



The contents of this document are OFFICIAL

Reference Group meeting bulletin – 25 March 2024

The Independent Advisory Council (IAC) [Equity and Inclusion Reference Group](#) (Reference Group) met online on 25 March 2024. They discussed:

- What they have heard in their communities.
- NDIA progress on the IAC's advice for the Board (IAC Advice) [‘Improving Equity in the NDIS’ \(DOCX 307KB\)](#).
- Co-designing reform.
- Impacts NDIS Review recommendations on foundational supports and navigators have on diversity and inclusion.

Ms Leah van Poppel, IAC Principal Member and Reference Group Co-Chair, led the meeting. She welcomed back Adjunct Associate Professor Jennifer Cullen, IAC Member, as the Reference Group Co-Chair. She acknowledged the recent appointment of Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed as the NDIA's Deputy Chief Operating Officer, First Nations.

What members have heard in their communities

Reference Group Members shared concern about recent delays in creating and reviewing NDIS plans. They also noted the NDIS sometimes contacts participants about their plan outside a set plan reassessment. Some participants have told Members that their plan changed after this phone call.

Members called for more information to be shared with the disability community about potential changes because of the NDIS Review. This will help boost overall community sentiment. They also noted the importance of consultation and sharing accurate information with First Nations people.

The Reference Group discussed the community's reaction to the NDIS Review's recommendations about navigators. They highlighted the role local governments could play in NDIS navigation.

NDIA progress on IAC Advice

Mr Aaron Verlin, General Manager of Co-design and Engagement, NDIA, discussed the work underway to implement the recommendations in the IAC Advice [‘Improving Equity in the NDIS’ \(DOCX 307KB\)](#), as



agreed by the Agency. He said the NDIA is ramping up work on inclusion strategies and creating an intersectionality framework.

Reference Group Members were pleased to see work commencing on the Advice, and offered to guide the NDIA in creating the intersectionality framework.

Co-designing reform

Mr Verlin shared updates on the NDIA's co-designing reform work. Members advocated for increased transparency from the NDIA about the ways it engages with participants on improvement work. They also highlighted the importance of engaging participants in innovative ways and ensuring engagements are accessible to all.

NDIS Review recommendations

Reference Group Members discussed the [NDIS Review's recommendations](#) on foundational supports and navigators. Members highlighted the importance of:

- People with disability having access to the supports they need regardless of which government agency funds these supports.
- Including people with disability in the process of designing how foundational supports will work.
- Giving people with disability real choice and flexibility in their navigator.
- Hiring skilled navigators who understand and represent the diversity of their community.

More information on the Reference Group

The [Equity and Inclusion Reference Group](#) will next meet in July 2024. Find out more about IAC and Reference Group meetings and bulletins at the [IAC website](#).

The IAC publishes an Easy Read version of this bulletin. This is part of its commitment to accessibility.