to them because of their background and way of life.



And how to support workers when something in their life changes.



This also includes how providers could hire family members to support participants.



Council Members explained there was a meeting for CALD community leaders in February 2023.



Members from these communities shared their experiences.

## Providers



Council Members explained that some providers don't believe the **NDIS Review** is supporting them as it should.



The Australian Government is checking the NDIS. We call this the NDIS Review.

The NDIS Review checks to see what:



- works well



- could be better.





Some providers are not sure that the NDIS Review can fix issues in some areas of Australia.

For example, issues that affect the Northern Territory.



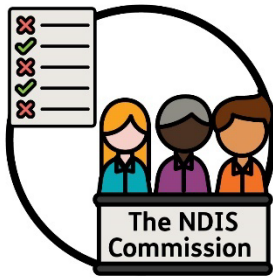
And some providers worry about how they will afford to change things the **Disability Royal Commission** suggests.



The Disability Royal Commission is a way to look into the experiences of people with disability.



It's already harder for some smaller providers to follow all the rules.



This includes the rules from the **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission)**.



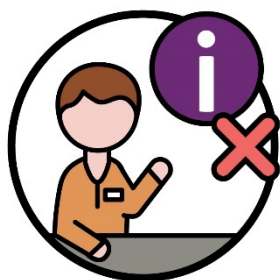
The NDIS Commission makes sure people with disability who take part in the NDIS:

- are safe
- get good services.



And the NDIS Commission doesn't work much with states and territories.

## NDIS supports



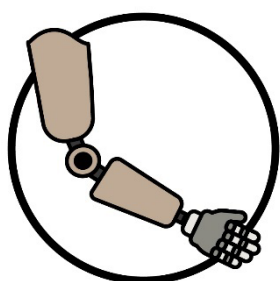
Council Members worry that there isn't enough information about **Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)**.



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



Council Members explained that the NDIS doesn't always support participants to get a **prosthetic** when they have a physical disability in their arm.



A prosthetic is equipment that replaces a part of your body, like your arm.

Some people shared that the NDIA:



- wouldn't include it in a participant's plan



- asked participants to get a specialist to say they need one.

Council Members shared issues with services from:



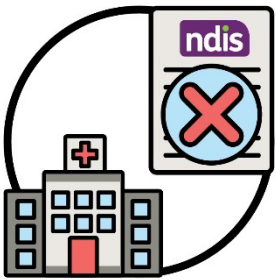
- LACs



- support coordinators.



Council Members shared that the community is happy that participants are leaving hospital sooner.



But they also shared that some participants can't use NDIS supports in hospital.



This includes participants who might need more supports.



Council Members shared that some providers tell families to make choices for participants.



But this stops them from taking part in decisions about their own lives.



Council Members explained that some participants can't get the support technology they need.



Some people who manage plans tell participants that the NDIA will say no to technology.

So they don't apply for technology that participants need.



Council Members explained that there is a podcast about the NDIS.

And there is a good episode about managing your own plan.



The podcast is *Reasonable and Necessary: Making Sense of the NDIS*.

## NDIS plans



Council Members explained that people worry about the type of support LACs deliver.

They worry it doesn't work well.



Council Members shared that it needs to be easier for participants to ask to check a decision the NDIA made about their plan.

This is important for participants who need support for their behaviour.



Council Members shared that some plans have lots of rules about what supports participants can spend money on.



This can make it harder for participants to use their plan.

## Home and living



Council Members shared there are issues with **supported independent living (SIL)** for First Nations peoples in the Northern Territory.



SIL is help with day-to-day tasks around your home so you can:

- do things for yourself
- learn new skills.



Some First Nations peoples had to move to Darwin to find and use:

- supports
- services.



Council Members explained that some participants have issues with **funding** for support at home.





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



Most funding is for one support worker for 3 participants.

But this is a problem for participants who need more support.



Council Members shared that participants are losing some of their SIL supports in their plans.



This has been causing stress for:

- participants
- their families.



Council Members explained that the NDIA should:

- share how supports at home should work
- make sure they make decisions the same way every time.

## Working with other services



Council Members shared that people want to know how schools use **suspensions** in Queensland.



Suspension is when the school asks a child not to attend school for a set period of time.

They want to know about this because there are more suspensions of students who are:



- children with disability



- First Nations children.

Council Members explained that people with disability worry they will lose their support payments if they:



- get a job



- start earning more money.

They want the government to change how these support payments work.



This could help more people:

- keep these payments
- work and earn money.

# Important updates

## The NDIS Review

Members of the NDIS Review team include:



- Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM



- Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM.



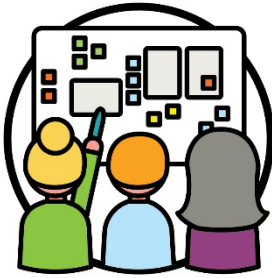
They met with Council Members to share what work the NDIS Review team have done.



Council Members shared they will keep working with the NDIS Review team.



Council Members explained it's important that the NDIS Review uses **co-design**.



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

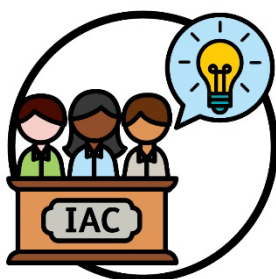


Council Members shared that it must also focus on early childhood supports for young participants.

## Testing the NDIS computer system



The NDIA gave us an update on how they are testing their new computer system.



Council Members shared some ideas about what they can do.



Council Members explained that there needs to be a plan about how the computer system will work in areas far away from:

- cities
- towns.

The plan will need to support participants in these areas who:



- don't have technology – like a computer



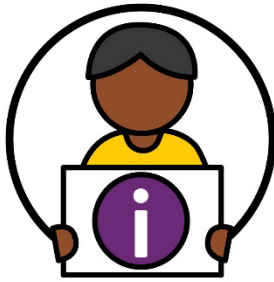
- may not have internet all the time.



Council Members shared that it can be hard for people to share documents that prove who they are when they apply to join the NDIS.



And the NDIA should think about how this affects First Nations peoples when they test the new computer system.



Council Members also shared that the NDIA should think about how First Nations peoples can manage the information the NDIA collects about them.



Council Members shared that the NDIA need to make sure the computer system is safe and private.



This means making sure it keeps everyone's information safe, including:

- participants
- organisations.



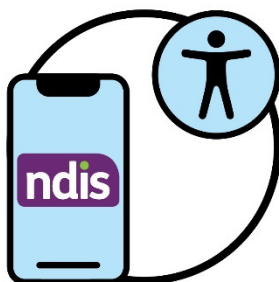
## my NDIS app



The NDIA showed Council Members how to use the my NDIS app.



Council Members shared some ideas about the my NDIS app.



Council Members explained that the app must be **accessible**.

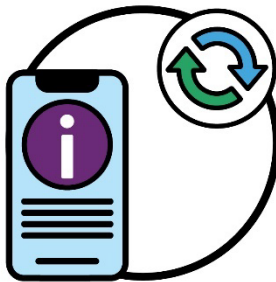
When information is accessible, it is easy to:

- find and use
- understand.

They shared that this includes:



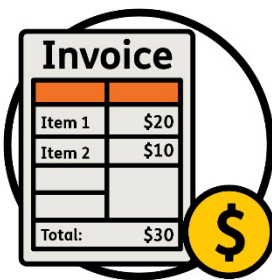
- supporting different screen reading technology



- participants changing how they can view information on the app.



Council Members also shared that the NDIA should research how people can scan **invoices** when they manage their own plans.



An invoice is a document that includes:

- a list of services that need to be paid for
- the amount that needs to be paid.



Council Members shared that it's important that the app works with other government websites and apps – like myGov.



Council Members asked if the NDIA could contact participants through the message inbox in the app.

## Our next meeting



Our next meeting is on 18 May 2023.



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

[www.ndis-iac.com.au/meetings](http://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](http://www.ndis-iac.com.au)



You can send us an email.

[advisorycouncil@ndis.gov.au](mailto:advisorycouncil@ndis.gov.au)



You can visit the NDIS website.

[www.ndis.gov.au](http://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 information is accessible, it is easy to:

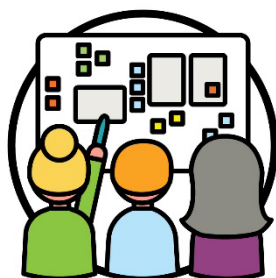
- find and use
- understand.



### **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.



### **Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)**

CALD people:

- come from different backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.



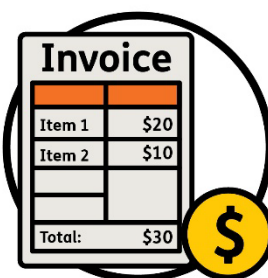
## Disability Royal Commission

The Disability Royal Commission is a way to look into the experiences of people with disability.



## Funding

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



## Invoice

An invoice is a document that includes:

- a list of services that need to be paid for
- the amount that needs to be paid.



## Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)

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

## LGBTIQA+



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.

## Local area coordinators (LACs)



An LAC is someone who helps people with disability:

- join and use the NDIS
- find community services.

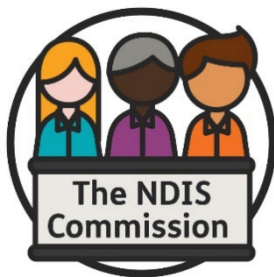


## NDIA Board

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



## NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission)



The NDIS Commission makes sure people who take part in the NDIS:

- are safe
- get good services.

## NDIS Review

The Australian Government is checking the NDIS.

We call this the NDIS Review.



The NDIS Review checks to see what:

- works well
- could be better.

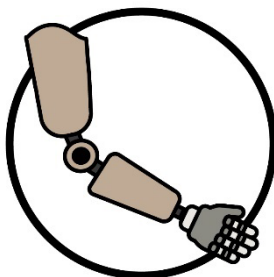
## Participants

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



## Prosthetic

A prosthetic is equipment that replaces a part of your body, like your arm.





## Providers

Providers deliver services and supports to people with disability.



## Support coordinators

A Support Coordinator is someone who helps people with disability manage their plans.



## Supported independent living (SIL)

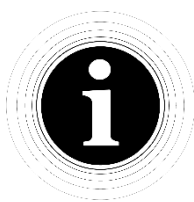
SIL is help with day-to-day tasks around your home so you can:

- do things for yourself
- learn new skills.



## Suspension

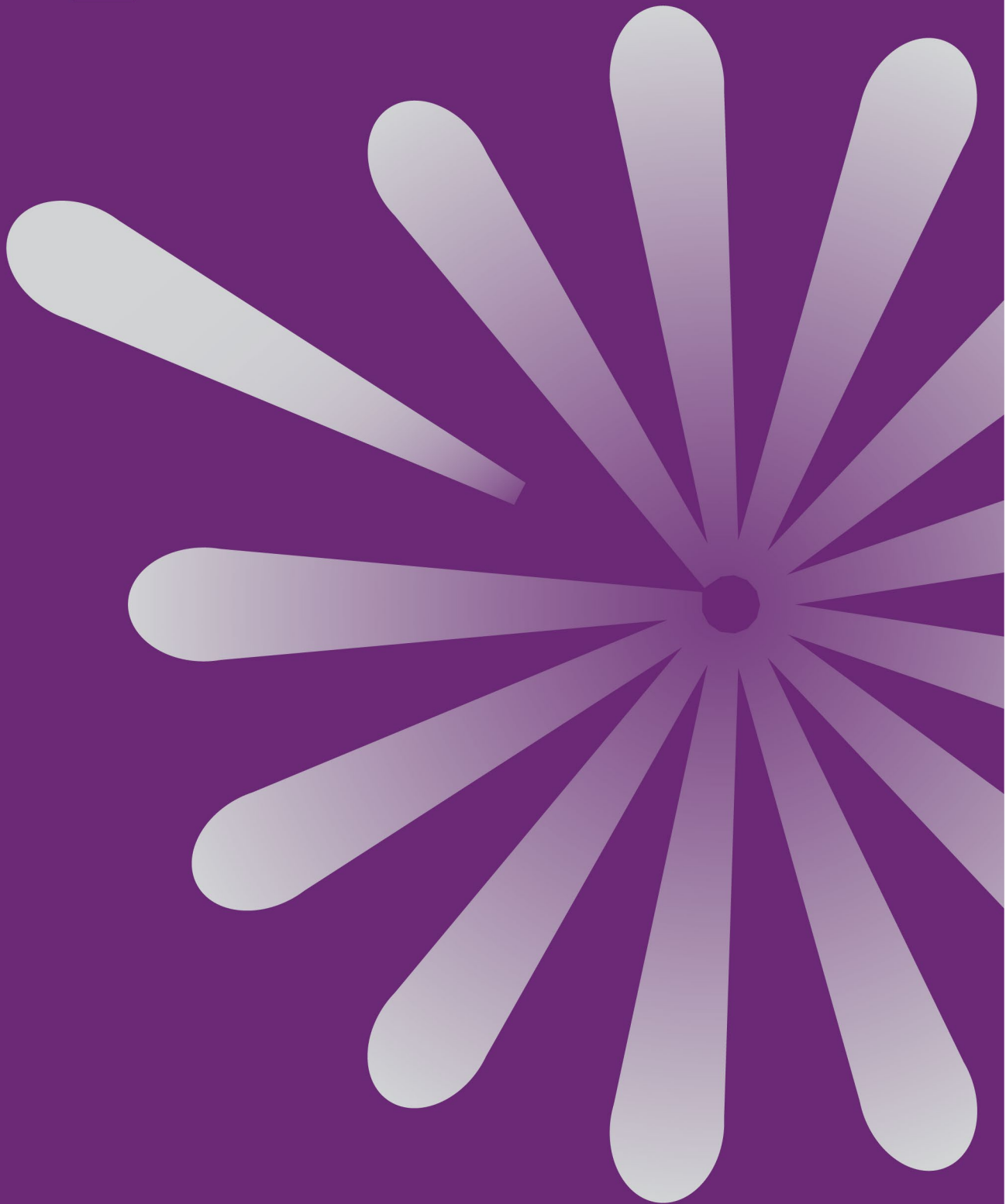
Suspension is when the school asks a child not to attend school for a set period of time.



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