



NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission

Disability Sector Consultative Committee Communique – 20 July 2021

The second meeting for 2021 of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) Disability Sector Consultative Committee (Committee) was held on 20 July by video conference.

Acting Commissioner's update

This meeting was the first since Mr Graeme Head's departure from the role of inaugural Commissioner with the NDIS Commission and the Chair acknowledged Mr Head's leadership in establishing the NDIS Commission and the Consultative Committees. Ms Samantha Taylor PSM is Acting Commissioner and Chair for this Committee meeting.

The Chair announced other Executive changes within the NDIS Commission and it was noted that Mr Robert Griew, Complaints Commissioner, had tendered his resignation effective early August 2021. Dr Lynne Coulson Barr OAM who is substantively the Branch Head, South East will act in this role until the role is filled permanently.

Of note since the last meeting was completion of the national rollout of NDIS worker screening, which commenced in the Northern Territory from 1 July 2021.

Also of note was the initiation of the NDIS Commission's first Own Motion Inquiry. This will be an Inquiry into Aspects of Supported Accommodation based on reportable incidents and complaints received by the NDIS Commission. It is designed to identify trends in the issues and incidents that are occurring in these settings, and the factors that might lead to them. Since the Committee met, the [Terms of Reference](#) for the Inquiry have been released.

Analysis of complaints data

Members discussed the work being done by the NDIS Commission to implement new approaches to managing reportable incidents and complaints, focused on timely decision-making and prioritisation of safeguarding issues. These new models are being assessed to measure impact as implementation continues.

They considered broad information about origins of the complaints received by the Commission and discussed strategies to further improve the proportion of complaints from people with intellectual disability.

The NDIS Commission undertook to report on the demographics of people making complaints, and also those represented in reportable incident data, to be released as an addendum to its next published Activity report. Data will be further developed, and the Committee particularly requested further discussion, and supporting data on the types of issues and providers who were the subject of complaints received.

Compliance Education

Members were briefed on the use of education as part of the NDIS Commission's compliance toolkit. The NDIS Commission utilises a wide array of compliance related education activities with providers, led by the NDIS Commission's compliance teams in each state and territory. Members were advised to use the NDIS Commission's complaints channel if they wished to alert the NDIS Commission to providers who may benefit from educational support.

Amendments to Practice Standards

Members were briefed on new NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators standards covering Mealtime Management, Severe Dysphagia Management and Emergency and Disaster Management. The Committee supported the new standards. It was noted that an exposure draft of the amendments would be released to state and territory officials as part of formal consultation shortly. Planning is also underway for communication of these changes to the sector.

Supported Independent Living

Following the discussion on Supported Independent Living (SIL) at the March 2021 Committee meeting, Mx Giancarlo de Vera from People with Disability Australia conducted a survey of Committee members to gain their feedback on SIL issues as they impacted people with disabilities. He and Ms Melanie Southwell from Specialist Disability Accommodation Alliance presented the findings and analysis of the survey.

It was noted that the NDIS Commission is currently planning compliance activity this financial year relating to service agreements and conflict management in shared living arrangements. Members welcomed the news that the NDIS Commission will shortly announce an Own Motion Inquiry looking at complaints and reportable incidents from seven providers collectively delivering a significant amount of supported accommodation across Australia.

Workforce Capability Framework

Members were briefed on the progress of the Workforce Capability Framework (the Framework), which has been in implementation stage since March 2021 with completion due in December 2022. Over the next eighteen months, the NDIS Commission will work with the provider sector to develop a range of tools and guidance materials to guide the implementation of the Framework. The Framework and tools, when developed, will be housed on a public website to be launched in coming months. It will also be important to seek feedback from participants and advocates and they will be invited to give feedback on the tools and other resources as they are developed.

Members were invited to become involved in the development and testing of the Framework tools and resources.

Other business

Dr Jeffrey Chan briefed members on five capability grants, which form part of a larger body of work on developmental and preventative projects relating to Behaviour Support. Members thanked Dr Chan for his commitment to building capability in this important area.

The Committee agreed that an agenda item on safeguarding for people with disability who are NDIS participants and subject to state or territory forensic orders should be included in the next meeting scheduled for November 2021. Members agreed that the broader issue of NDIS supports to children and young people who require access to supports, while subject to custodial sentences, be included in this discussion.

Final note

The Committee will next meet in November 2021. The Chair thanked the Committee for their participation and support for the NDIS Commission's work.