



MEDIA RELEASE – 17 May 2021

Overwhelming opposition to planned NDIS reforms, say young people with disability and their families

A [report released today](#) by the national organisation for children and young people with disability finds 80 per cent of young people with disability and families of children with disability believe the introduction of Independent Assessments is a negative change to the NDIS.

The report, based on survey data of more than 200 families of children with disability and young people themselves, shows for some the NDIS can be transformative but there continue to be many challenges:

- Around 40 per cent of respondents are not satisfied with their services and support
- More than two thirds say they have difficulty finding suitable services and supports in their area
- Over half had asked for a plan review due to insufficient supports
- High levels of confusion and overwhelm with the Scheme's complexity and administrative burden
- Significant concerns about personnel in the NDIA and Local Area Coordinators, including lack of training and understanding and high turnover.

Mary Sayers, CEO of Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) said despite overwhelming opposition to the planned reforms and a flawed evaluation, all indications are the Government and the NDIA are forging ahead with the roll out.

“Our coalition of 108 disability groups question whether these changes genuinely motivated by a desire to make the NDIS fairer, as the Agency’s marketing says,” notes Ms Sayers. “Instead, our communities have real concerns the changes are intended to reduce spending on the NDIS – which means reducing supports for people with disability and restricting their choice and control.”

“We know when the NDIS works well, it changes lives, but there are still so many problems and there is no evidence the proposed changes will address them.”

“Independent Assessments will not entirely remove the financial burdens around demonstrating eligibility for the Scheme, and we are concerned a short assessment done by a stranger will provide an inaccurate picture of the lives of children and young people.”

“This is likely to lead to inaccurate assessments and unsuitable funding approaches, leaving people high and dry – and the results of the assessment won’t be able to be appealed.”

There are also widespread community concerns about the rigour and effectiveness of the evaluation of the Independent Assessments trial. One of the report’s authors, Professor Helen Dickinson, notes, “the announcement by the Minister that Independent Assessments has

been put on hold is really welcome, although I have concerns about waiting for the results of the trial to inform whether they go ahead. The evaluation of the trial is not fit for purpose and will not give the evidence needed to make a decision on a reform of this magnitude.”

Ms Sayers concludes, “despite the Government’s insistence, the proposed changes are not in line with the recommendations in the Tune review and, instead of reducing inequality in the NDIS, the changes risk making it even less fair,” says Ms Sayers.

“We are calling on the Federal Government to abandon this reform and engage in meaningful co-design with the people this affects – those that live with disability every day.”

Media contact: Mary Sayers (she/her) Chief Executive Officer
0407 126 351 or marysayers@cyda.org.au