

NSW DISABILITY NETWORK FORUM

This Update is designed to provide information on the activities of the NSW Disability Network Forum (DNF). Updates are produced regularly after scheduled DNF meetings. Please contact the DNF through the NCOSS secretariat at the contact details listed below.

Guest Speaker: Michael Coutts-Trotter, Secretary of FACS

Michael Coutts-Trotter explained the rationale behind the transfer of Home Care Service of NSW (Home Care) from Government ownership. Home Care is the NSW Government provider of home based care to support older people, people with disability and their carers to live independently in their own homes. Home Care includes Aboriginal Home Care, a specialist service stream which provides culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their family members.

The Federal Government provides 60% of funding for home care services and NSW has an agreement with the Commonwealth to get their input to the selection of a new operator so that funding can continue. Mr Coutts-Trotter noted that the main motivation behind the transfer is continuity of care, continuity of services and maintaining relationships between clients and service providers. The transfer process is seeking to transfer the whole of Home Care Service, including Aboriginal Home Care and special regard is being given to ensure that the new operator of Home Care has a proven track record working with Aboriginal staff and clients, managing staff, etc. The aim of having a single provider take over Home Care is to minimise disruption to services. A range of organisations are expected to express interest, including those with a state-wide footprint and strong reputation in the market as quality service providers. All EOIs will be assessed by the end of April, and shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit a final proposal to the NSW Treasury team managing the process. The new operator is likely to be selected by July with the transfer likely to take about 3 months.

Guest Speaker: Samantha Taylor, ADHC, Executive Director, NDIS Implementation

Samantha Taylor discussed the full implementation of NDIS and how NSW is working to make it seamless for people with disability. Lessons will be learned from the Hunter where the launch site is progressing. Ms Taylor noted that over 3,000 people currently have support plans in NSW, around 10,000 across the country and another 1,000 people are ready to go into the scheme in the Hunter.

The Ability Links program was introduced at the same time as NDIS in the Hunter. People with low support needs can be better included in main stream services and Ability Linkers can help facilitate these connections. Local Area Coordinators (LAC) work with people and have experience of life planning and engagement with NDIA, so when people come to NDIA they have clear view about basics and their first engagement is positive. People have regular/annual cycles to adjust their plans, especially as their understanding of the system grows and changes.

ADHC is working with the NDIA to provide information about local service systems. The NDIA will engage with people in NSW across a staggered timeframe. There may be some challenges connecting with people in NSW who are not currently connected to the disability service system. The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building supports may reduce these challenges.

Consultation: Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Policy Framework

Rochelle Waterhouse, Ageing Disability & Home Care, Department of Family & Community Services, Director, NDIS Policy, made a presentation on Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Framework. ILC was previously called Tier 2. Tier 1 is community awareness and inclusion and Tier 3 are individual funding packages. The name change happened to move away from tiered approach.

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The five “streams” of ILC were explained as follows:

- Information, Linkages and Referrals - The purpose of this stream is to connect people with disability, their families and carers with appropriate disability, community and mainstream supports.
- Capacity building for mainstream services - The purpose of this stream is to build the capacity of mainstream services, such as Health, Mental Health, Education, and Transport to better support people with disability, and their families and carers.
- Community awareness and capacity building - The purpose of this stream is to increase the community’s awareness of people with disability, their families and carers and to build community capacity to support their social and economic participation.
- Individual capacity building - The purpose of this stream is to build the capacity of individuals with disability, their families and carers to have choice and control over their lives and to navigate the new paradigm of disability service delivery.
- Local area coordination - The purpose of this stream is to develop relationships between the NDIS, people with disability, their families and carers, and the local community so that they can make full use of the mainstream and other services.

Senate Inquiry

On 11 February 2015, the Senate referred the following matter to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee for inquiry and report: Violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender and age related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability. More information and terms of reference: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Violence_abuse_neglect . Members discussed this inquiry and decided to put together a DNF submission.

NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

The DNF noted the official launch of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan by Minister Ajaka during the Sydney Opera House Access Program event on Thursday 26th February 2015.

About the NSW Disability Network Forum

The NSW Disability Network Forum comprises non-government, non-provider peak representative, advocacy and information groups whose primary purpose is to promote the interests of people with disability. The aim of the DNF is to build capacity so that the interests of people with disability are advanced through policy and systemic advocacy.

NSW Disability Network Forum Member Organisations:

Aboriginal Disability Network NSW	Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW
Association of Blind Citizens of NSW	NSW Consumer Advisory Group - Mental Health
Brain Injury Association NSW	NSW Council for Intellectual Disability
Deaf Australia NSW	NSW Disability Advocacy Network
Deaf Society of NSW	People with Disability Australia
DeafBlind Association NSW	Physical Disability Council of NSW
Deafness Council (NSW)	Positive Life NSW
Information on Disability and Education Awareness Services	Self Advocacy Sydney
Institute For Family Advocacy	Side By Side Advocacy Incorporated
Intellectual Disability Rights Service	Council of Social Service of NSW

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