



Australian Government



Australian
**Small Business and
Family Enterprise**
Ombudsman

31 October 2019

NDIS Consultations
Department of Social Services
Canberra ACT 2601

via email: NDISConsultations@dss.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

REVIEW OF THE NDIS ACT AND THE NEW NDIS PARTICIPANT SERVICE GUARANTEE

We support a service guarantee, in particular the proposed 'Connected' principle. For the improvement of participant outcomes, small business providers need to be involved in the plan creation and review process. Small businesses represent 60% of NDIS providers¹, they are also often the only service providers in rural and regional areas.

The collaboration of the NDIA with service providers during the creation and review of plans will require allocation of funding for a new support category to facilitate providers developing a coordinated delivery plan where multiple services are required.

NDIA staff assess and review participant plans with training in how disabilities impact people's lives. Yet practitioners, those on the 'front line' of participant care, have limited input. Small business practitioners are concerned that they are unable to provide necessary services because the NDIA review has determined they are not required. NDIA must build in consultation with experts, the practitioners, when determining if a requested support is required.

The optimal outcome of plans will depend on all parties collaborating to maximise the benefit of individual services. A new support category for service provider collaboration is required. This will enable the experts, the providers, to build holistic plans and deliver multiple services to maximise the benefits of individual supports. Participants may know 'what' they need, but will not know how the different supports best interact. It will also ensure that small business providers can advocate on behalf of the participant to meet a participant's unique needs with large business providers.

Funding to facilitate collaboration between practitioners and the NDIA in the creation and review of plans, and between practitioners in the provision of multiple services to a participant, has the ability to drive significant improvement to participants achieving their personal and economic goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Ada Klinkhamer on 02 6121 6126 or at ada.klinkhamer@asbfeo.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Kate Carnell AO
Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

¹ McKinsey & Company, *Independent Pricing Review: National Disability Insurance Agency*, February 2018