



NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Consultation

Frequently asked questions

What is the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)?

The NDIS supports people with a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.

It gives people more choice and control about the services and supports they use.

The NDIS is being progressively rolled out in trial sites around Australia.

What is quality and safeguarding?

Quality is about ensuring people receive good supports and safeguarding is about keeping people safe from harm.

Features of quality and safeguarding systems generally include systems for handling complaints, staff screening processes and systems for checking that service providers meet the standards expected of them.

What are the current arrangements for quality and safeguarding in disability services?

Currently each state and territory and the Commonwealth has its own system for disability services. This means we have nine different quality and safeguarding systems for disability services in Australia.

Current arrangements will continue to be used in the NDIS trial sites until a new national system is developed.

What is the consultation paper about?

The paper considers how quality and safeguarding arrangements need to change for the NDIS and some of the choices that will need to be made about how it should work.

The NDIS represents a new model of service provision where the individual has greater choice and control. For many people, having choice and control over their providers and supports, along with information about potential providers and their rights, will be enough of a safeguard. For other people, there will need to be extra safeguards.

As much as possible, there should be national consistency so that everyone using NDIS funded supports has assurances about quality and safeguards.

We want to hear what people with disability, families, carers and service providers think about these options to inform decisions about quality and safeguards in the NDIS.

What is the relationship between the Senate Inquiry and the National Quality and Safeguarding Framework?

The Senate Inquiry will look at violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings.

It will report by June 2015 and will inform the development of an NDIS quality and safeguarding framework.

If you would like to make a submission to the senate inquiry please visit their [website](#).

Why does the paper focus on five specific topics?

The paper looks closely at the following topics:

- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) provider registration
- systems for handling complaints
- ensuring staff are safe to work with participants
- safeguards for participants who manage their own plans
- reducing and eliminating restrictive practices in NDIS-funded supports.

These five areas are explained in detail because they are likely to have a regulatory impact. This means they may place new or extra obligations on individuals, businesses, governments and community-based organisations. For this reason it is important that everyone has the chance to have a say before we make a decision.

What is NDIA provider registration?

The NDIA is required to keep a register of providers who are approved to provide supports to participants. Under the arrangements for the NDIS trial sites, the NDIA accepts a provider for registration if they meet the quality requirements of the state or territory in which they are providing supports, or planning to provide supports.

The NDIS is a national scheme so the NDIA needs to have a nationally consistent way of assessing whether individuals, businesses, and other organisations provide safe and high quality service. This should help participants to have confidence when they are choosing a service.

The consultation paper describes a range of options for provider registration. One option is to require providers to comply with standard legal requirements in their jurisdiction, such as occupational health and safety laws. Another option involves independent quality auditing.

How will complaints be managed under the NDIS?

Complaints processes are an important part of any quality system as they help providers respond to concerns and make improvements.

The paper also seeks your views on how a complaints system might work for the NDIS. A key issue is whether complaints should be handled by a body that is independent of service providers and/or independent of the NDIA.

What employee checking arrangements are proposed?

One issue addressed in the consultation paper is how to make sure disability support workers are safe to work with participants.

A range of different options are explored from police checks to working with vulnerable people checks and barred employee lists. We want to hear what you think about these options.

What are restrictive practices?

The consultation paper describes a restrictive practice as any intervention that restricts the rights or freedom of movement of a person with disability who displays behaviours of concern, where the primary purpose of that intervention is to protect that person or others from harm. This may include using restraint (physical, chemical, mechanical and environmental) and seclusion.

The paper considers who should be responsible for authorising restrictive practices and what reporting arrangements should be in place.

What about people who self-manage?

The paper considers what safeguards should be in place for people who manage their own funding.

An important issue is whether the NDIA should have a role in checking that staff and providers used by people who self-manage are safe or whether that will limit choice and control too much.

How can I get involved?

We want to hear what you think about all the options described in the consultation paper.

There are several ways you can get involved in the consultation.

You can make a submission, join the discussion in our online forum, complete a questionnaire or attend a public meeting.