

WA Coalition of Disability Advocacy Organisations

c/- 2 Delhi Street

West Perth WA 6005

7 July 2021

Minister Hon Don Punch MLA
Minister for Disability Services
7th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Minister Punch,

I am writing to ask you to listen to people with disability, their families and community including disability service organisations and their workers, about the concerns they have about the proposed changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

We are asking you to raise our concerns at the next Disability Reform Ministers' Meeting and to ask NDIS Minister Linda Reynolds to stop the proposed changes to the NDIS.

People with disability, their families and community including disability service organisations and their workers, are deeply concerned about the changes being put forward by the NDIS and the Federal Government. We have raised our voices many times over the last year, but we are not being listened to.

The National Disability Insurance Agency and the government are proposing to fundamentally change how the NDIS works. They want people with disability to undergo compulsory assessments, with a stranger, using tick-a-box tools. These assessments will be used to decide eligibility for the NDIS as well as how much support people will receive. The results of these assessments won't be able to be challenged or appealed.

We all fought for an NDIS that would give people the support they need based on their individual needs and circumstances. This is now under threat. Instead, the NDIA is proposing to use '400 personas' to decide how much support people should get. This is forcing people into narrow boxes. We fear this will mean big cuts to funding packages and support for people with disability. Any cuts to

disability support will have flow on effects for state and territory budgets, particularly health, justice, housing and education.

Another part of the proposed changes will remove the say that the states and territories currently have about how the NDIS is run - even though they will continue to contribute financially to the NDIS. There are also concerns that decision making about the NDIS will be much less transparent.

Our organisations work with people with disability every day and we hear the good and the bad about the current way the NDIS is working. For many people with disability the NDIS has been life-changing, particularly for those people who had not received any support before.

We also know that the NDIS can be unfair, complex and difficult to use. But these proposed changes won't fix any of those problems. In fact, we are worried they will make them much worse. The WA Coalition, along with disability organisations around Australia, have been suggesting changes that would improve the NDIS for years, yet we continue to be ignored by the NDIA.

We want to work with the Australian Government and the NDIA to change this picture. We want to deal with problems and come up with solutions that work for participants. We want to make sure this is the world-leading scheme we believe it can and should be.

I would be very happy to meet with you and to discuss these vital matters for people with disability, their families and community at your earliest convenience. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Butterworth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Butterworth
Chair

(On behalf of individual and systemic disability advocacy organisations detailed on P3)

