

National Mental Health Sector Reference Group Sector Communiqué – June 2016

The National Mental Health Sector Reference Group (NMHSRG) provides expert advice from a cross section of the mental health sector to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) about the integration of psychosocial disability and mental health into the Scheme. The NMHSRG is also an important mechanism for information sharing across the mental health sector and the broader community. As such, the purpose of this Communiqué is to provide the key outcomes of the seventh meeting of the NMHSRG which took place on 10 June 2016 in Melbourne.

The meeting was well attended with members focusing on the important work underway in transitioning to a national Scheme and planning the integration of mental health and psychosocial disability into the NDIS.

The NMHSRG, chaired by NDIA Strategic Adviser Mr Eddie Bartnik, includes diverse sector representatives and is attended by expert guest presenters when necessary.

The following members, project managers and invited guests were in attendance:

Members Present

- Ms Anne Skordis, Chairperson and NDIA General Manager
- Ms Janet Meagher AM, NDIS Independent Advisory Council
- Mr Evan Bichara, Consumer representative
- Ms Arahni Sont, Carer representative
- Ms Marita Walker, Regional Manager
- Mr John Riley, Department of Social Services
- Ms Joanne Llewellyn, Department of Social Services
- Ms Robyn Humphries, Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee*
- Ms Teena Balgi, Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee (for Amy Wyndham)*
- Ms Sarah Johnson, NDIS Scheme Actuary (Session 3 only)
- Dr Anthony Millgate, Department of Health
- Ms Paula Zylstra, Department of Health
- Mr Tully Rosen, Mental Health Commissions (for Mr John Feneley)**
- Mr Daniel Casey, Mental Health Australia (for Mr Frank Quinlan) left 2:30PM

Project Managers

- Ms Joanne Llewellyn, Department of Social Services
- Ms Emma Coughlan, Mental Health Australia
- Mr Mark Rosser, NDIA Mental Health Section
- Ms Deborah Roberts, NDIA Mental Health Section
- Ms Petra Hill, NDIA Mental Health Section
- Mr Jason Leung, NDIA Program Analyst

Invited Guests

- Ms Vanessa D'Souza, Independent Hospital Pricing Authority (IHPA)

Apologies

- Mr Eddie Bartnik, NDIA Strategic Adviser
- Mr John Feneley, NSW Mental Health Commissioner
- Ms Julie Anderson, Consumer representative
- Mr Frank Quinlan, Mental Health Australia

- Mr Josh Fear, Mental Health Australia
- Dr Gerry Naughtin, NDIS Independent Advisory Council
- Ms Amy Wyndham, Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee*
- Mr Damian Griffis, First Peoples with Disability Network (invited guest)

*representative of the Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee (MHDAPC) of the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council

**representative of Mental Health Commissions.

Summary of the Seventh Meeting

The Chairperson acknowledged the Wurundjeri people as traditional owners of land and paid respect to elders both past and present.

The Chairperson, Ms Anne Skordis, welcomed members to the second meeting of the NDIA Mental Health Sector Reference Group (the NMHSRG) for 2016 and thanked members for their attendance.

The Chairperson acknowledged that the NDIS gives effect to Australia's obligations under the *United Nations Convention on the rights of People with Disabilities* (2006) and noted the criticality of continuance of the National Mental Health Sector Reference Group as an ongoing partnership mechanism between the mental health sector and the National Disability Insurance Agency.

The Chairperson acknowledged the valuable contribution of people with a lived experience of mental health difficulties, along with their families/ carers and all those in the sector who support them. The Chairperson reminded the NMHSRG that the core purpose of the group is to ensure people with psychosocial disability accessing the Scheme (including through the ILC) have the best life they can in the community.

Chairperson's Report

The following incoming Members and Project Managers of the NMHSRG were noted:

- Mr John Riley, incoming NMHSRG Member and NDIS Program Transition Branch Manager for the *Department of Social Services* replacing Dr Russell Ayers
- Ms Joanne Llewellyn, incoming NMHSRG Project Manager and Community Mental Health NDIS Transition Director for *Department of Social Services* replacing Ms Janie Lawson; and
- Mr Jason Leung, *National Disability Insurance Agency* NDIA Program Analyst, Mental Health Section.

The Chairperson expressed her sincere thanks to all outgoing members for their commitment to the work of the NMHSRG and wished them well in their future endeavours.

Scheme Actuary's Report

Ms Sarah Johnson, Scheme Actuary presented the report: *People with Psychosocial Disability and the NDIS – as at 31 March 2016*. It was noted that the March 2016 Quarterly Report, a Sustainability Report and Trial Site 'dashboard' are now available on the NDIS website.

As at 31 March 2016, across all trial sites 2,945 (10%) of all scheme participants have a psychosocial disability, and 2,137 participants (7%) have psychosocial disability recorded as

their primary disability. It was also noted that 41% of all participants with a primary or secondary psychosocial disability have more than one disability listed.

Ms Johnson then took the NMHSRG through the People with a Psychosocial Disability Report in detail. Information on people who had completed an access request as at 31 March 2016 included a breakdown of the numbers of participants with a psychosocial disability across trial sites.

For the purposes of this communique, a Key Points summary of data *People with Psychosocial Disability and the NDIS – as at 31 March 2016* is included at [Attachment A](#)

Members' Reports

A 'Members Reports' session followed, allowing shared visibility of NDIS transition and readiness planning. Of significance, the NMHSRG heard feedback that:

- The Independent Advisory Council (IAC) is progressing work to further articulate better how 'high cost NDIS packages' which facilitate independent living (with support) for people with disability are less 'costly' than the provision of lifetime care without a focus on re-ablement
- The development of a NDIS Community Mental Health Conference will be led by CMHA and overseen by the NMHSRG. The proposed conference would be truly owned and driven by the sector. Members noted that, typically, conferences regarding the NDIS and mental health reform are privately run disallowing ownership from community based organisations, consumers their families and carers
- Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA) has established an Executive Director position and recruitment to this position is underway
- The Mental Health Commission of NSW has released a [Peer Work Hub](#) on 16 May 2016. The online Peer Work Hub is intended to assist the development of peer workforces by providing a business case outlining why mental health, community service and care organisations in NSW would benefit by developing a peer workforce. It also contains a toolkit with practical resources for employers and two language guides.
- In order to consolidate learnings from NDIS Hunter and Mental Health Community of Practice Forums (jointly facilitated by NSW Mental Health Commission and Mental Health Coordinating Council of NSW) the MHCC is developing two guides to support the formation of NDIS CoPs across the country:
 - a guide to navigating the NDIS for people with mental health conditions.
 - a guide for communities and service providers to establish their own local Communities of Practice for psychosocial disability.
- Under NDIS Sector Development Fund, Mental Health Australia has undertaken the significant work to build the capacity of the mental health sector to engage with the NDIS, including:
 - engaging Richmond Wellbeing to deliver [NDIS Peer Education and Train-the-Trainer Workshops](#) to mental health consumers and carers nationally
 - engaging [National Disability Services to deliver NDIS organisational readiness training](#) for mental health service providers
 - ongoing information provision about NDIS policy and operational issues as well as capacity building opportunities through regular NDIS Mental Health Network updates. Please find the most recent update the MHA website ([click here](#))
- The Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Principal Committee's recent work includes:

- ongoing work on the *Fifth National Mental Health Plan*
- developing the National Drug and Alcohol Strategy; and
- the establishment of an NDIS Working Group to inform the work of the NMHSRG.
- Joint Department of Health and Department of Social Services CEO meetings were held in Sydney (for the eastern states; 31 May 2016) and Perth (for WA, NT and SA; 3 June 2016) to discuss business planning requirements for the move from block funding, and to present a number of tools and resources that are being utilised by the disability sector in the NDIS rollout
- The Department of Social Services conducted four state and territory workshops for team leaders and workers of Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs), Mental Health Respite: Carer Support (MHR:CS), Respite Support for Carers of Young People with Severe or Profound Disabilities Program (RSCYP) and Young Carers programs.

General Manger Update on Transition to Full Scheme

Bilateral agreements and their schedules outline roles and responsibilities for governments and the NDIA as well as high level arrangements for the transition to full Scheme. The bilateral agreements will support the transition from 30,000 participants in NDIS trial sites to the full rollout of the NDIS and an estimated 460,000 eligible people.

Bilateral negotiations have focussed on a range of key issues including participant phasing, workforce transition, and continuity of support, market and sector issues. The bilateral agreements are a critical requirement for the NDIA as they underpin a range of service delivery issues, including office locations, recruitment of NDIA staff, and communications and engagement.

- On 16 September 2015, both New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria (VIC) signed bilateral agreements for the rollout of the NDIS. The agreements give certainty to around 140,000 people with disability in NSW and around 105,000 people with disability in VIC. The agreements also give certainty to their families and carers.
- On 25 September 2015, the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government announced early transition sites in Townsville, Charters Towers and Palm Island. These sites are now delivering supports and services to eligible children and young people under 18 years of age in Townsville and Charters Towers and all eligible people under the age of 65 on Palm Island. Around 1,600 people are expected to be eligible for the NDIS in the early transition sites.
- The Tasmanian and South Australian bilateral agreements were signed on 11 December 2015. Both transition arrangements are a “whole of state” approach building on the extensive learnings achieved from the same approach taken during trial of the NDIS. The bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and the NT Government was announced on 5 May 2016.

Operational Plans set out the key deliverables agreed between states and territories, the NDIA and the Commonwealth to support the transition to full Scheme. Their primary purpose is to operationalise the bilateral agreements and their supporting schedules.

- Each Operational Plan covers 20 elements critical to the successful implementation of the NDIS. Key Operational Plan focus areas include:
 - streamlining data exchange processes
 - quality and safeguards
 - workforce and property planning
 - information, linkages and capacity building; and

- phasing and data collection.
- The NDIA has put in place governance arrangements to support the transition to the NDIS. Each NDIA General Manager (or equivalent) has oversight and sign-off of the individual elements of the Operational Plans assigned to them.
- Local Area Coordination activities have commenced to support participant readiness to transition to the NDIS.

For more information regarding the agreed sets of actions and responsibilities of New South Wales, the Commonwealth and the National Disability Insurance Agency see [NDIS Factsheets](#) developed by the NSW government. As it becomes available, further details regarding the NSW bilateral agreement will be provided to members out of session for further distribution.

Participant Pathway

- Participant Pathway booklets were provided to all attendees of the NMHSRG. This material was presented for participants to help them understand the entry point and processes involved in establishing supports through the NDIS.
- The '[My NDIS Pathway](#)' booklet was informed by feedback from the NDIS Independent Advisory Council and was well received by NMHSRG attendees.
- NDIS first plans are a way to ensure large numbers of NDIS participants receive their first plans and get the support they need straight away. First plans are the beginning of a lifelong involvement with the Scheme. Participants are in control of the planning process and there are no limits to the number of short or long term goals a participant can include in their plans.

Project Updates

A session focusing on the progress of key NDIA mental health projects, and opportunities for feedback on these, then took place. A summary is provided here:

Reference Packages

[*NDIS Reference Packages for Psychosocial Disability*](#)

- The Scheme Actuary has sourced publically available population data on the LSP-16 and HONOS measures from Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network and is currently working on an analysis of this data to inform this project.
- The Expert Panel met for a first meeting on 16 May 2016 and made significant progress in describing potential reference groups and typical support packages using the HONOS and LSP-16. Data on individuals with approved plans (supports and costs) and HONOS and LSP-16 scores from trial sites has been sourced from the Hunter and Perth Hills trial sites and will be analysed by the Actuarial team to test the proposed support packages.
- A second meeting of the Expert Panel will be scheduled following analysis of the trial site data.
- The next Expert Panel will include representative of Mental Health Commissions, Mr Tully Rosen as well as a nominee from Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA).

For further information relating to this project please contact:

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Joint Support Design Project

[MHA / NDIA Design of Supports for Psychosocial Disability](#)

Ms Deborah Roberts provided an update on the progress of the MHA/ NDIA Joint Support Design project. In particular, it was noted that:

- The project produced a number of jointly agreed recommendations for the NDIA to consider.

Next steps of the project include:

- The development of an implementation plan to address the project recommendation in liaison with all other relevant divisions including NDIA Media, Communications and Engagement, NAT, Operations and Market & Sector. Some of these recommendations are already being addressed.
- A final report and recommendations arising from the report will then be considered by the NDIA's Executive Management Group (EMG). The expected timeframe for this is September 2016.

For further information relating to this project please contact:

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Access Review

[Operational Access review for Psychosocial Disability](#)

Mr Mark Rosser provided an update on the progress of the Operational Access Review for Psychosocial Disability project. Current work includes the:

- Literature review: Early Intervention and Psychosocial Disability has been completed by MIND and a draft was received by the NDIA on the 28 April 2016.
- The proposed National Mental Health Communication and Engagement Events calendar of events has now been rescheduled to approx. August 2016. For the purposes of this communique, note that resources have been acquired for events coordination and administrative support to complete the project. Events are proposed for all capital cities and key regional areas. The location of the events are aligned to the national Scheme roll out. NMHSRG members will be further engaged in planning for these events.
- Enhancement of NDIA materials - a review of documentation used by the National Access Team has been completed. Consultation with key NDIA teams, including the; National Access Team, Operations and Communication and Engagement Teams is ongoing. An NDIA resource; *Completing the Access Process for the NDIS, Tips for Communicating about Psychosocial Disability*, has been developed with the practical assistance ACT Health. The resource provides practical examples for clinical and psychosocial support staff to describe functional impacts of psychosocial disability.
- The NDIA has purchased a two year licence from the Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC) (NSW) for exclusive use of their 'capacit-e', mental health eLearning recovery suite. The suite includes three 30-45 minute eLearning modules with topics covering; understanding mental health recovery, the language of mental health recovery and supporting mental health recovery. The modules feature video vignettes of people with lived experience of psychosocial disability. The suite is targeted to all NDIA staff. In addition, discussion with MHCC in relation to trauma informed practice and eLearning modules are ongoing (See Item 5.3 below).
- A working paper monitoring the Agency's Learning and Development Strategic Plan 2015-16, Learning and Development Model and Growing Capability Map and providing

recommendations for the inclusion or development of mental health and wellbeing training components is ongoing. This paper will also include recommendations monitoring the Agency's Work Health and Safety (WHS) policies and procedures including a focus on psychosocial injury.

- Mental Health First Aid training for Geelong based staff took place on 18 and 19 May 2016.
- The NDIA has funded a pilot initiative in the Barwon region to test strategies in relation to how to engage 'hard to reach' cohorts. This initiative will be delivered by Barwon region community support provider 'Diversitat' who specialise in supporting culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This pilot project is not specific to psychosocial disability, however, the strategies may be applicable in that the project will address homelessness and CALD communities. A representative from the Mental Health team will be included on the steering committee. The project is led by NDIA staff member Toni Van Hammond PSM who has extensive mental health experience.

For further information relating to this project please contact:

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NDIS Psychosocial Resources Online

Ms Petra Hill provided an overview of the work of the NDIA to develop NDIS Psychosocial Resources Online. This project was conceived at the 4 December 2015 meeting of the NMHSRG following discussion around the challenge of enabling genuine choice and control over supports for people with psychosocial disability and/ or mental health difficulties, their families and carers. The core purpose of the project is to increase self-directed planning and enable choice and control for both participants and non-participants of the Scheme. For the purposes of this communique, note that the Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC) were successful in tendering for the provision and development of this work.

The next steps include the establishment of a Project Steering Committee to ensure strong alignment with the co-design principles underpinning the Scheme. It is expected that project outcomes will assist people with psychosocial disability and/ or mental health difficulties to be in control and have choices as understood by the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities* (2006).

NDIA Community of Practice: Enhancing Practice for Psychosocial Disability

Ms Marita Walker, NDIA Regional Manager provided an update on the work of the internal *NDIA Community of Practice: Enhancing Practice for Psychosocial Disability* including that the CoP:

- Met for the second time this year on Thursday 12 May 2016 with good representation from staff across the NDIS network.
- Focussed on the emerging data from the trial sites as reflected in the Scheme Actuary's Quarterly Report.
- Enabled dialogue around data trends as well as discussion about what may be causing difference between trial sites.
- Agreed that a standing agenda item on mainstream principles be included at future meetings to allow for explorations of the principles as they are put into practice. Sharing staff experiences of mainstream interfaces may assist in identifying solutions and ensuring consistency of approach.

- Ms Walker noted that although mainstream interface principles are policy issues, they must be constantly clarified and negotiated at each point of practice. Robust discussion is necessary for staff confidence in their practice approaches. A salient example of a commonly faced mainstream interface issue is 'medication supervision'.

Meeting Close

Attendees from an adjacent meeting of the National Mental Health Information Development Expert Advisory Panel (NMHIDEAP) were invited by the Chairperson to join the NMHSRG meeting to share high level information about the work of the NMHIDEAP.

The purpose of the NMHIDEAP is to provide clinical and technical advice to the Mental Health Information Strategy Subcommittee (MHISSC) on issues and priorities that guide the development of the national mental health information agenda.

NMHSRG members agreed that NMHIDEAP link with the Scheme Actuary to identify opportunities for cross pollination of work around outcomes classifications in the mental health sector and the Outcomes Framework in the context of the NDIS.

The Chairperson reminded members that the focus of the NMHSRG's work is the NDIA's *Mental Health Work Plan 2015-16* including projects captured in the plan. Additionally, the NMHSRG is an important mechanism for information sharing across the mental health sector, NDIA and the broader community.

Priority topics for consideration on the next agenda include:

- NDIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Approach
- Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC)
- Employment
- Self-Management
- Behavioural Economics.

The next meeting is expected to take place in October 2016.

For further information regarding the National Mental Health Sector Reference Group please contact:

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Attachments

Attachment A Key Data on Psychosocial Disability and the NDIS as at 31 March

Attachment B Two Page summary of the Sector Communique