



Independent Advisory Council

An Easy Read meeting bulletin

18 May 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.



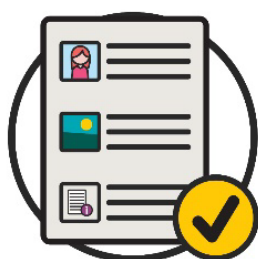
The Independent Advisory Council gives advice about ways to make the NDIS better.

In this bulletin, we just say IAC.



The IAC wrote this bulletin.

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



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 29.



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



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?

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What happened in the last meeting?



Leah van Poppel ran the last meeting.

She is the IAC's Principal Member.

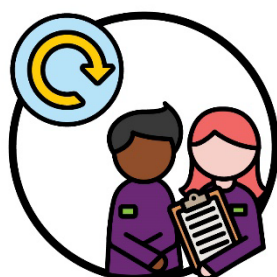
She's also a member of the **NDIA Board**.



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

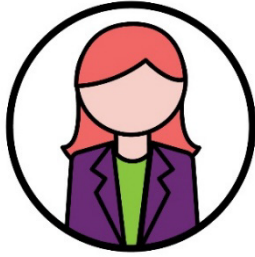


The meeting was held on 18 May 2023.



Leah gave an update on our work with the NDIA.

This includes a meeting we had with:



- the NDIA



- **Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCOs).**

These organisations speak up for people who support people with disability.



The **Minister** of the NDIS was also at the meeting.

A minister leads an area of government.



Leah also talked about how much money the Australian Government plans to give the NDIS this year.



Leah shared the work Dr Ben Gauntlett has done for the IAC.



He will be finishing his work with the IAC at the end of June 2023.

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 thanked the IAC for their work with the:

- NDIA
- Minister of the NDIS.



This includes their work on:

- planning how much money the NDIS should get
- what the NDIA should focus on.



He also shared the important work we have done on our advice about children and young people.

What did our IAC Members share?



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



Our IAC Members shared these issues with the NDIA.

NDIS plans



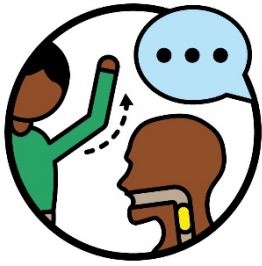
Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.



IAC Members shared that people worry about participants losing a new support in their NDIS plan.

This might happen when they get a new support before their plan starts over again.

Machado-Joseph disease is a disability that affects how you:



- move your body
- speak
- swallow.

IAC Members shared that some participants with Machado-Joseph disease have:



- lost supports from their NDIS plan



- less **funding** for supports.



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



For example, they might get less support from **support coordinators**.

A support coordinator is someone who helps participants plan and use their supports.

NDIS services and supports



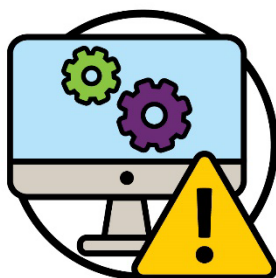
IAC Members shared there are issues with how the NDIA keeps track of when they **reviewed** a decision.

And how this affects when they make new plans.



When the NDIA reviews something, they check to see what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



IAC Members explained there were issues with testing the NDIA's new computer system in Tasmania.

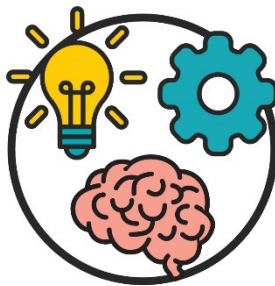
For example, payments taking too long.



IAC Members shared that people have different ideas about how well support coordinators work.

But they are an important support for some people with **intellectual disability**.

An intellectual disability can affect how you:



- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do some things on your own.



IAC Members shared that the community worry about people with **public guardians**.

They worry that in Victoria these people can't speak up for themselves.

A guardian is a person who acts and makes decisions for you.



The government chooses a public guardian if your guardian can't be your:

- family member
- friend.



People with public guardians have to go to court when they want to speak for themselves.

And people worry this happens all around Australia.



IAC Members shared they have had good meetings with the **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission)** about their work.



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

- are safe
- get good services.



IAC Members explained that people aren't sure about the NDIA's rules about how much supports cost.



They want the NDIA to be stricter about some supports.



IAC Members shared people are happy about the NDIA's work in the Northern Territory.



They supported participants who had to leave their homes because of floods.



This happened in places far away from cities and towns.

Information about supports



IAC Members shared that NDIS call centres don't give the same information to participants.

And this doesn't help participants.



IAC Members explained that older people with disability need more support to find the care they need.

This includes when they need support towards the end of their life.



IAC Members also explained there should be more information to support participants who manage their own funding.

This includes guides from the NDIA.



IAC Members shared there needs to be more information about how participants can use their supports in hospital.



And that some **Hospital Liaison Officers (HLOs)** don't always give the same advice.

HLOs help hospitals support people with disability to get the support they need.

Children and young people

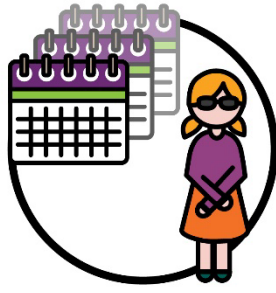


IAC Members shared that some young participants lose supports they need when the NDIA reviews their plan.

Even when they have enough proof that they need the support.



This happens more to participants who need more support with finding a job after school.



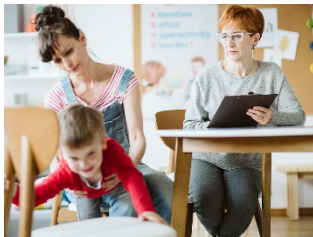
IAC Members shared that it takes a long time to connect children in **foster care** with their:

- NDIS plan
- supports.



Foster care is when a child lives:

- in a home with a family they do not know
- with people who look after children who might not be safe.



IAC Members explained that it helps children to develop when parents learn from parenting classes.



People worry that parents think this is less important than supports for their child.

And it can be harder to get this support in a child's plan.

Home and living



Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.



The NDIA will review how much SDA costs.



IAC Members worry that the NDIA might think SDA costs less than it actually does.

This will affect people who build new SDA.

They might not be able to build SDA that suits the need of one participant.



The NDIA must also make sure this helps SDA **providers** focus on supporting participants.

At the moment some focus on earning money.



Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



IAC Members shared that the NDIA understands more about how SDA works.

And they use this information when they make decisions about how much SDA should cost.



IAC Members explained that some participants living in SDA face issues when other people leave.

This includes getting less support from providers.



IAC Members shared that some participants who ask for SDA support don't hear back for 2 years.



They want the new computer system to help the NDIA make decisions quickly.



IAC Members explained people worry that decisions about NDIS plans aren't always the same.

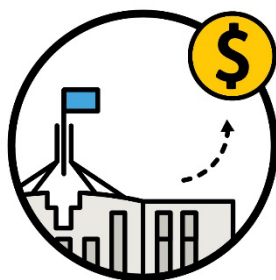
This includes decisions about SDA.



For example, some participants can't get the SDA support they need in their plan.

But they get more funding in their NDIS plan without asking for it.

The community



IAC Members shared that the government has explained how much money they plan to give the NDIS.



The community feels hopeful about how much money the NDIS will get.

This includes organisations who work with people with disability.



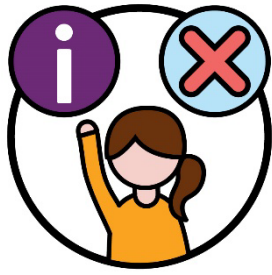
IAC Members shared that the community are looking forward to information sessions the NDIA will run.



These sessions will share information about **Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)** in the Northern Territory.



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



IAC Members shared that the NDIA doesn't always have the right information about participants.



And that there have been issues with the Independent Expert Review program.

In this bulletin we call it the program.

The program is a new way to review decisions for participants.



In the program, a person who doesn't work for the NDIA reviews the NDIA's decision.

They do this before the **Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)** reviews the decision.



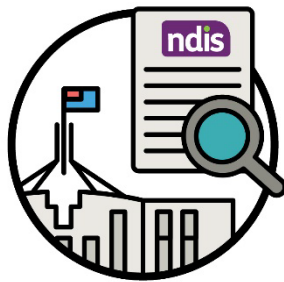
The AAT is a government organisation that is separate to the NDIS.

They check the NDIA's decisions about:

- who can join the NDIS
- NDIS plans.



IAC Members explained that the community wants the **NDIS Review** to share more information about their work.



The Australian Government is checking the NDIS to find out what:

- works well
- could be better.

They call it the NDIS Review.



This means the community can stay up to date on information about the NDIS.

Important updates

Our advice to the NDIA Board



IAC Members gave an update on our 'Improving the NDIS for children and young people' advice.



IAC Members agreed that our advice is ready to share with the NDIA Board.



And they want to share the advice with the Board quickly to make sure the NDIA better understands what children and young people need.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal

IAC Members got an update on:



- the AAT's work



- the NDIA's test of the program.



IAC Members shared some ideas they had about the program.



IAC Members shared that any way to review the NDIA's decisions should:

- work with participants to support them
- not make participants feel scared.

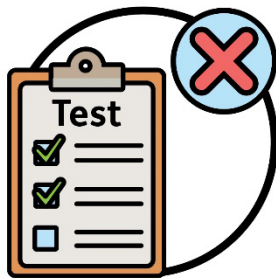
IAC Members shared it's important the program reach out to:



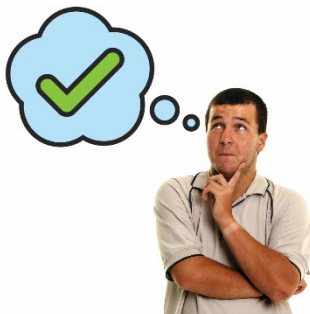
- First Nations participants



- participants from different backgrounds.



Not many of these participants took part in the test of the program.



The program must also make sure participants with intellectual disability understand the program.



IAC Members explained that reviewing the NDIA's decisions early is a good idea.

And participants should always have this option before they need to go to the AAT.



IAC Members shared they want to hear more about how well the program works.

This includes:



- how the program will record the experiences of participants



- how much the program will cost.

Our Work Plan



IAC Members talked about what's important to include in our new Work Plan.

Our Work Plan explains how we will make sure we support the community.

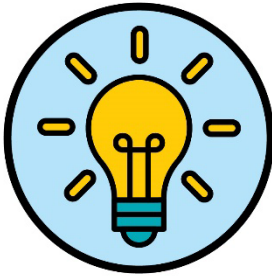


IAC Members shared that we will make sure the IAC is a good place to work.



This includes making sure we provide good services for:

- people with disability
- people with intellectual disability.

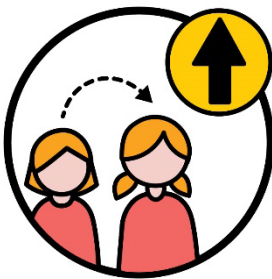


IAC Members shared that we will use ideas from the:

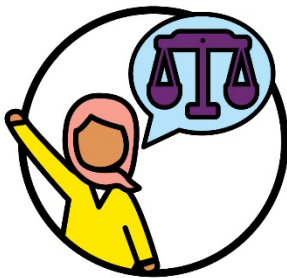
- NDIS Review
- **Disability Royal Commission.**



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



IAC Members shared we will include advice for participants as they grow older.



And we will make sure the NDIS use our advice about how to be fairer.

Our next meeting



Our next meeting is on 6 July 2023.



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

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



You can send us an email.

advisorycouncil@ndis.gov.au



You can visit the NDIS website.

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.



Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)

The AAT is a government organisation that is separate to the NDIS.

They check the NDIA's decisions about:

- who can join the NDIS
- NDIS plans.



Bulletin

A bulletin is an important news item we share with the community.

It explains what we did in our last meeting.



Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCOs)

These organisations speak up for people who support people with disability.



Disability Royal Commission

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

Foster care



Foster care is when a child lives:

- in a home with a family they do not know
- with people who look after children who might not be safe.



Funding

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

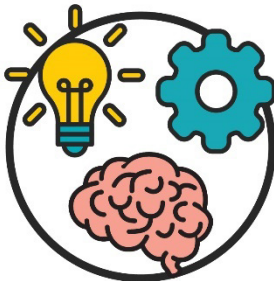


Hospital Liaison Officers (HLOs)

HLOs help hospitals support people with disability to get the support they need.

Intellectual disability

An intellectual disability can affect how you:

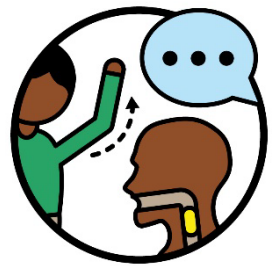


- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do some things on your own.



Justice Liaison Officers (JLOs)

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



Machado-Joseph disease

Machado-Joseph disease is a disability that affects how you:

- move your body
- speak
- swallow.



Minister

A minister leads an area of government.



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.



Providers

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.

Public guardian



A guardian is a person who acts and makes decisions for you.

The government chooses a public guardian if your guardian can't be your:

- family member
- friend.

Review



When the NDIA reviews something, they check to see what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



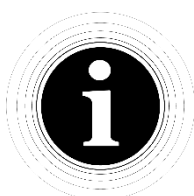
Support coordinators

A support coordinator is someone who helps people with disability manage their plans.



Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)

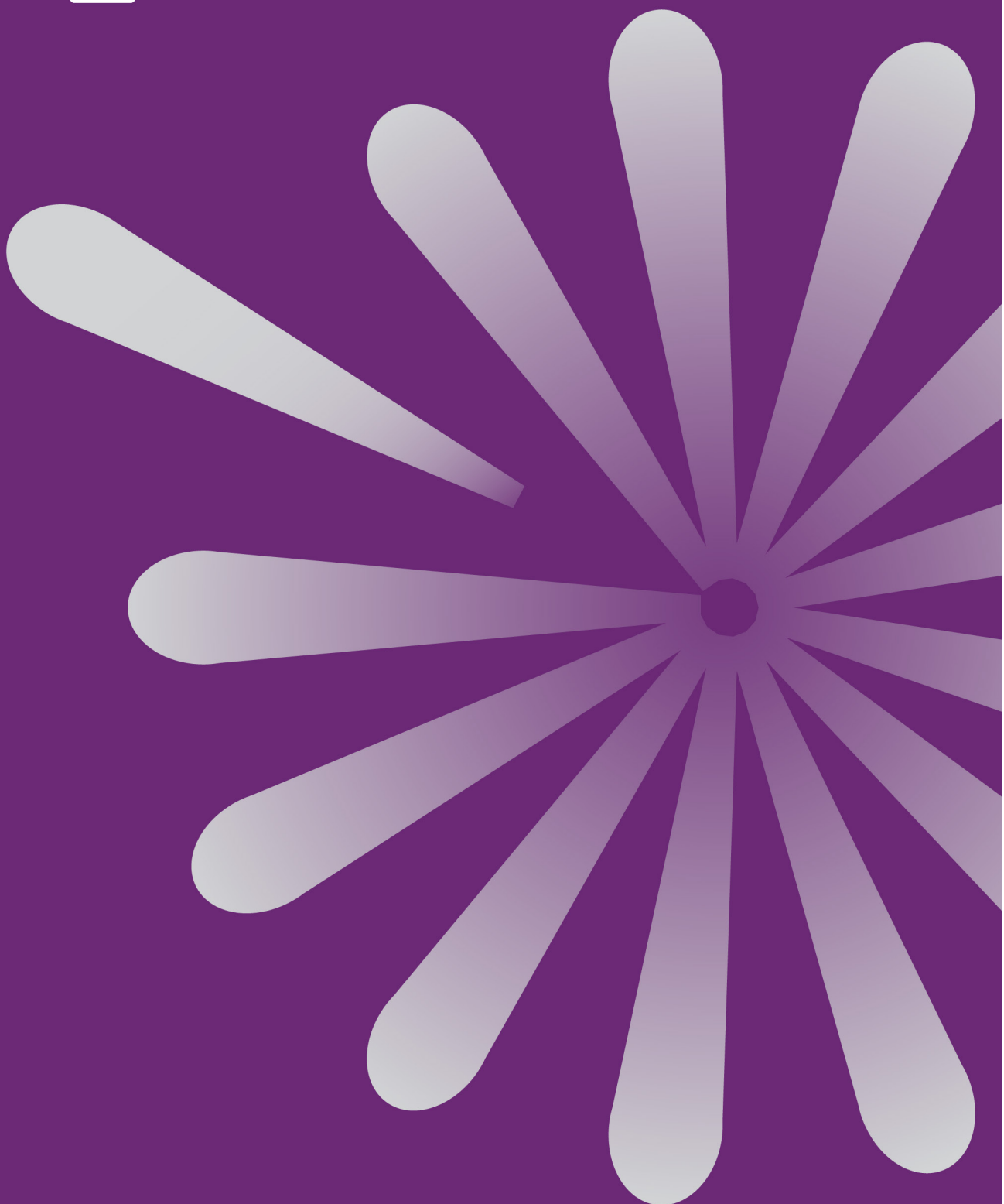
SDA is housing for people with disability who need extra support most of the time.



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**Independent
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