

NDIS FACT SHEET #1

THE HISTORY OF THE NDIS

In 1972, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam explored a system of no-fault compensation for all injuries. This was planned to cover more than workers' compensation and motor accidents, to instead support anybody with disability.

This system was slowly worked out and was put to parliament just as the Whitlam government was dismissed in 1975! This meant that the proposed system for disability support was abandoned by the incoming government. Nearly 40 years passed before the issues were addressed again.

How the NDIS started

A report was written in 2009 by the Disability Investment Group, recommending a National Disability Insurance Scheme. At the same time, the Shut Out report was released. This report recorded the desperation of people with disability and their families. The report highlighted the strong need for a better quality of life for people with disability.

**“Once shut in, many people with disabilities now find themselves shut out. People with disabilities may be present in our community, but too few are actually part of it.”
- Shut Out report**

The Shut Out and Disability Investment Group reports made the Federal Government take disability support in Australia more seriously. As a result, the Productivity Commission investigated whether or not an NDIS was achievable. They wrote a report in 2010 that famously said that the current disability support system in Australia was:

“...unfair, underfunded and fragmented.” - Productivity Commission report

Importantly, the Productivity Commission found that leaving the disability support system in Australia alone and not introducing the NDIS would create far greater costs to the community over the long run. This meant that the NDIS would not just be good for people with disability and their families, but good for saving the country money in the long run:

The economic benefits of “...the NDIS would significantly exceed the additional costs of the scheme.” - Productivity Commission report

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DISABILITYLOOP.ORG.AU

To contact the NDIS for more information:

www.ndis.gov.au

1800 800 110



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Community campaign for the NDIS

In 2009 the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, National Disability Services, and Carers Australia formed the National Disability and Carer Alliance. The goal of the National Disability and Carer Alliance was to work together to improve disability support in Australia.

In 2011, the National Disability and Carer Alliance launched the Every Australian Counts campaign. This campaign targeted politicians and the wider Australian community to get support for the NDIS. The Every Australian Counts campaign was very busy over the next few years, slowly convincing Australia that the NDIS was the right thing to do.

Getting the states and territories to agree

After years of report writing, grassroots campaigning and political lobbying, the NDIS Act was introduced to Parliament in 2012. The NDIS then started as a trial in different parts of Australia from 2013 to 2016. During this time the state and territory governments looked at how well the NDIS trials were going in different states and territories, and working out what improvements could be made.

The Commonwealth government then worked with the state and territory governments of Australia to individually work out the timing of when the NDIS would be available in each of the areas. This took lots of negotiation and planning, to make sure that the NDIS would only become available when governments and service providers were ready to support people to access services through the NDIS. Now, all of the states and territories of Australia have signed up for the NDIS, so it is truly a National Disability Insurance Scheme!

Funding the NDIS for the future

People often ask how we pay for the NDIS. It is funded by the money that we pay to the government as tax. The NDIS is for every Australian who may or may not acquire a disability. This means the Australians who earn enough money to pay tax can support people with disability and their families by funding the NDIS. This is not charity though, as the same people who fund the NDIS may eventually rely on the NDIS at some point in their life; either by accessing it themselves or having it support a family member or close friend.

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