

ndis

Q4
2022–23

NDIS Quarterly report to disability ministers

30 June 2023





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Contents

	Introduction	5
1.	Participants and their plans	11
	1.1 Number of participants in the Scheme	11
	1.2 Participant rates	11
	1.3 Participant characteristics	12
	1.4 Children in the NDIS (younger than 7)	15
2.	Participant and family/carer outcomes	17
	2.1 Measuring outcomes	17
	2.2 Participation in work and community and social activities	18
	2.3 Perceptions of whether the NDIS has helped	22
3.	Participant experience	26
	3.1 Participant Service Improvement Plan	26
	3.2 Participant Service Guarantee	27
	3.3 Complaints, Critical Incidents, Review Requests and AAT Cases	30
	3.4 Participant satisfaction	36
	3.5 The NDIS National Contact Centre	39
4.	Providers and the growing market	42
	4.1 Support categories	42
	4.2 Plan management types	43
	4.3 Plan managers	45
	4.4 Supported Independent Living	47
	4.5 Specialist Disability Accommodation	48
	4.6 Choice and control, utilisation and market concentration	49
	4.7 COVID-19 assistance	52
	4.8 Market Stewardship activities	52
	4.9 NDIS pricing	53
5.	Financial sustainability	55
	5.1 Total payments	55
	5.2 Average and median payment trends	56
	5.3 Average plan budget trends	57
	5.4 Operating expenses	61
6.	Staff, advisory groups and the NDIS community	63
	6.1 A high performing NDIA	63
	6.2 Co-design and engagement	64
	6.3 Valued input from the Independent Advisory Council	66
	6.4 Public data sharing and the latest release of information	66
	6.5 Fraud and Compliance	67
	6.6 NDIA's new Information and Communication Technology system	68
	6.7 Independent Expert Review model for dispute resolution	69
	Appendix A: Key definitions	71
	Appendix B: Approved plans and children accessing early connections	74
	Appendix C: Outcomes Framework Questionnaires	75
	Appendix D: State/Territory – comparison of key metrics	77

This report

This report is an overview of the performance and operations of the NDIA for the three months from 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023.

The NDIA is committed to ensuring all data around NDIA performance and participant outcomes remains accessible and easy to understand by different audiences.

Analysis and key insights are presented in this report, including key figures and cross jurisdictional comparisons in the appendices.

As part of streamlining the report, some of the Appendices in earlier reports are now available as Supplements on the [NDIS website](https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/quarterly-report-supplement)¹.

Supplementary list:

- National, State and Territory statistics including:
 - National
 - New South Wales
 - Victoria
 - Queensland
 - Western Australia
 - South Australia
 - Tasmania
 - Australian Capital Territory
 - Northern Territory
- Participants by service district and support type, and committed supports and payments by service district
- Specialist Disability Accommodation

Other changes to the Appendices are:

Appendix B (Scheme roll-out: Timing and locations) is available in previous quarterly reports.

Appendix D (Outcomes Framework Questionnaires) is now as renamed as Appendix B.

Appendix N (State/Territory – comparison of key metrics) is now renamed as Appendix D.

¹ <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/quarterly-report-supplement>

Introduction

Key highlights for Quarter 4 2022–23

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continued to make a positive difference to participants, their families and carers in the quarter ending 30 June 2023.

The most recent participant outcome data² clearly demonstrates the positive impacts being delivered by the Scheme:

- **Participation in community and social activities** has **increased by 7 percentage points** from **35%** to **42%** for all Scheme participants aged 15 years and older.
- **Participation in work (percentage in a paid job)** has **increased by 11 percentage points** from **11%** to **22%** for participants aged 15 to 24.
- **The percentage of parents and carers in a paid job** for participants who have been in the Scheme for at least two years has **increased by 6 percentage points**³ from **46%** to **51%** for parents/carers of participants aged 0 to 14 years.
- **Positive perceptions of whether the NDIS has helped with choice and control** has **increased 10 percentage points** from **67%** to **77%** for participants aged 15 years and older.

10 years of the NDIS

The NDIS has now been in operation for 10 years – a significant milestone for the Scheme and the Australian community. A grassroots campaign was at the heart of the creation of the NDIS with people with disability, community organisations, advocates and governments working hard to make disability reform a reality.

In 2013, the NDIA launched the first 4 trial sites in the Hunter area (New South Wales), Barwon (Victoria), South Australia for 0-to 14-year-olds and Tasmania for 15-to 24-year-olds.

At the end of the trial period in 2016, the Scheme had approximately 30,000 participants.

From 1 July 2020 the NDIS was available to all Australians and today there are more than 610,000 participants working towards or achieving their goals.

It is now truly a national Scheme with many participants receiving formal supports for their disability for the first time.

A timeline of the NDIA can be found on the NDIS [website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/history-ndis)⁴, including stories of participant experiences from trial through to full Scheme.

² <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/participant-dashboards>

³ The difference is calculated from unrounded metrics.

⁴ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/history-ndis>

Improving the Scheme – the next 10 years

When the NDIS began, it was described as a world-first. This means there was no guidebook to help us through the first decade.

As we move into the next decade for the NDIS, the Agency has a renewed commitment to being guided by the voice of participants. We have a strong focus on co-designing key initiatives with participants and the disability sector. We have also implemented a program of engagement with staff, ensuring the voice of participants is also heard through feedback and interactions they have with us.

The NDIS Review is providing an opportunity to revisit the original intent of the Scheme, and ensure the Agency is delivering the best Scheme possible.

With the knowledge and experience we've gained over the past ten years, the NDIA has contributed to the consultation by the NDIS Review Panel. As an Agency, we are preparing to respond to the recommendations of the final report, due in October 2023.

The Minister for the NDIS, the Hon. Bill Shorten, has outlined six reforms that will deliver better outcomes for people with disability and, in the process, help secure the ongoing sustainability of the Scheme.

1. Increasing the NDIA workforce and sharpening its specialisation
2. Long-term planning
3. Addressing financial pressures on the Scheme
4. Better outcomes from Supported Independent Living
5. Eliminate unethical practices
6. Increasing community and mainstream supports

To support the delivery of these priorities, the Commonwealth Government announced an investment of more than \$720 million over four years from 2023–24 to lift the NDIA's capability, capacity and systems to better support participants.⁵ This work is currently being progressed through a co-design program with people with disability and the disability community.

Quarter 4 updates

This quarter, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has been focused on:

1. Scheme financial experience
2. Improving the participant experience
3. Co-design and engagement

⁵ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/9087-media-release-minister-national-cabinet-commits-sustainable-ndis>

Scheme financial experience

Since 30 June 2022, payments for participant supports, plan budgets and the number of participants entering the Scheme are above AFSR expectations.

Scheme financial experience is monitored against expectations outlined in the 2021–22 Annual Financial Sustainability Report (AFSR)⁶. The AFSR was published by the NDIA in November 2022. Since 30 June 2022, payments for participant supports, plan budgets and participant numbers have continued to increase and are above AFSR expectations.

Total participant costs for the 12 months to 30 June 2023 were \$35.1 billion (on an accrual basis) or 3.2 per cent higher than the estimate from the 2021–22 AFSR of \$34.0 billion. The cost pressures identified in the AFSR continue to drive this experience:

- **More participants in the Scheme** – the total number of Scheme participants at 30 June 2023 was **610,502**, which is approximately 18,200 (3.1%) higher than the AFSR expectations.
- **Higher participant plan budgets** – for the 12 months to 30 June 2023, total growth in plan budgets for participants already in the Scheme was **19.4%** per annum. Around 6.3% per annum of the total can be attributed to the combined effects of indexation, following the 2021–22 Annual Pricing Review⁷. The remaining 13.1% per annum growth is over and above indexation and pricing impacts.
- **More participants accessing Supported Independent Living (SIL) support** – since June 2022, the number of participants with SIL supports has increased from 26,950 to 31,509 or by **4,559**, higher than expected. On average, participants with SIL supports have higher plan budgets and payments compared with other participants.

The NDIA continues to examine available data to understand the drivers behind the variance from the AFSR. Key insights include:

- Additional children with developmental delay and autism entering the Scheme since June 2022 than expected.
- Plan budgets have increased across most participant cohorts when considering age, primary disability, geography, and whether or not the participant is receiving Supported Independent Living supports. This level of increase exceeds the allowance for additional growth in the AFSR.

The Agency is currently progressing work to deliver better outcomes for people with disability and, in the process, help secure the ongoing sustainability of the Scheme by managing the ongoing growth outlined above. This work is supported by the Commonwealth Government's investment of over \$720 million dollars over 4 years to build the capability and efficiency of the Agency.

⁶ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/publications/annual-financial-sustainability-reports>

⁷ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements/making-pricing-decisions/pricing-review-archive>

Improving the participant experience

The NDIA continues to improve processes to empower participants and their experience.

The NDIA has continued improving the experience of participants, focusing on the following areas:

- **NDIS appeals** – we have reduced the number of participants waiting for an external review through the implementation of an alternative resolution process, which has also reduced the number of new cases going to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).
 - **6,232** NDIS cases have been resolved at the AAT
 - Overall caseload has reduced by **35%** since May 2022 (to 2,915)
 - **85%** of the 4,501 legacy cases waiting to be heard by the AAT by May 2022 have now been resolved.
- **Independent Expert Review (IER)** – we have concluded the pilot program involving an independent disability expert reviewing an independent case which provided a recommendation to the NDIA. The outcomes of the evaluation of the pilot will support our future AAT resolution processes.
- **Home and Living demonstration project grants** – we invited organisations to apply for grants to deliver innovative projects that empower participants to explore and understand home and living opportunities. The projects are being assessed and the outcomes are expected to be communicated in the next quarter.
- **First Peoples Disability Network partnership** – we have partnered with the First Peoples Disability Network to co-design a new First Nations Strategy and action plan that is culturally appropriate, promotes self-advocacy, provides value and can be measured, and reflects the goals and hopes of First Nations people with disability.
- **Improved hospital discharge** – we are working with the broader Australian Government on our continued commitment to improving the safe and timely discharge of NDIS participants from hospital. In the June 2023 quarter:
 - The NDIA target of contacting NDIS participants within 4 days of the NDIA being notified of a participant's admission remains high at **89%** for the June 2023 quarter, which is unchanged from the **89%** in the March 2023 quarter.
 - The average days between a NDIS participant being medically ready for discharge and being discharged was **27 days** in the June 2023 quarter, this has reduced from **30 days** in the March 2023 quarter.

Co-design and engagement

Working with participants and the disability community to ensure they have a say on their NDIS.

People with disability are the experts in their own lives and in how the NDIS works for them. Listening to, and learning from, participants and the disability community is fundamental to improving the NDIS.

The NDIA has continued to progress co-design work on key initiatives and projects to ensure the participant voice is heard and contributes to decision-making.

Priority co-design projects

The NDIA continues to work closely with people with disability and the broader community on co-designing policy areas. This quarter the NDIA released the Participant Safeguarding Policy⁸ and the Supported Decision Making Policy⁹.

Reform for Outcomes

This quarter, the NDIA commenced co-design work with participants and disability community representatives on reform initiatives supported by a \$724.4 million Australian Government investment in the NDIS.

Further information on the NDIA's co-design approach, including details on each of the priority co-design projects and meetings of the Co-Design Advisory Group, and Disability Representative and Carer Organisations Forum, is included in section 6.2 of this report.

⁸ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participantsafeguarding>

⁹ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/supported-decision-making-policy>



My NDIS app pilot part of a life changing journey for Finn



Playing his part in piloting the launch of the My NDIS app was another step in a “life changing” journey for NDIS participant, **Finn**.

Finn, who lives with cerebral palsy, was part of the NDIS app pilot program co-designed by participants before it launched early last year. He said the app’s login and user-friendly options had been another step in living his best life since joining the NDIS.

“I’ve been with the NDIS for about three years now. The NDIS funding has really been life changing for me in allowing me to access regular physiotherapy and exercise physiology in improving my balance and strength,” Finn said. “I was also able to get a modified trike to help me get around. It’s really changed my life.

“I really wanted to use the app and felt it would suit me better and wanted to try it. It’s been a huge benefit and I find it’s a lot easier and quicker to use for me as it uses the face ID technology to verify who I am.

Finn’s involvement in the pilot program helped to iron out an NDIS app glitch. No stranger to experiencing software issues in inputting the apostrophe in his name when logging into various sites and apps, Finn played an integral part in liaising with the NDIS team to make improvements.

“My feedback overall was gratefully received, and I’d get emails back regarding suggestions I’d made and that was a positive experience. I was also able to help others and that’s why I got involved.”

As one of many NDIS participants who contributed to over 700 pieces of feedback on the app, Finn said it had proven an engaging process, which was inclusive of people with disability.

“The app is another way for people to access and make their claims and make their lives easier. It’s all about giving people options and I certainly find the app flexible and easier to use.”

Section one:

Participants and their plans



More than 610,000 participants are receiving support from the NDIS.

1.1 Number of participants in the Scheme

At 30 June 2023, 610,502 participants had an NDIS plan, and 21,501 participants entered the Scheme during the quarter.

At June 2023, 610,502 participants had approved plans.¹⁰ This represents a 4 per cent increase from last quarter (an increase of 21,501 participants since March).

Figure 1: Active participants with approved plans and percentage increase over time

	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	2020 -21	2021 -22	2022 -23
Active participants	7,285	17,155	29,719	89,610	172,333	286,015	391,999	466,619	534,655	610,502
Yearly increase ¹¹		9,870	12,564	59,891	82,723	113,682	105,984	74,620	68,036	75,847
% increase in active participants		135%	73%	202%	92%	66%	37%	19%	15%	14%

1.2 Participation rates

The number of NDIS participants as a proportion of the Australian population peaks between the ages of 5 and 7, with approximately eleven per cent of 5 to 7 year old males and 5 per cent of 5 to 7 year old females being NDIS participants.

Participation rate refers to the proportion of the Australian population who are NDIS participants. The rate varies by age and gender, reflecting the prevalence of different disability types.

Overall, the rate of participation in the NDIS rises steeply from birth, peaking at roughly 8 per cent between the ages of 5 and 7. The rate then declines steadily to around one per cent at age 35, before rising gradually to 2 per cent by age 64. The shape of these participation rates reflects the age and disability profile of participants in the Scheme, with over half of all NDIS participants aged 18 or under.

Participation rates for males and females differ considerably at younger ages. At the peak, between the ages of 5 and 7, the participation rate for males (11 per cent) is more than double that of females (5 per cent).

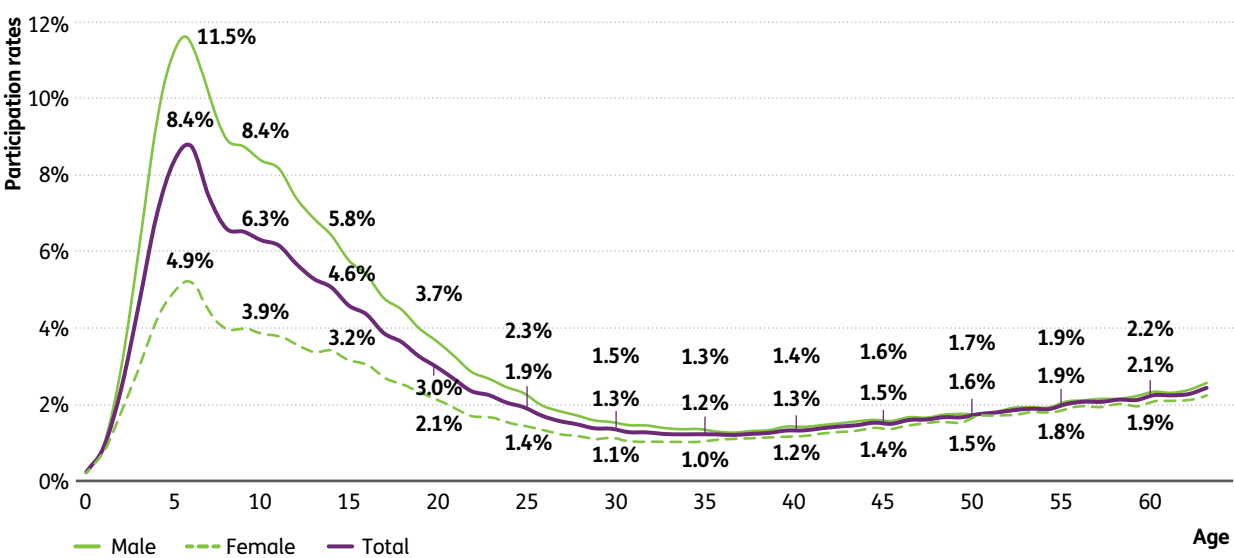
¹⁰ 41,441 participants with approved plans have left the NDIS in the period between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2023.

¹¹ This is the net increase in the number of active participants in the NDIS each period noting some participants have left the NDIS.

Much of the difference in participation rates by gender can be explained by disability type. For NDIS participants aged 18 or under, the most prevalent disability types are autism and developmental delay. Both disability types have higher prevalence in males than females. Psychosocial disability and Intellectual disability are a high proportion of the remaining disability types.

Participation rates at ages up to 25 are slightly higher than last quarter's results, increasing by between 0.1 to 0.3 percentage points in the younger age bands.

Figure 2: Participation rates¹²



The participation rates by age and gender in each service district are shown in the Supplements.

1.3 Participant characteristics

The NDIA continues to monitor the number of participants entering the NDIS who identify as First Nations Australians, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), and participants who are from remote and very remote areas.

Of the 21,501 participants entering and receiving a plan in the quarter:

- 9.9% were First Nations peoples¹³
- 8.6% were CALD¹⁴
- 1.8% were from remote and very remote areas¹⁵

The NDIA is continuing to co-design and develop the CALD Strategy refresh and a new First Nations Strategy.¹⁷ Trends in First Nations participants are shown in the Figures overleaf. CALD and Remote participation is similar to that observed in previous reports, and is not repeated in this report.

12 There were 7,658 participants aged 0 to 64 years with a gender of 'Other' at 30 June 2023. The participation rates for this group are included within the total rates.

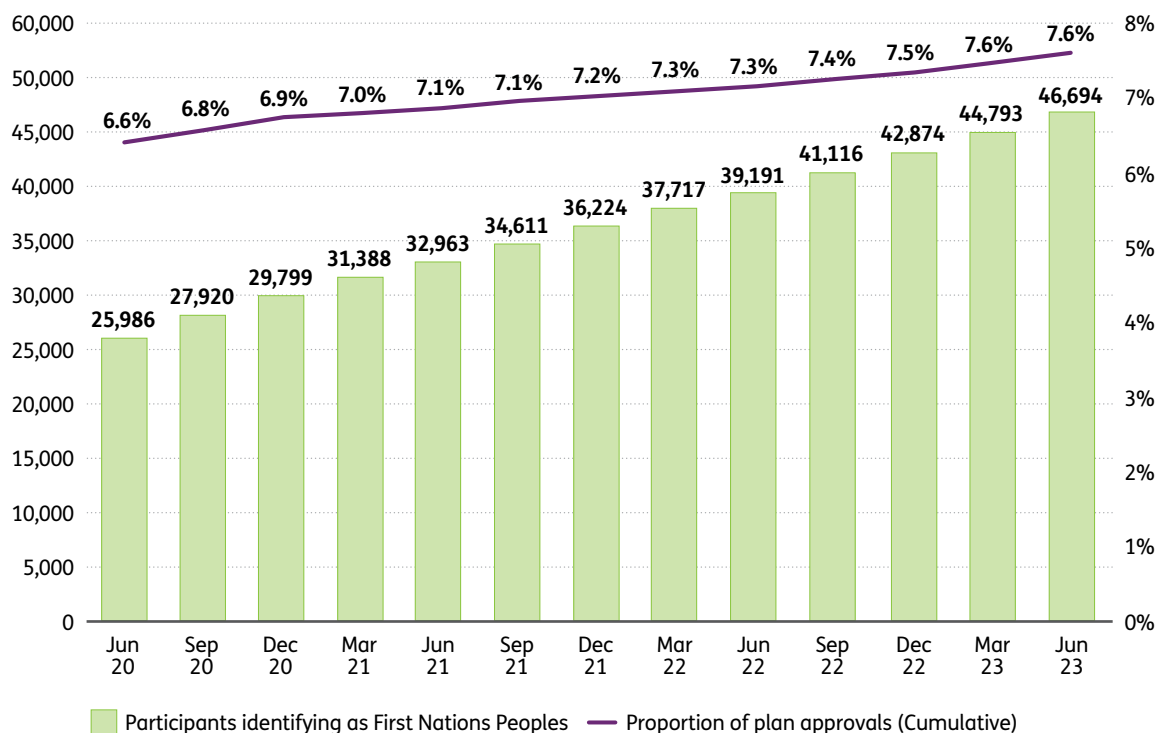
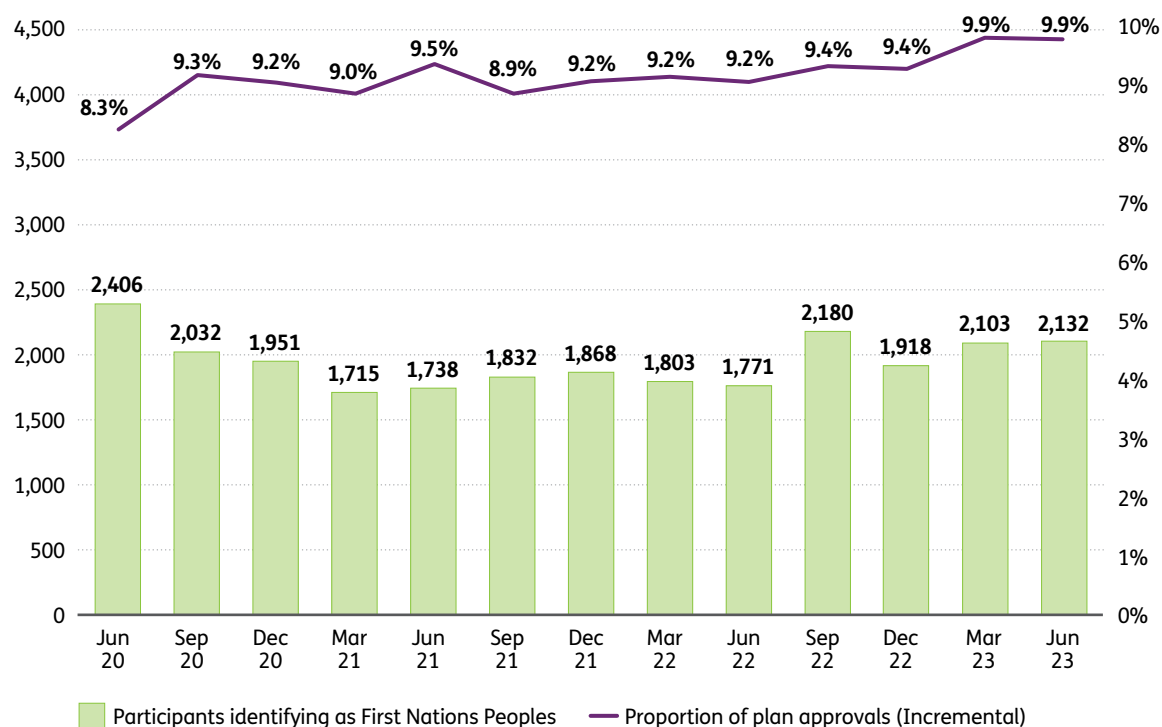
13 This compares to 8 per cent of the Australian population identifying as First Nations Peoples who have a need for assistance. Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021 ("Need for Assistance" variable), Persons Place of Usual Residence, by Indigenous Status.

14 The percentage of CALD participants excludes participants who identify as First Nations Peoples. Further, the NDIA published extra analysis on CALD participants in the September 2021 quarterly report (<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/publications/quarterly-reports>). The analysis indicated that it is likely that CALD participants are joining the NDIS but have not been identified as CALD in the data collected, rather than a large number of CALD people with a disability not currently being in the NDIS. With the introduction of the new ICT system, the opportunity to collect improved data on participants should allow better identification of CALD participants.

15 This compares to 2 per cent of the Australian population living in remote or very remote areas. Source: Census of Population and Housing 2021, Persons Place of Usual Residence, by Remoteness Area.

16 Further information on these strategies can be found here: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/strategies/first-nations-strategy> and <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/strategies/cultural-and-linguistic-diversity-strategy>

Figure 3: Number and proportion of First Nations participants entering quarterly over time incrementally (top) and cumulatively (bottom)^{17,18}



¹⁷ The incremental chart shows the distribution of new participants that have entered in each quarter. The cumulative chart shows the distribution of active participants as at each quarter over time.

¹⁸ <https://data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data> has detail on numbers of CALD participants and remote and very remote participants

Younger People in Residential Aged Care (YPIRAC)

The YPIRAC Targets

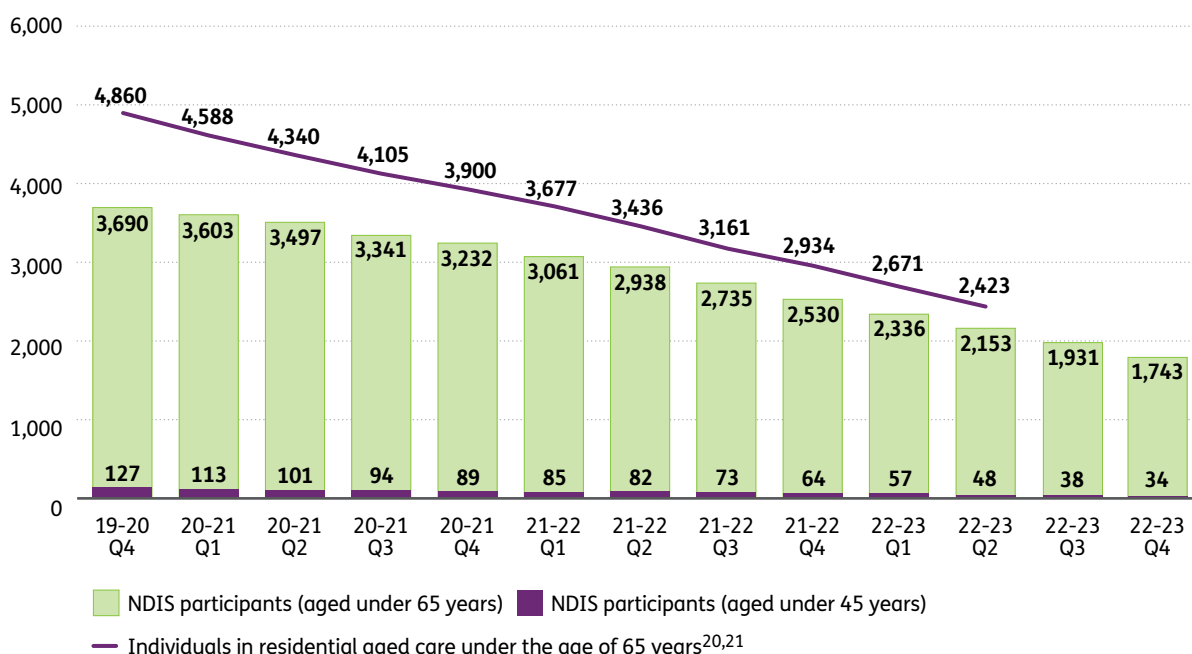
The Australian Government is committed to achieving the YPIRAC targets which seek to ensure that, apart from where there are exceptional circumstances, there are no people under the age of 65 living in residential aged care by 2025.

The Agency's focus on YPIRAC

At 30 June 2023, there were 1,743 participants aged under 65 years in residential aged care with an NDIS approved plan, including 34 who were aged under 45 years (2 per cent).

Since 1 July 2016, 1,039 participants have left residential aged care and are now in a more appropriate accommodation setting.

Figure 4: Number of NDIS participants in residential aged care (under 65 and under 45), and total number of individuals under age 65 in residential aged care¹⁹



As at 30 June 2023, 522 younger people in residential aged care have a goal to leave residential aged care, including 16 under the age of 45, and 1,221 NDIS participants under the age of 65 without a goal to leave residential aged care. The NDIA is working to gain better understanding about the barriers to exit for participants and their supporters that do not have a current goal to move from residential aged care.

¹⁹ Represents the number of NDIS participants in residential aged care as per data available on respective quarter-ends.

²⁰ Data provided by the Department of Health and Aged Care as at 31 December 2022.

²¹ For periods up to June 2022, the data were extracted in September 2022 from the Department of Health and Aged Care's Data Warehouse (ACDW). From July 2022 until December 2022, data were derived from the Department of Health and Aged Care's Siebel database. This report uses live data, future or past extracts of these data may change and thus alter the final numbers.

1.4 Children in the NDIS (younger than 7)

At 30 June 2023, there were 99,395 children younger than 7 with an NDIS plan, and a further 14,556 accessing early connections.

The early childhood approach applies to children younger than 7, whereby children meeting access requirements can join the Scheme and other children for which there are developmental concerns can access supports through early connections. From 1 July 2023, the early childhood approach is being expanded to children younger than 9.

In addition to the 99,395 children younger than 7 with an approved plan:

- **5,062** children had met the access criteria under Section 24 of the NDIS Act (Permanent Disability) or Section 25 of the NDIS Act (Early Intervention) and were waiting for an approved plan.
- **4,554** were awaiting an access decision from the NDIA (of which **3,033 (67%)** were accessing early connections from the early childhood approach).
- **15,203** children were supported by the early childhood approach (of which **14,556 (96%)** were accessing early connections). Not all children need to make an access request to the NDIA because some will receive early connections, along with support from mainstream and community services.

Throughout the quarter, the Agency continued to focus on improving access to supports for children and families in remote and very remote areas. This effort contributed to 164 children meeting access criteria to join the NDIS, of which 79 identified as First Nations families. Of the 99,395 children aged younger than 7 with an approved plan as at 30 June 2023, 1,392 were children in remote and very remote areas.



Guitar just the hook for neurodiverse rocker



Extra-sensitive hearing and an autism diagnosis has given rise to the monster talent of **JayBird**, who lets her 'Frankenstat' electric guitar do the talking when words are hard to find. At the tender age of 12, JayBird is blowing the minds of seasoned musicians with her amazing guitar skills, and the scary thing is she can only get better.

JayBird, from Narangba, north of Brisbane, lives with autism and ADHD and has been playing the guitar since she was 8. The NDIS participant puts her amazing musical ability down to her disability.

"I believe it's my autism that gives me the ability to play the guitar," JayBird said. "My guitar is like a translator of sorts. I find it hard to express myself through normal language."

JayBird has a rare type of autism known as Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), which results in the extreme resistance or avoidance of the expectations of daily life. Her NDIS supports include fortnightly psychology appointments to manage her anxiety, regulate emotions and to develop social skills. She also sees an occupational therapist each month to help her with sensory issues and personal care.

"JayBird has extra-sensitive hearing, which made school hard, and going out in general," Samantha said. "But it is this extra-sensitive hearing that makes playing music so easy."

With an EP called Dog Tales on the way, JayBird practices 3 hours a day. Jaybird has been a client of the NDIS provider Team Musicare, which offers musical programs for people with a disability since last year. Owner and seasoned musician Dan Nebe was immediately impressed. "Prodigy is probably the word that comes to mind," Dan said.

JayBird has a message for both neurodiverse and neurotypical people. "People with autism are a bit like guitar amps. They're going to be wired differently. They will have different abilities and disabilities but, at the end of the day, they're all still amps. We're all still humans."

Section two:

Participant and family/carer outcomes



The NDIS is having a positive impact on the lives of participants, and their families and carers.

2.1 Measuring outcomes

Reports on annual outcomes and specific outcome areas such as employment are publicly available

Outcomes framework questionnaires

The results shown in this section are based on responses provided by participants and their families and carers to the outcomes framework questionnaires. These questionnaires collect information on how participants and their families and carers are progressing in different areas (domains) of their lives.

Responses are collected at Scheme entry (“baseline”) and at subsequent plan reassessments, allowing progress to be tracked over a participant’s time in the Scheme.

Reporting on outcomes

Information collected from the current outcomes framework questionnaires is used to contribute to a range of publicly available reports and data cubes.^{22,23,24,25}

22 Annual outcomes reports for Participants, for family and carers, and dashboards by geographical area: <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/outcomes-and-goals/participant-families-and-carer-outcomes-reports>.

23 Analysis focusing on employment outcomes: <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/outcomes-and-goals/employment-outcomes-participants-their-families-and-carers>.

24 Analysis focusing on health and wellbeing: <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/outcomes-and-goals/health-and-wellbeing-ndis-participants-and-their-families-and-carers>.

25 Quarterly data cubes containing baseline and longitudinal results for key indicators: <https://data.ndis.gov.au/data-downloads>.

2.2 Participation in work and community and social activities^{26,27}

Despite COVID-19, participation rates in community and social activities have increased, while the overall rate of participation in work is stable.

Participation in community and social activities

For participants who have been in the Scheme for at least two years, their community and social participation has increased since they first entered. Specifically, comparing responses at the most recent plan reassessment (between two and six years after entry) with responses at Scheme entry²⁸:

- **six** percentage point increase from **34%** to **40%** for participants aged 15 to 24 years.
- **nine** percentage point increase from **36%** to **45%** for participants aged 25 to 34 years.
- **seven** percentage point increase from **36%** to **43%** for participants aged 35 to 44 years.
- **seven** percentage point increase from **35%** to **42%** for participants aged 45 to 54 years.
- **five** percentage point increase from **35%** to **40%** for participants aged 55 to 64 years.
- **six** percentage point increase from **36%** to **42%** for participants aged 65 years and older.
- **seven percentage point increase from 35% to 42% for participants aged 15 years and older.**

The overall result of 42 per cent compares to a 2022–23 target of 46 per cent.

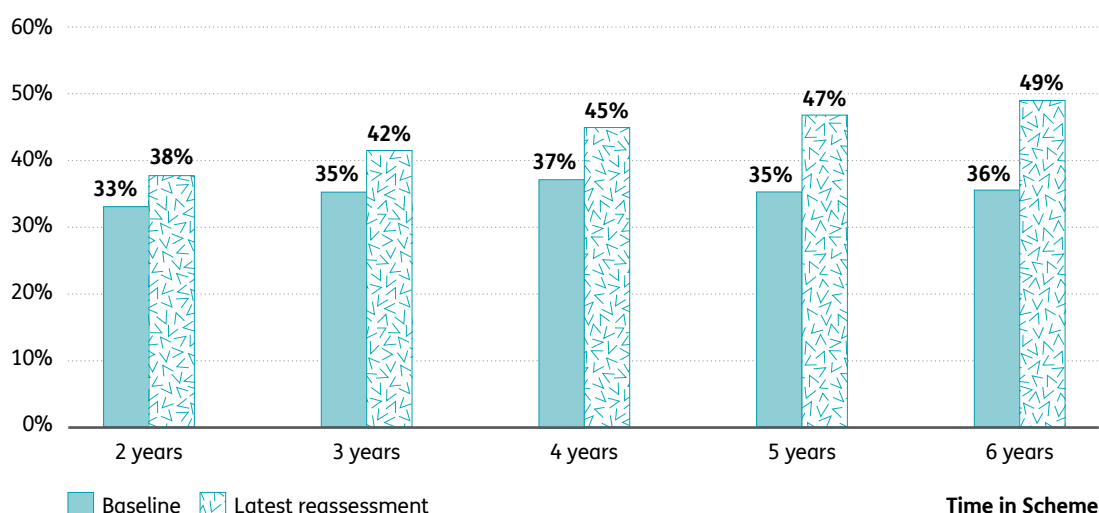
In general, the increase in participation in community and social activities has improved the longer participants have been in the Scheme.

26 This section compares Baseline indicator results when participants entered the Scheme, with results measured at the most recent participant plan reassessment for each respondent. Trial participants are excluded.
27 The participant age reported in this section is as per their latest plan reassessment.
28 Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

Combining all age groups, the increase for participants who have been in the Scheme for two years was 4²⁹ percentage points (from 33 per cent to 38 per cent), and the increase for participants who have been in the Scheme for six years is 13 percentage points (from 36 per cent to 49 per cent).

Figure 5: Percentage change in the participation rate in social activities

Participants aged 15 years and over



Participation in work (percentage in a paid job)

The percentage in a paid job for those in the Scheme for at least two years continues to be relatively stable overall. However, the percentage and the change over time in the Scheme differs by age group. For instance, the largest percentage increase was for participants in the 15 to 24 age group, consistent with participants entering the workforce for the first time. The percentage in a paid job remains stable or declines for all other age bands. Specifically, comparing responses at the most recent plan reassessment (between two to six years after entry) with responses at Scheme entry³⁰:

- **eleven** percentage point increase from **11%** to **22%** for participants aged 15 to 24 years.³¹
- **one** percentage point increase from **27%** to **29%** for participants aged 25 to 34 years.
- **one** percentage point decrease from **28%** to **27%** for participants aged 35 to 44 years.
- **two** percentage point decrease from **25%** to **23%** for participants aged 45 to 54 years.
- **four** percentage point decrease from **19%** to **15%** for participants aged 55 to 64 years.³²
- **four** percentage point decrease from **13%** to **8%** for participants aged 65 years and older.³³
- **two** percentage point increase from **21%** to **23%** for participants aged 15–64 years.

The overall result of 23 per cent compares to a 2022–23 target of 26 per cent.

²⁹ Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Some of the increase is due to participants leaving school and starting work. As the Scheme matures it will be possible to analyse the extent to which the percentage gap increases.

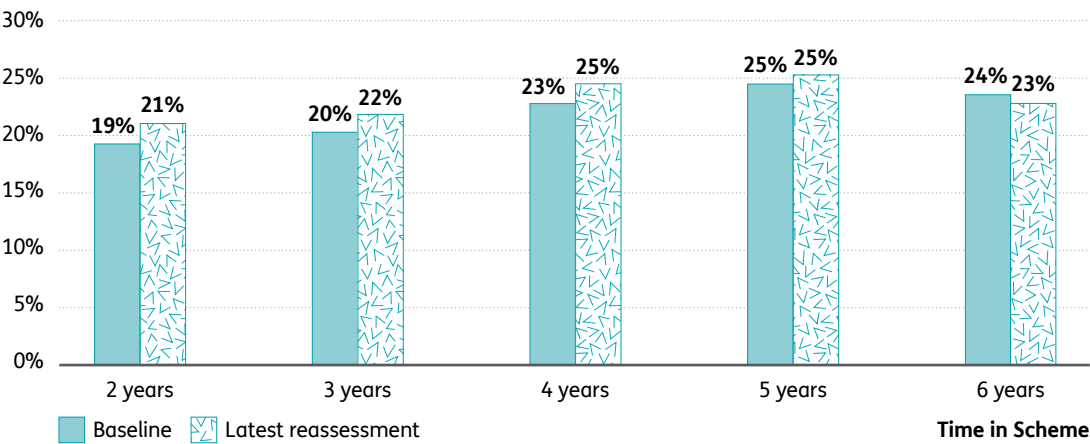
³² Some of the decrease for older age groups is due to participants retiring from the workforce.

³³ Ibid.

Looking at all participants who are of working age (15 to 64), the percentage of participants in work has increased slightly from 19 per cent to 21 per cent for those who have been in the Scheme for two years. For participants who have been in the Scheme for six years, the percentage of participants in work has decreased from 24 per cent to 23 per cent.

Figure 6: Change in the percentage of participants in work

Participants aged 15 to 64 years



Family/carer employment rate

As for participants, it should be noted that the global COVID-19 pandemic that took hold from early 2020 has had an impact on family/carer employment (and other indicators).

The percentage of parents/carers in a paid job for participants who have been in the Scheme for at least two years has improved over time. Specifically, comparing responses at the most recent plan reassessment (between two and six years after entry) with responses at Scheme entry, there has been a³⁴:

- **six** percentage point increase from **46%** to **51%** for parents/carers of participants aged 0 to 14 years
- **two** percentage point increase from **47%** to **48%** for parents/carers of participants aged 15 years and over.

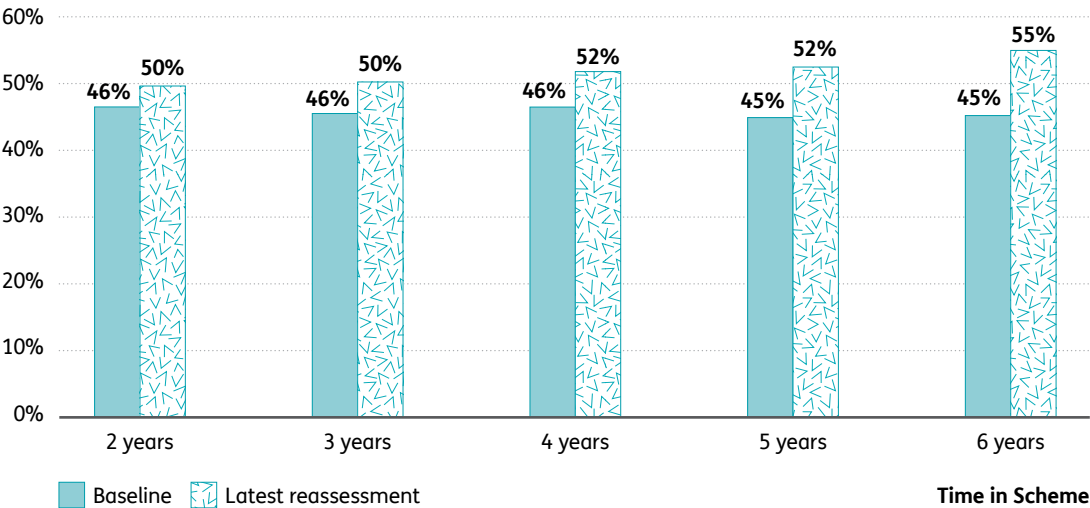
Overall, for parents/carers of all participants, there has been a 4 percentage point increase, from 46 per cent to 50 per cent, reaching the 2022–23 target of 50 per cent.

34 Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

Considering all families and carers of participants of all ages in the Scheme for at least two years, larger improvements in the percentage in work are seen where the participant has been in the Scheme for longer. For instance, 46 per cent of those who have been in the Scheme for two years were in work at baseline, compared to 50 per cent at second reassessment. Those in the Scheme for six years improved from 45 per cent to 55 per cent.

Figure 7: Change in the percentage of families and carers of participants in work

Families and carers of participants of all ages



2.3 Perceptions of whether the NDIS has helped

Participants have positive perceptions across most domains and for the different age groups. However, the percentage of positive responses varies by domain and age group.

At each plan reassessment, participants are asked whether the NDIS has helped with areas related to each domain. For these questions, longitudinal change is measured from first plan reassessment, since the Scheme has not had an opportunity to help at baseline. Results shown in this section compare responses provided at the first plan reassessment with those from later reassessments, for participants entering the Scheme since 1 July 2016 and who have been in the Scheme for at least two years.

Participant choice and control

The choice and control metric for participants aged 15 and over is based on the question “Has the NDIS helped you have more choices and more control over your life?”

Positive perceptions of whether the NDIS has helped with choice and control have increased for the latest reassessment compared to the first reassessment across all age bands. Older participants tend to have higher levels of satisfaction than the 15 to 24 year age group. Specifically, the percentage who think that the NDIS has helped them have more choices and more control over their life showed³⁵:

- **nine** percentage point increase from **61%** to **70%** for participants aged 15 to 24 years
- **eleven** percentage point increase from **66%** to **77%** for participants aged 25 to 34 years
- **ten** percentage point increase from **69%** to **79%** for participants aged 35 to 44 years
- **ten** percentage point increase from **69%** to **80%** for participants aged 45 to 54 years
- **ten** percentage point increase from **71%** to **81%** for participants aged 55 to 64 years
- **twelve** percentage point increase from **71%** to **82%** for participants aged 65 years and older
- **ten percentage point increase from 67% to 77% for participants aged 15 years and older.**

Overall, for participants aged 15 and over, there has been a 10 percentage point increase, from 67 per cent to 77 per cent. This compares to a 2022–23 target of 75 per cent.

Other “Has the NDIS helped?” questions

For children aged from birth to before starting school, results have improved across all domains.

Figure 8 shows the percentages responding positively at first assessment and at latest reassessment, as well as the change between the two time points.

³⁵ Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

Figure 8: “Has the NDIS helped?” – participants aged from birth to before starting school³⁶

Domain	First assessment %	Latest reassessment %	Percentage point change
Daily living: child’s development	91	94	+3
Daily living: access to specialist services	92	95	+3
Choice and control (child’s ability to communicate what they want)	83	86	+3
Relationships (fitting into family life)	77	83	+6
Social, community and civic participation (fitting into community life)	63	70	+6

Improvements were slightly stronger for fitting into family and community life (although results for these domains started off at a lower level and hence had more scope to improve).

For children aged from starting school to age 14, results are generally less positive than for the younger age group but show stronger improvement over time.

Figure 9 shows the percentages responding positively at first assessment and at latest reassessment, as well as the change between the two time points.

Figure 9: “Has the NDIS helped?” – participants from starting school to age 14³⁷

Domain	First assessment %	Latest reassessment %	Percentage point change
Daily living (independence)	61	73	+12
Lifelong learning (access to education)	41	51	+9
Relationships (with family and friends)	50	60	+10
Social, community and civic participation (social and recreational life)	45	53	+7

For young adults aged 15 to 24 years, Figure 10 shows the percentages responding positively at first assessment and at latest reassessment, as well as the change between the two time points.

Figure 10: “Has the NDIS helped?” – participants aged 15 to 24³⁸

Domain	First assessment %	Latest reassessment %	Percentage point change
Choice and control	61	70	+9
Daily living	61	72	+11
Relationships	50	54	+5
Home	22	21	–1
Health and wellbeing	43	51	+7
Lifelong learning	36	37	+1
Work	18	17	–1
Social, community and civic participation	55	62	+7

³⁶ Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

From Figure 10, the largest improvement over time in the Scheme has been observed for the daily living domain (+11 percentage point change). Strong improvements have also been observed for choice and control (+9), relationships (+5), health and wellbeing (+7) and social, community and civic participation (+7). Lifelong learning showed a marginal increase (+1), and there were slight declines for home and work.

For participants aged 25 years and over, perceptions tend to be more positive than for those aged 15 to 24, and the older adult group also shows a stronger improvement over time. Figure 11 shows the percentages responding positively at first assessment and latest reassessment, as well as the change between the two time points.

Figure 11: “Has the NDIS helped?” – participants aged 25 and over³⁹

Domain	First assessment %	Latest reassessment %	Percentage point change
Choice and control	69	80	+11
Daily living	72	84	+11
Relationships	52	62	+9
Home	31	35	+5
Health and wellbeing	52	61	+9
Lifelong learning	30	32	+2
Work	19	19	0
Social, community and civic participation	59	70	+10

From Figure 11, the largest improvements over time in the Scheme have been observed for daily living (+11 percentage point change), and choice and control (+11). Strong improvements have also been observed for relationships (+9), health and wellbeing (+9) and social, community and civic participation (+10). By contrast with the younger adult group, there was an improvement for the home domain (+5).

Similar to the younger adult group, lifelong learning showed a marginal increase (+2), and there was no material change for work.⁴⁰

Results continue to improve with time in Scheme

Responses tend to become more positive the longer a participant has been in the Scheme.

While the above results are encouraging, the analysis also indicates that there are areas where outcomes could be improved. For example, for participants aged 25 and over, after at least two years in the Scheme, only 19 per cent agreed that being in the NDIS had helped them find a suitable job, almost unchanged from their first plan reassessment.

The NDIA is actively working to improve participation in work, as discussed earlier in this section.

³⁹ Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage; differences are calculated from unrounded metrics.

⁴⁰ Noting that the education and housing systems have a major role to play in the lifelong learning and home domains.



NDIS supports help Adam excel at school and in his community



Adam can't wait to get back to school this year to start Year 6 and be Drysdale Primary School's 2023 Dan Dan Nook House Captain. Last year his fellow Drysdale Primary school students voted him in and mum, Julie, said it's all he's been excited about and talked about in the lead up to going back to school.

Sports crazy, the energetic 12-year-old, who has Down syndrome and low muscle tone, transitioned to the NDIS when it first trialled in Victoria, in the Barwon region, in 2013.

"The early intervention and the continuity of support the NDIS provides, that whole life-long financial commitment to support Adam, and us as parents, has been priceless," Julie said.

"Adam receives fortnightly speech therapy, occupational therapy, and peer support. It's really helped him to develop and grow and become a valued member of our community."

Heavily involved in sport, Julie said Adam plays competition tennis with the Drysdale Tennis Club, loves playing basketball and does regular swimming lessons. In winter he plays soccer with the Drysdale Soccer Club, and he loves it all.

"Right from Kinder Adam's NDIS supports have helped us to improve his fine motor skills and muscle tone. It supported him to learn how to pick up objects and hold them, like pencils and paintbrushes and throwing and catching balls," she said.

Julie credits Adam's success to his therapists and to Drysdale Primary School for its values on inclusion, learning, and personal development, supporting its students, disability or not.

"For Adam, the NDIS came in at the right time. He's had support at all the right stages and it's the continuity of his supports that has made the difference," she said.

Section three:

Participant experience



The NDIA's Service Charter sets out the delivery standards for what the Agency is doing to meet participants expectations.

3.1 Participant Service Improvement Plan

Progress is being made against the Participant Service Improvement Plan deliverables.

The NDIA is committed to improving service for NDIS participants. That is why the NDIA introduced a Participant Service Charter to explain what participants can expect when they deal with the NDIA, and the Participant Service Improvement Plan (SIP) that outlines all the improvements the NDIA will make.

The NDIA Participant Service Charter sets out what participants can expect from the NDIA and Partners in the Community (PITC) organisations. It provides overall principles for interactions with participants, and clear service standards and timeframes. These are included in the Participant Service Guarantee (PSG).

The Participant Service Charter is also underpinned by the specific tangible actions listed in the SIP.

The NDIA's SIP is the key to making real the promises in the Participant Service Charter and PSG. It sets out what the NDIA and partners are going to do to deliver a NDIS that meets expectations.⁴¹

The Participant Service Charter is based on five principles for engagement with participants.

Engagement principle	What you can expect
Transparent	We will make it easy to access and understand our information and decisions.
Responsive	We will respond to individual needs and circumstances.
Respectful	We will recognise your individual experience and acknowledge you are an expert in your own life.
Empowering	We will make it easy to access information and be supported by the NDIS to lead your life.
Connected	We will support you to access the services and supports you need.

An outline of the activities underway as part of the SIP and an update on progress can be found on the [NDIS website](#)⁴². The SIP milestones have not changed since the previous quarter⁴³. The SIP activities are aligned to each of the 'what you can expect' statements in the Participant Service Charter. While the list is not exhaustive, the NDIA is continually looking for opportunities to improve our participant service in line with the engagement principles.

⁴¹ Work is currently underway to develop a qualitative measurement framework and dashboard to report on the NDIA's performance against the engagement principles (and associated 'we will' commitments), as set out in the Participant Service Charter.

⁴² <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/policies/service-charter/participant-service-improvement-plan>

⁴³ Future reports will include updated milestones if they change.

3.2 Participant Service Guarantee

The latest quarter shows notable improvements in the service standard experience across a number of the measurable Participant Service Guarantee metrics.

Performance against the service standards – June 2023

The NDIA commenced measuring performance against the Participant Service Guarantee metrics prior to passing the Participant Service Charter and Guarantee legislation, and these results have been published in prior quarterly reports. The legislation focuses on improving participant experience and builds on the recommendations of the 2019 Tune Review. It legislates the Participant Service Guarantee (from 1 July 2022) and introduces changes that provide greater flexibility for participants and the NDIA to vary plans.

In the June 2023 quarter, 12 out of the 17 (71%) PSG timeframes were met in 95% of cases, compared to 10 out of 17 (59%) in the March quarter and 12 out of 17 (71%) in the December quarter.

PSG	Service type	Description of the service being guaranteed	Service Guarantee	Performance in the June 2023 quarter	Comparison to target of 95%	Change from last quarter
1	General	Explain a previous decision, after a request for explanation is received	28 days	99%	●	↔
2	Access	Make an access decision, or request for more information, after an access request has been received	21 days	100%	●	↑
3	Access	Allow sufficient time for prospective participants to provide information, after NDIA has requested further information	90 days	95%	●	↑
4	Access	Make an access decision, after more information has been provided.	14 days	97%	●	↔
5	Planning	Commence facilitating the preparation of a plan, after an access decision has been made	21 days	96%	●	↔
6	Planning	Approve a participant's plan, after an access decision has been made (excludes those Early Childhood Approach that have received initial supports)	56 days	94%	▲	↔
7	Planning	Approve a plan for ECA participants, after an access decision has been made	90 days	98%	●	↔
8	Implementation	Offer to hold a plan implementation meeting, after the plan is approved	As soon as reasonably practical ⁴⁴	Reporting will commence in the second half of 2023		

Comparison to target of 95% ● 95% and over

▲ 85%-95%

■ Less than 85%











Change from last quarter ↑ More than 3 percentage points higher

↔ Within 3 percentage points


↓ More than 3 percentage points lower


⁴⁴ The average (mean) timeframe for this Participant Service Guarantee metric is 17 days and the median is 3 days.


Section three: Participant experience

PSG	Service type	Description of the service being guaranteed	Service Guarantee	Performance in the June 2023 quarter	Comparison to target of 95%	Change from last quarter
9	Implementation	If the participant accepts the offer, hold a plan implementation meeting	28 days	100%		↔
10	Implementation	Provide a copy of the plan to a participant, after the plan is approved	7 days	Reporting will commence in the second half of 2023		
11	Plan reassessment	Commence facilitating a scheduled plan reassessment, prior to the scheduled reassessment date	56 days	76%*		↑
12	Plan reassessment	Decide whether to undertake a Participant Requested Plan reassessment, after the request is received	21 days	82%		↔
13	Plan reassessment	Complete a reassessment, after the decision to accept the request was made	28 days	64%		↔
14	Plan variations	Amend a plan, after the receipt of information that triggers the plan amendment process	28 days	90%		↔
15	Plan variations	Amend a plan, after receipt of information relating to a complex quote that triggers a plan amendment process	50 days	96%		↔
16	Plan variations	Provide a copy of the plan to a participant, after the plan is amended	7 days	Reporting will commence in the second half of 2023		
17	Reviewable decisions	Complete an internal Review of a Reviewable Decision, after a request is received	60 days	98%		↑
18	Reviewable decisions	Implement an AAT decision to amend a plan, after the AAT decision is made	28 days	97%		↔
19	Nominee	Cancel participant requested nominee	14 days	100%		↔
20	Nominee	Cancel CEO initiated nominee	14 days	100%		↔


* Note: The NDIA's participant check-in process ensures that every scheduled reassessment begins with a contact from the planner or partner to discuss reassessment options well before any scheduled reassessment date. Plans are extended automatically if they have not been reassessed before expiry so participants have continuity of support. That is, participants do not stop receiving supports.


Comparison to target of 95%  95% and over

 85%-95%

 Less than 85%

Change from last quarter  More than 3 percentage points higher

 Within 3 percentage points

 More than 3 percentage points lower

Participant Service Guarantee metrics below target

Further detail around the five PSG timeframes that were not met in 95 per cent of cases are as follows:

- **PSG 6 – Approve a participant's plan, after an access decision has been made (excludes ECA):** The metric is at **94%** and is slightly below target. The NDIA is committed to reaching service standards and is reviewing and manually assigning records on a weekly basis.
- **PSG 11 – Commence facilitating a scheduled plan reassessment, prior to the scheduled reassessment date:** The metric is at **76%** and there has been a considerable improvement (8%) since the March quarter. The NDIA has a key focus on continuing to improve this metric with early contact with participants prior to plan reassessment. We note that in the month of June 2023 the performance metric reached 82%.
- **PSG 12 – Decide whether to undertake a Participant Requested Plan reassessment, after the request is received, PSG 13 – Complete a reassessment, after the decision to accept the request was made:** There has been an increase in the number of unscheduled reviews requested which has resulted in a decrease in the resulting performance metrics for PSG 12 and PSG 13 over recent quarters. The NDIA is reviewing the ability to balance this with other key priority areas and is actioning the allocation of additional staff and operational changes.
- **PSG 14 – Amend a plan, after the receipt of information that triggers the plan amendment process:** The metric is at **90%** and is below target, partially due to a business process error where plan changes were incorrectly being categorised as amendments. Weekly communications are being sent to business areas to improve performance.

Home and Living decisions

The end-to-end process duration for Home and Living (H&L) applications tracks the time taken from receipt of Home and Living application form through to plan implementation.⁴⁵

- In the June 2023 quarter, **6,718** Home and Living applications were closed or implemented⁴⁶ and **67%** were finalised within 90 days. This compares with 7,086 applications closed or implemented in the March 2023 quarter.
- At 30 June 2023, **4,540** applications remained in-progress, a net increase of **816** applications compared with 31 March 2023. **4,074** in progress applications were waiting for a decision from a Home and Living delegate,⁴⁷ while a further **466**⁴⁸ were waiting for supports to be implemented in a plan.
- Approximately **5%** of the open applications have been in progress for 90 days or more, a decrease from 8% as at 31 March 2023. The number of in-progress applications awaiting plan implementation for 90 days or more has decreased from 290 applications in December 2022 to **245** applications as at 30 June 2023.

⁴⁵ The time taken for Participants to respond to requests for further information (RFI) has been removed from the duration.

⁴⁶ An application is considered closed if an application is cancelled or rejected, a Participant is declined all Home and Living supports, or an application won't progress to implementation (e.g. deceased, Participant chooses not to proceed etc.). An application is considered implemented once a Participant has a new approved Plan.

⁴⁷ 585 out of the 4,074 applications the NDIA is waiting on additional information from participants.

⁴⁸ The Operations and Support Division are continuing to investigate open applications to ensure next steps are underway for Participants as part of an ongoing process.

- At 30 June 2023, **62%** or **2,818** open applications have been flagged as relating to PRR or RoRD requests.
- In the June 2023 quarter, there were **7,602** new requests for Home and Living applications. This compares with a quarterly average of **7,283** new requests over the previous 12 months.

Figure 12: Number of Home and Living Applications by stage in the Plan Implementation process

Cohort	Last period number	New requests in period	Closed in period	On-hold end of period ⁴⁹	Open end of period number		
					Awaiting delegate decision	Awaiting Plan Implementation	Total
H&L Applications	3,627	7,691	6,718	60	4,074	466	4,540 ⁵⁰

Figure 13: Number of Home and Living applications by time taken from application to Plan Implementation

Days	Duration of closed applications in period							Duration of open applications in period						
	no data ⁵¹	<14 days	15 to 30 days	31 to 60 days	61 to 90 days	90+ days	Total	no data	<14 days	15 to 30 days	31 to 60 days	61 to 90 days	90+ days	Total
H&L Applications	1,408	1,241	1,401	1,161	712	795	6,718	–	1,528	923	1,326	518	245	4,540
%	21%	18%	21%	17%	11%	12%	100%	0%	34%	20%	29%	11%	5%	100%

3.3 Complaints, Critical Incidents, Review Requests and AAT Cases

The Agency is seeing a decrease in RoRD and AAT cases and in recent quarters, a lower complaints rate compared to prior quarters.

Complaints⁵²

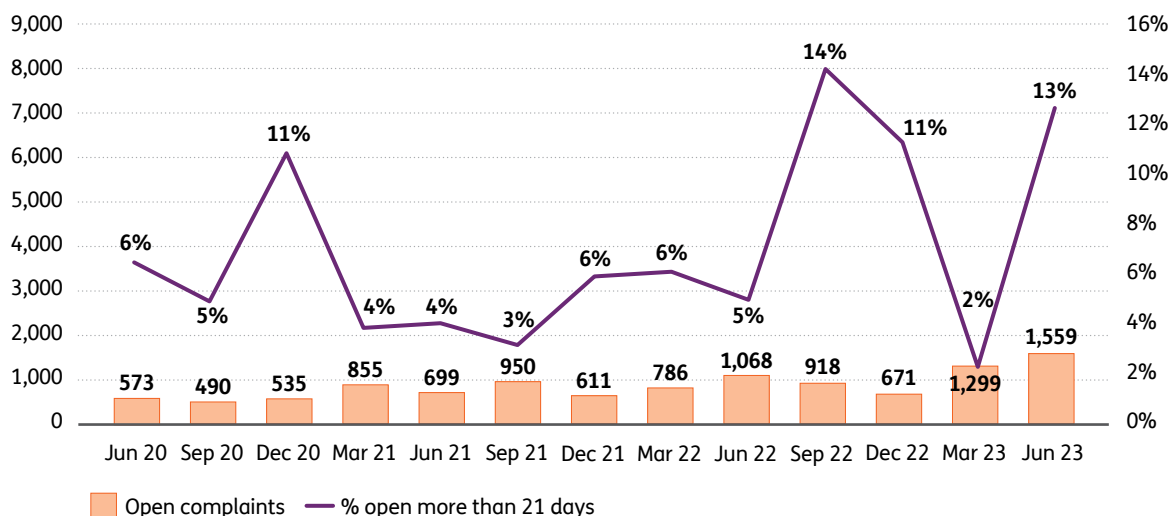
The Agency maintains a service standard under which it aims to resolve 90 per cent of complaints within 21 days after they are received. In the June quarter this service standard was met at 78 per cent and has resulted in a higher volume of open complaints at the end of the quarter with 13 per cent of complaints open for more than 21 days.

⁴⁹ Applications where implementation will only occur at a later date or may not occur. Includes Participants in the CSN / Complex pathway, Participants awaiting a Hospital Discharge, YPIRAC / Aged Care, Voluntary Out of Home Care (VOOHC), Justice Involvement, AAT cases and unresolved s100 / s48 cases.

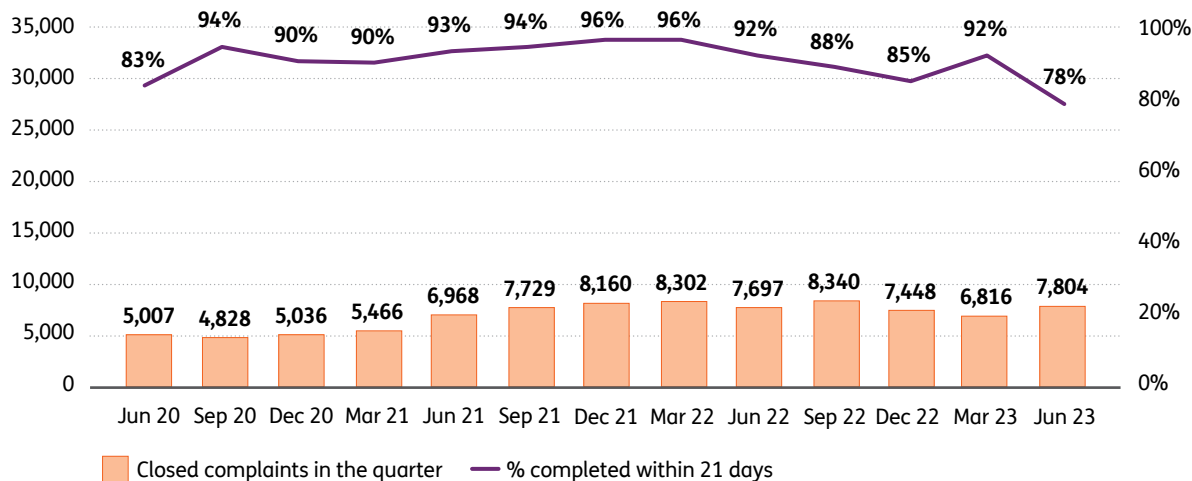
⁵⁰ There are 4,540 open home and living applications relating to 4,535 unique participants.

⁵¹ Due to system limitations it is not possible to accurately capture timeframes for all closed applications. This limitation predominantly affects timeframes of cancelled applications.

⁵² Figures do not capture 388 complaint records that have been migrated to the new ICT system, see section 6.6 for further information.

Figure 14: Open complaints and percentage that have been open for more than 21 days^{53,54}


Around 86 per cent of complaints have been closed within 21 days in the past four quarters, this proportion has declined from levels seen in 2021.

Figure 15: Closed complaints and percentage completed within 21-day timeframe^{55,56}


Complaints as a proportion of active participants have slightly increased over the last three quarters from 4.7 per cent in December 2022 to 5.1 per cent in June 2023. This is an improvement from the experience between the September 2021 and September 2022 quarters where complaints averaged approximately 6.0 per cent of active participants.

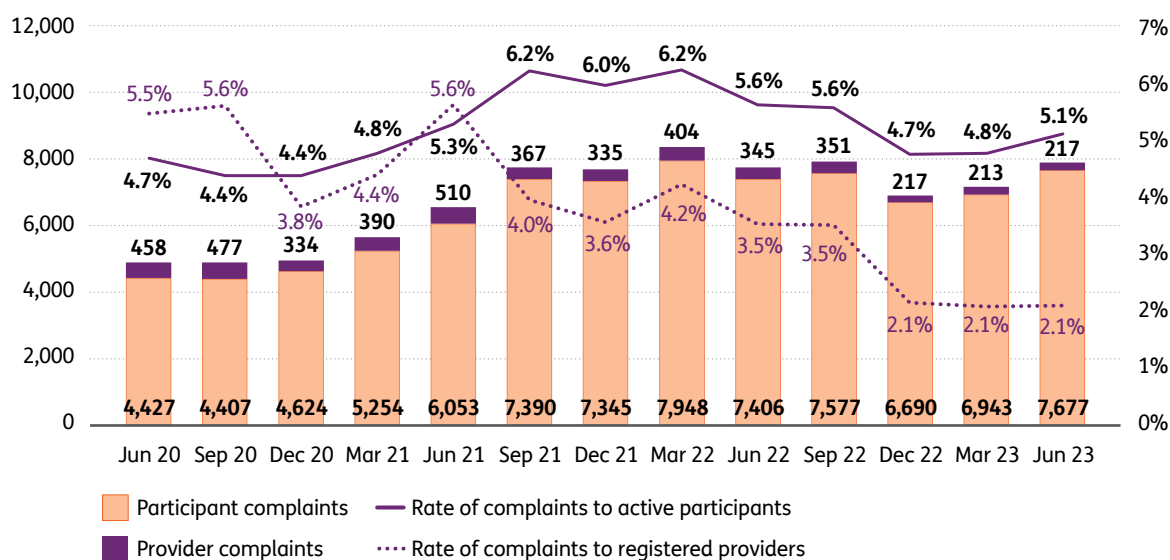
Further, 217 complaints were received from providers over the quarter, which is equivalent to 2.1 per cent of registered providers making a complaint. This has reduced from a peak of 5.6 per cent in the September 2020 quarter.

53 The numbers of complaints reported for the most recent quarter may still increase to the extent there is a lag in data collection. However, any increase is not expected to have a material impact on the results.

54 The historical number of complaints reported prior to the June 2023 QRDM has changed due to Participant Critical Incidents being reported separately from the June 2023 QRDM onwards, see later in the section for further details.

55 The numbers of complaints reported for the most recent quarter may still increase to the extent there is a lag in data collection. However, any increase is not expected to have a material impact on the results.

56 The historical number of complaints reported prior to the June 2023 QRDM has changed due to Participant Critical Incidents being reported separately from the June 2023 QRDM onwards.

Figure 16: Number and proportion of participant and provider complaints over time⁵⁷


Participant Critical Incidents (PCIs)

While working with participants, their families and carers, providers or mainstream services, NDIA staff and Partner staff may encounter circumstances or obtain information about allegations of harm occurring to a participant. This is known as a participant critical incident (PCI). Note that PCIs were captured in complaints data in previous reports, this is the first report to separate out PCIs.

Where the NDIA and Partners receive information about a PCI, the NDIA follows protocols to determine when and how incident information will be disclosed to the NDIS Commission. The NDIA may consider that the incident should be reported to the NDIS Commission as a 'notifiable incident' as it fits the criteria of a 'reportable incident' and involves a registered provider, or that information about the incident should otherwise be shared with the NDIS Commission for consideration of possible action under the NDIS Act.

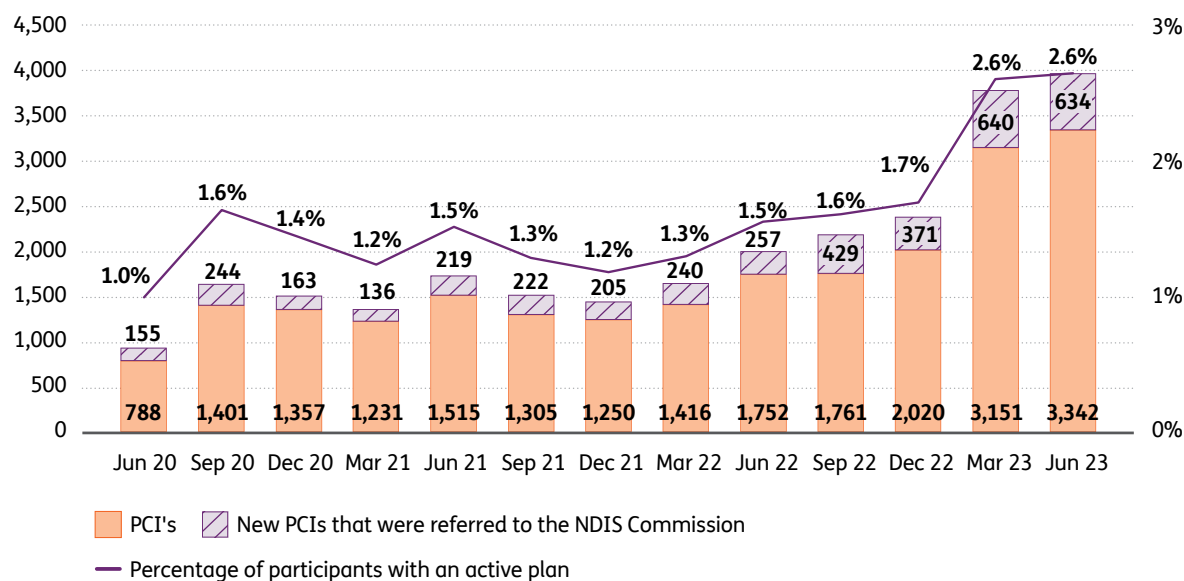
There has been an increase in the total volume of PCI's received in the March 2023 and June 2023 quarters where the proportion of PCI's as a percentage of participants with an active plan has increased from approximately 1.5% prior to December 2022 to 2.6% over the last two quarters. This increase has been due to an increased awareness of financial abuse in the community and improved reporting of PCIs over the last two quarters.

Improving complaints and feedback management processes

The NDIA initiated a project in February 2023 to improve the management and resolution of complaints, feedback and enquiries made to the NDIA by NDIS participants, providers, and other members of the community about their experience with our services. The aim of the project is to improve our practices including building staff capability to manage and resolve issues and make sure our culture gives effect to the Participant Service Charter, and the objects and principles of the NDIS Act.

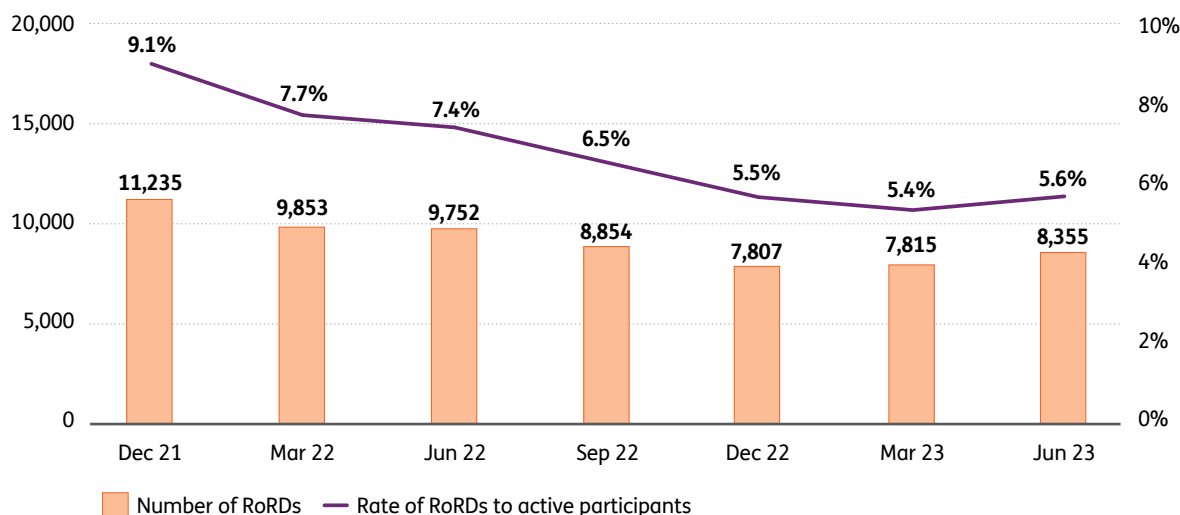
The project is considering improvements to complaints and feedback management processes and practices across the whole Agency, including the National Contact Centre (NCC), AAT Branch and front-line service delivery and partners. The project is working with Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCOs) and is extending co-design to the Participant Reference Group to better understand issues experienced by people with disability who make representations to the NDIA, and ways to provide a better service when issues are raised. There is a focus on making sure that our processes are accessible and accommodate individual circumstances and rights of the person making a complaint or providing feedback.

⁵⁷ In the 'My Customer Requests' tile launched in October 2019, it is possible to record multiple related parties as the source of a complaint and in some cases both participants and providers or other parties are linked to a single case. Previously, the single source was often recorded as a participant regardless of whether a provider was associated with the complaint.

Figure 17: Number and proportion of PCI's over time


Review of a Reviewable Decision (RoRD)⁵⁸

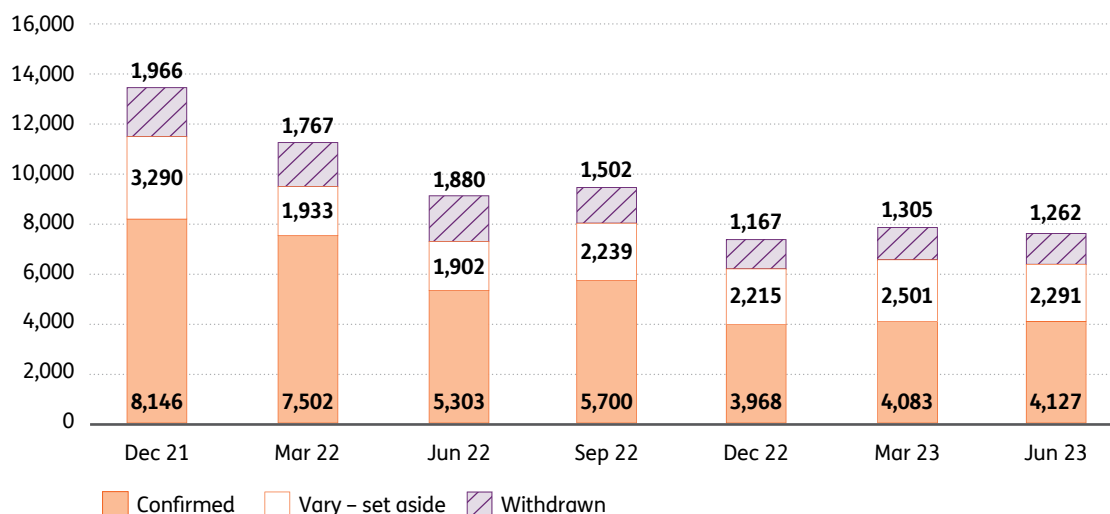
The number of RoRDs as a percentage of active participants has decreased from 9.1 per cent in the December 2021 quarter to 5.6 per cent in the June 2023 quarter.

Figure 18: Requests for a RoRD – quarterly trend⁵⁹


There were 7,680 RoRDs closed in the June 2023 quarter with 1,262 requests withdrawn. Of the remaining closed RoRDs, 4,127 confirmed the Agency's decision, meaning there was no change from the Agency's decision. Further, there were 2,291 decisions to amend or set aside the decision of the original decision maker. Decisions are often varied or set aside as further evidence is obtained during the review process.

⁵⁸ Figures do not capture 391 review records that have been migrated to the new ICT system, see section 6.6 for further information.

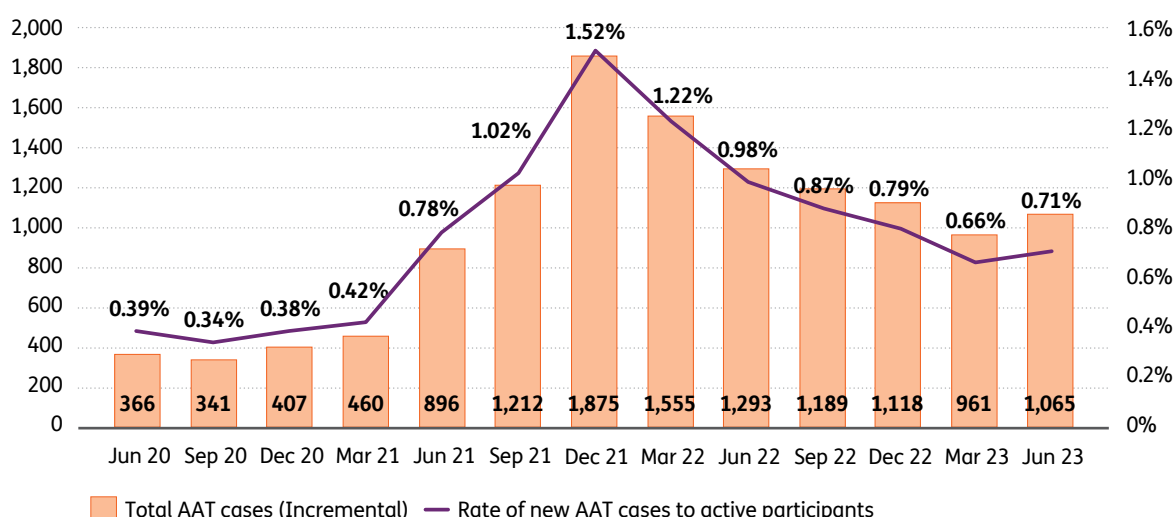
⁵⁹ The number of RoRDs have changed compared with the previous report. This is due to additional records which have been retrospectively added/removed from the underlying data. Work to include records entered in the off-system database as well as requests that have been recorded in the ICT system continues.

Figure 19: Closed RoRDs by outcome – quarterly trend


Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)

If a person is not satisfied with the outcome of their review, they may apply to the AAT for review of a decision made by a reviewer. The NDIA is committed to acting as a model litigant in the AAT as required by the Legal Services Directions 2017, and in doing so works with applicants and their legal representatives to resolve their matters as early as possible in the AAT process.^{60,61}

There were 1,065 new AAT cases in the June 2023 quarter, relating to 1,046 participants. The number of new AAT cases (as a proportion of active participants) has decreased since the December 2021 peak of 1.52 per cent to 0.71 per cent in the June 2023 quarter. The decrease is also a result of the Independent Expert Review (IER) trial which is one of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) initiatives introduced to reduce the AAT case backlog and improve dispute resolution processes.

Figure 20: Number and proportion of new AAT cases over time


⁶⁰ As part of the AAT process, it is not uncommon for new requests to be made and for new evidence to be provided by applicants while their matters are in progress. This contributes to NDIS decisions being varied in the AAT.

⁶¹ Further information about the AAT process can be found on the AAT website: <https://www.aat.gov.au/apply-for-a-review/national-disability-insurance-scheme-ndis/can-we-help>

There have been 13,428 AAT cases closed since the commencement of the NDIS. Of those cases, 13,118 were resolved before a hearing, with the remaining 310 progressing to a substantive hearing and receiving a decision on a substantive legal issue.

Figure 21: AAT cases by open/closed and decision

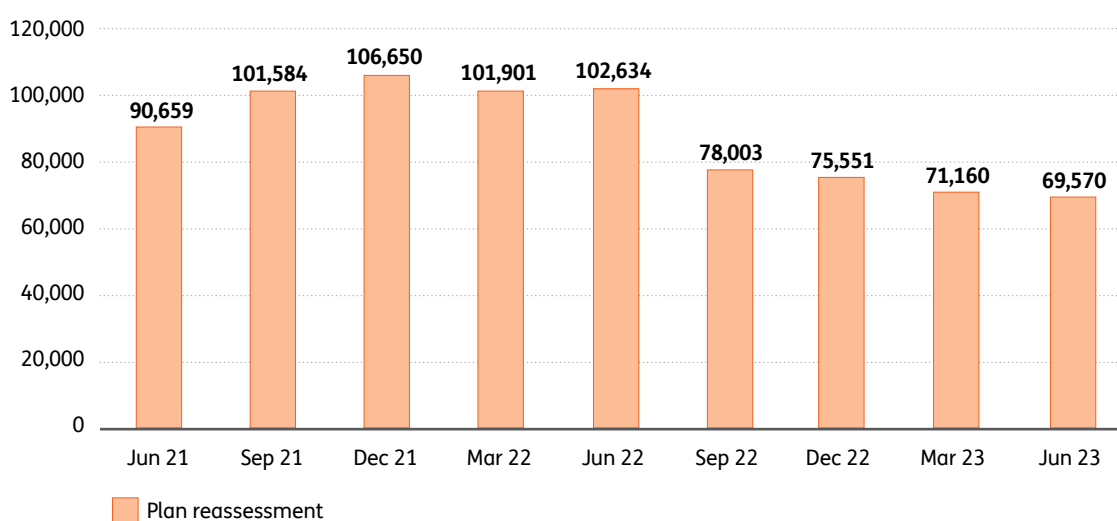
	Number of cases	Number of unique active participants ⁶²
AAT Cases	16,343	14,872
Open AAT Cases	2,915	2,883
Closed AAT Cases	13,428	12,281
Resolved before hearing	13,118	12,015
Gone to hearing and received a substantive decision	310	266

Of the cases no longer before the AAT, approximately 66 per cent were resolved by agreement, 29 per cent were withdrawn by the applicant or dismissed by the AAT and 2 per cent proceeded to a (substantive) hearing.⁶³

Plan reassessments⁶⁴

There were 69,570 plan reassessments conducted in the June 2023 quarter. There has been a reduction of plan reassessments from the September 2022 quarter compared to the preceding four quarters due to a plan continuation strategy which involves communicating with the participant to ensure there have been no significant changes in circumstance and that the participant is in agreement with this approach. This has led to a lower volume of plan reassessments in the quarter. Of the 69,570 plan reassessments conducted in the June 2023 quarter, 45,555 (65 per cent) were initiated by the Agency and 24,015 (35 per cent) were requested by participants. Agency Initiated Plan Reassessments occur as plans are due to expire, and a new plan is required.

Figure 22: Number of plan reassessments by quarter⁶⁵



⁶² As participants may have both open and closed cases, the unique active participants will not sum to the total.

⁶³ Less than 12 per cent of cases were related to applications for an extension of time which were declined by AAT or were not opposed by the Agency, matters over which AAT has no jurisdiction and reasons that were unspecified.

⁶⁴ Plan Reviews are now referred to as Plan Reassessments in line with the amendments to the NDIA legislation which came into effect on 1 July 2022.

⁶⁵ Short plans (plans with duration less than or equal 30 days) have been excluded. The number of plan reassessments in historical periods have been updated with retrospective data changes.

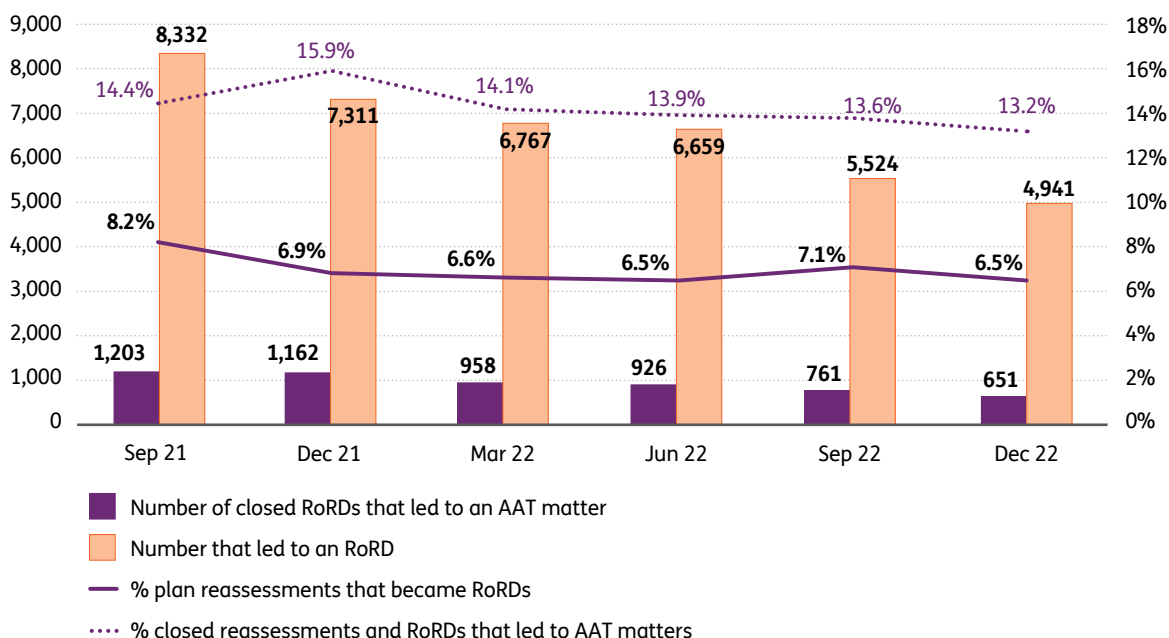
Pathway from plan reassessments and first or short plans to RoRDs and AATs

A participant may request a RoRD and then further appeal to the AAT. The following two figures show the pathway from plan reassessments to RoRDs and AAT cases between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2022.

The proportion of RoRDs, arising from plan re-assessments as well as the proportion of AATs arising from RoRDs has been reducing in recent quarters:

- Plan reassessment related RoRDs have declined from a peak of **8.2%** (**8,332** RoRDs) in the September 2021 quarter to **6.5%** (**4,941** RoRDs) in the December 2022 quarter.
- Plan reassessment related AATs have declined from a peak of **15.9%** (**1,162** AATs) in the December 2021 quarter to **13.2%** (**651** AATs) in the December 2022 quarter.

Figure 23: Pathway from plan reassessment to RoRDs and AAT between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2022 at 30 June 2023



3.4 Participant satisfaction

Participant satisfaction has remained in line with previous quarters.

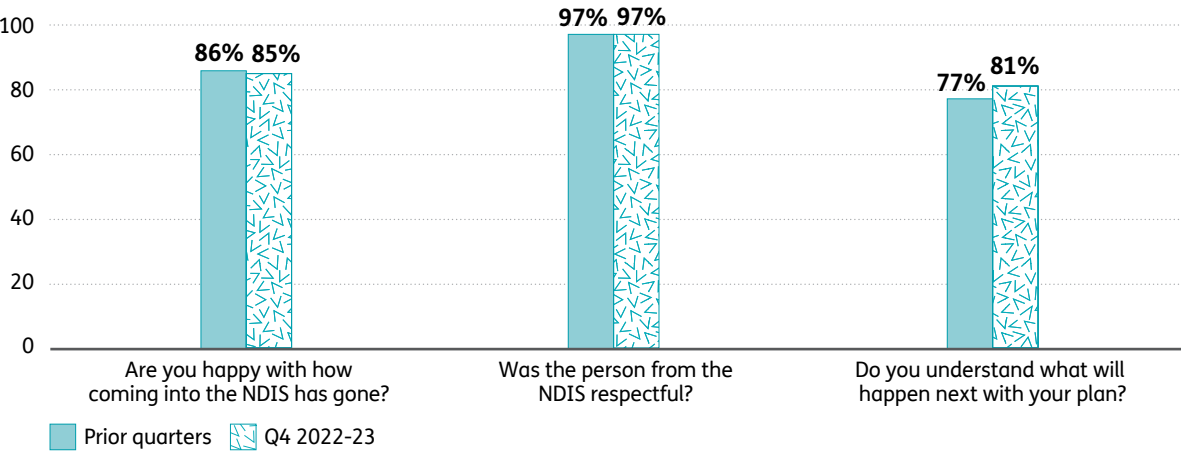
This quarter, 86 per cent of participants rated the Planning process as either good or very good, with a further 9 per cent rating the experience as neutral. Eighty per cent of the participants in the quarter rated the Access process as either good or very good, 80 per cent rated the Pre-Planning process as either good or very good, and 67 per cent of participants rated the Plan Reassessment process as either good or very good.⁶⁶ Satisfaction with the Plan Reassessment process has decreased slightly, by 2 percentage points in the most recent quarter, following a one percentage point decrease in the two prior quarters.

Figure 24: Rating of experience with the NDIS (1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023)

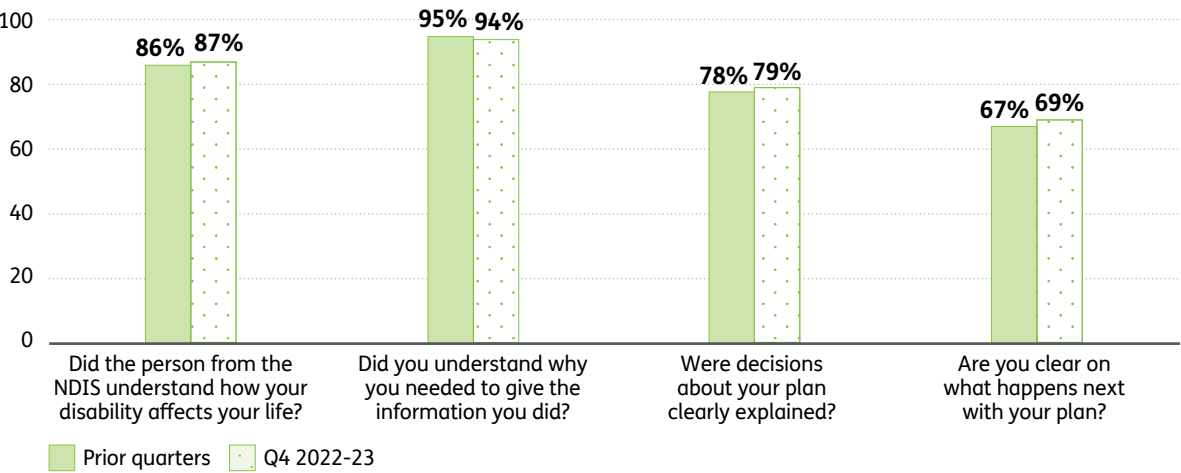
	Access	Pre-Planning	Planning	Plan Reassessment
Very good/good	80%	80%	86%	67%
Neutral	11%	13%	9%	14%
Poor/very poor	10%	7%	5%	19%

Figure 25: Satisfaction across the four stages of the pathway⁶⁷

Stage One: Access



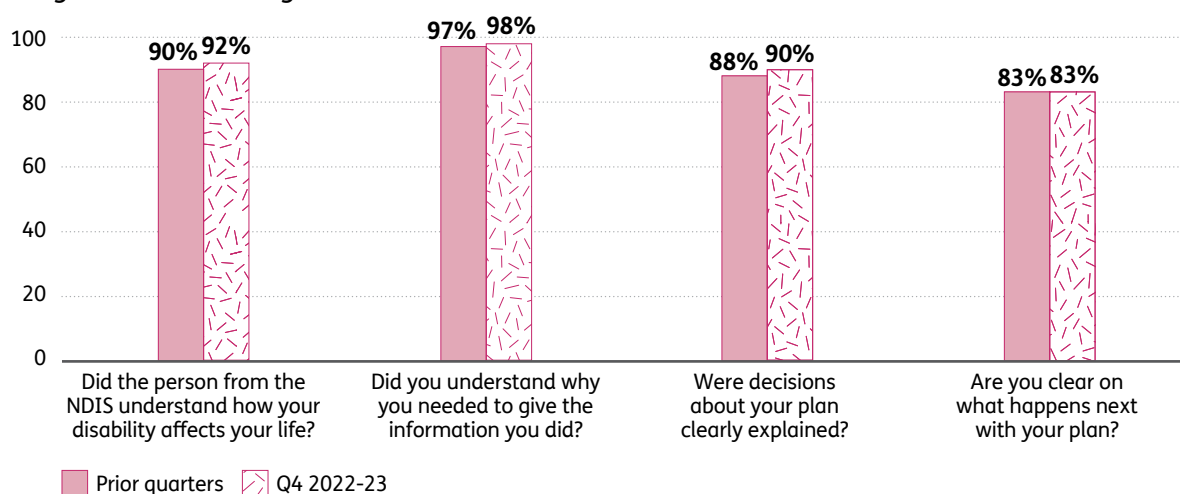
Stage Two: Pre-Planning



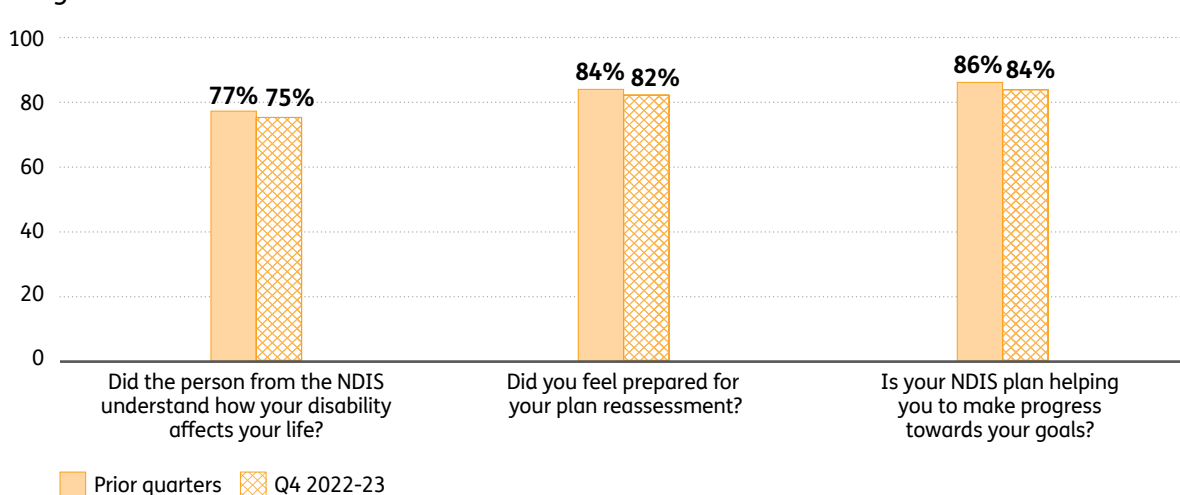
66 These results are based on 1,025 surveys at Access, 971 at Pre-Planning, 5,594 at Planning and 9,459 at Reassessment, which is 17,049 in total.
67 Prior quarters include responses from 1 October 2020.

Figure 25: Satisfaction across the four stages of the pathway⁶⁸ cont.

Stage Three: Planning



Stage Four: Plan Reassessment



The surveys also include questions that provide further insights at each stage of the pathway.

The results (Figure 25) indicate that satisfaction for the June 2023 quarter is slightly more favourable than for prior quarters for most questions about the first three pathway stages, although satisfaction declined slightly in relation to Plan Reassessment.

For this quarter and historically, the percentage who have a clear understanding of what happens next with their plan in the first three steps of the participant pathway has been lower than the positive response rate for other questions. For example, at planning, 83 per cent were clear on what happens next with their plan (same as for prior quarters), lower than the 90–98 per cent responding positively to other questions about planning.

Participants surveyed responded very positively to questions on whether the person from the NDIS was respectful, and to understanding why they needed to provide the information they did.

⁶⁸ Prior quarters include responses from 1 October 2020.

3.5 The NDIS National Contact Centre (NCC)

This quarter the NCC continued with the progressive implementation of a transformation to its contact centre operations. This includes the partial insourcing of contact centre staff, significant upgrading and retraining of staff skills, process reengineering and technology uplift.

The NDIS NCC provides personal and high-quality services and information about the NDIS for people with disability, their family and carers, and service providers.

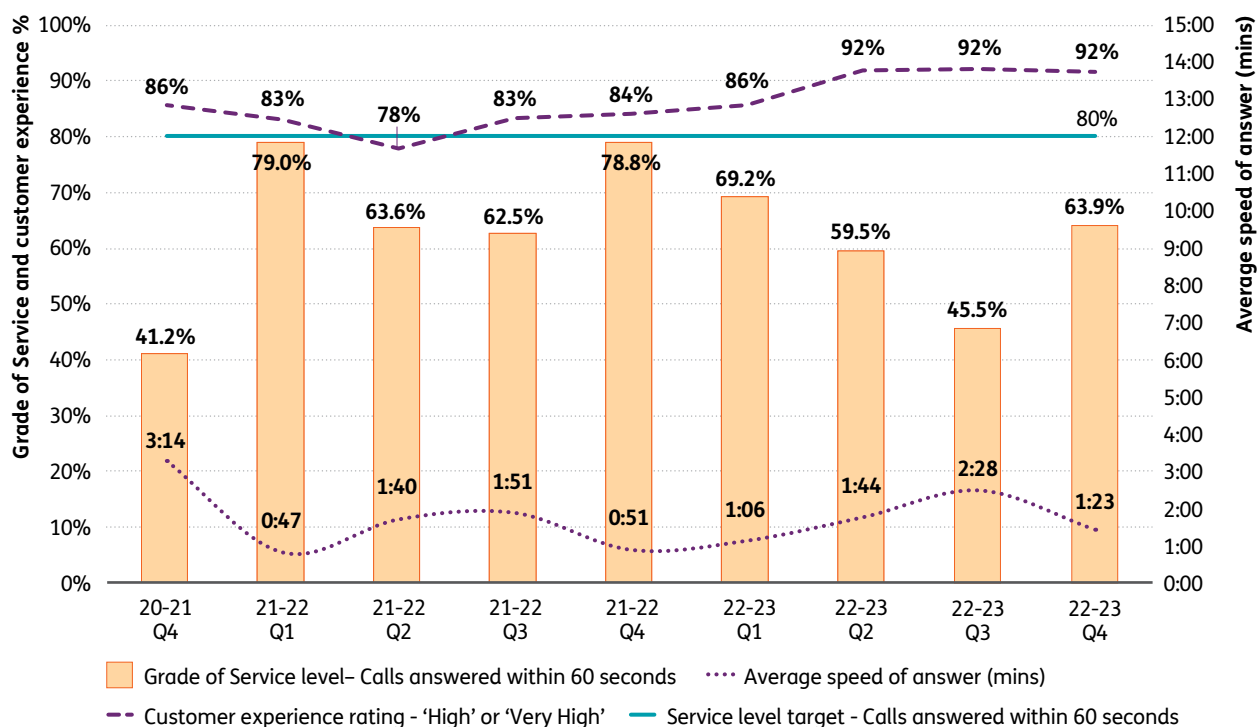
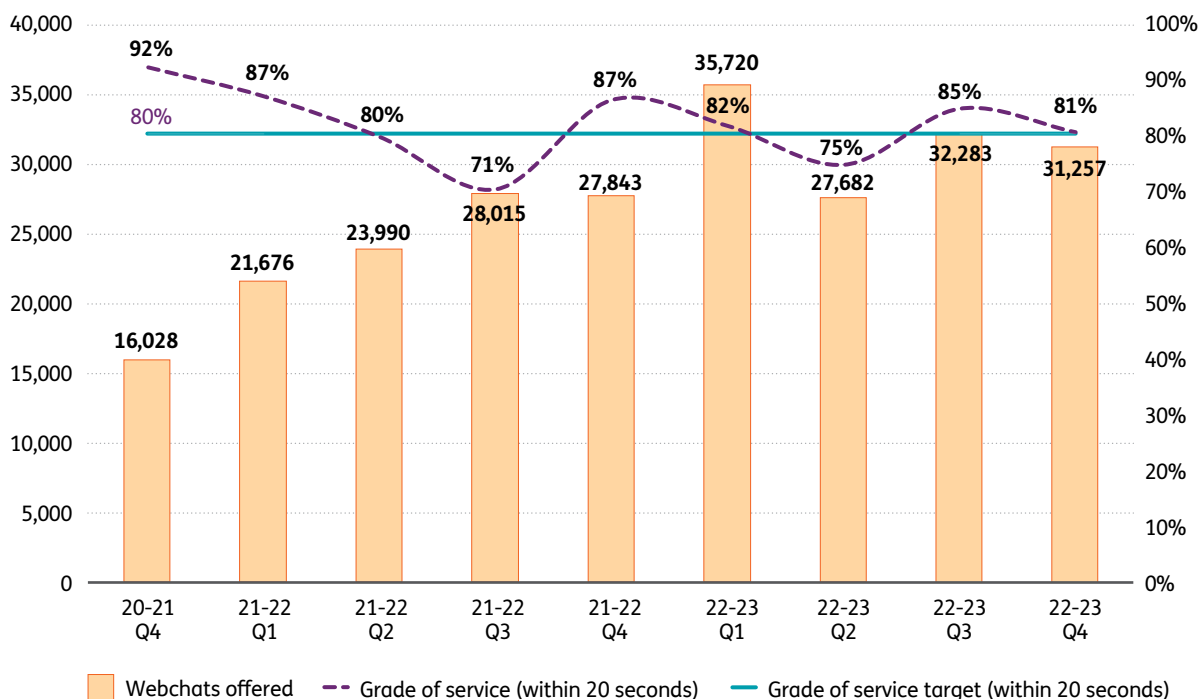
Specialist teams have been created to respond to service requests, supported by improved training and redesigned processes to improve first contact resolution. The most complex enquiries will be answered by NDIA staff through a partial insourcing of contact centre roles. By the end of Quarter 4, 86 Customer Service Officers had commenced in Dandenong, Victoria and Robina, Queensland. The NDIA has a target of 40% of staff within the NCC having a lived experience of disability.

The NCC has also implemented a new contact centre technology platform which enables future integration with NDIA’s customer relationship management (CRM) system. The foundation of the new platform was implemented in June 2023, with progressive implementation to build integration with existing systems expected soon.

A dedicated phone line for Government appointed advocates, guardians, and trustees was launched this quarter. This will improve the experience by connecting to Customer Service Officers who have additional training in the application of guardian orders and AAT processes.

For the whole of quarter results:

- Call answering performance improved to **64%** of calls answered in 60 seconds, with the June result of **74%** within 60 seconds, this was an increase from the previous quarters result of **45%**. The NCC has not received any complaints about wait times.
- **81%** of all webchats received were answered within 20 seconds. Webchat channel continues to see significant growth across the financial year to date, with **31,257** webchats offered for the quarter.
- **72%** of email enquiries were answered within 2 business days. Email enquiries continued to increase this quarter, with **260,438** emails received, up **7%** from the previous quarter.
- First contact resolution remained consistent at **86%** based on post call survey responses.
- Customer experience remained strong this quarter, with **92%** of post call survey respondents scoring their experience with the NCC as ‘High’ or ‘Very High’.
- The NCC utilised “virtual hold” automatic call back functionality through this period thus removing the need to wait in queue.

Figure 26: Quarterly telephony grade of service, average speed of answer and customer experience results

Figure 27: Quarterly webchat grade of service and offered chat volume




From hard knocks to happiness, Tua sings from experience



Tua has suffered hardship, pain, and loss. But now the creative and determined 56-year-old Sydney musician is creating a happy life, with support from the NDIS. The proud and soulful Polynesian woman is preparing to release her first recording, “I’m still standing up”.

“It’s about struggling and feeling defeated but making the choice to live my best life and not feel sorry for myself,” Tua says. “I’m in constant pain. That can be depressing, but thanks to the NDIS I have the opportunity to do what I love.”

Tua lives with dystonia, associated with Parkinson’s disease. Her chronic pain, which sometimes causes tremors and cramps, is partly managed with medication. Music is Tua’s release.

The NDIS supports Tua’s musical journey with funding towards her community, social, and recreational activities. “My goal was to create professional sounding music in a studio. Thanks to the NDIS I’m achieving that goal,” Tua says.

A few years after Tua’s diagnosis in 2017, her relationship broke down and she lost her job. Then she became homeless, living in crisis accommodation and transitional housing for seven months before being offered social housing. During this time, her mother passed away.

When her friends suggested she apply for the NDIS, it was a turning point. “Prior to the NDIS I was in a really bad way. Now I see life differently because I’m able to do the things that improve how I feel,” Tua says.

Tua has NDIS funding for a chiropractor, physiotherapist, and an exercise physiologist who runs a Parkinson’s Warrior Program, focusing on movement, balance, and fall prevention. Tua believes her physical improvement is linked to the way she feels about herself.

“I have improved because my mental health is better,” Tua says. “The recipe for happiness is to choose to do what you love. The NDIS has given me the opportunity to make those choices.

Section four:

Providers and the growing market



The provider market continues to grow.

4.1 Support categories

The largest support categories are core support for daily activities, core support for social and community participation, and capacity building for daily activities.

\$34.7bn in support has been provided in the 12 months to 30 June 2023⁶⁹ The largest support categories are core daily activities (53 per cent of total payments), core social and community participation (21 per cent of total payments), and capacity building daily activities (therapy services) (13 per cent of total payments). Core daily activities includes participants in SIL. \$8.8bn of the \$18.3bn payments on core daily activities in the 12 months to 30 June 2023 was for payments for participants in SIL.

Figure 28: Total payments from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

Support Category	Total payments (in \$m)	% of total payments
Core – daily activities	18,291	52.7%
Core – community	7,464	21.5%
Core – consumables & transport	1,392	4.0%
Capacity building – daily activities ⁷⁰	4,363	12.6%
Capacity building – other	2,199	6.3%
Capital	1,007	2.9%
Total⁷¹	34,724	100.0%

Over the last two years, payments have grown by 41 per cent (from \$6.6bn in the June 2021 quarter to \$9.3bn in the June 2023 quarter). Payments have grown substantially across the support categories, most notably for core social and community participation (growing by 78 per cent over the period).

⁶⁹ This represents total payments on a cash basis (including payments made under in-kind arrangements). On an accrual basis, total payments were \$35.1 billion. Please note this figure is a provisional result and subject to change including ANAO audit.

⁷⁰ Includes therapy services.

⁷¹ Total includes \$8m of payments with no support category.

4.2 Plan management types⁷²

There has been a significant shift in plan management, with an increasing number of participants choosing to use a plan manager rather than have the Agency manage their plan.

Over the past two years, the proportion of participants who:

- **Self-manage all or part of** their plan has been broadly stable, decreasing from **31%** to **29%**
- Use a **plan manager** has increased from **49%** to **60%**
- Have an **Agency-managed** plan has decreased from **20%** to **10%**.

Many participants who have entered the Scheme in more recent years have chosen to use a plan manager for most or some of their supports compared with participants who joined the Scheme earlier. This is a key driver of the increase in the number of participants with plan managers.

Out of 167,409 active providers in the fourth quarter of 2022–23, 8,971⁷³ providers provided support to Agency-managed participants and 166,641⁷⁴ providers provided support to plan-managed participants.⁷⁵

There have also been changes in payments over the past two years across these three plan management types:

- **Self-management** has remained between **12%** and **13%**
- Payments managed by a **plan manager** have increased from **38%** to **53%**
- **Agency-managed** payments decreased from **50%** to **35%**.

⁷² All figures in this section are impacted by a correction put through for a covid-related data issue, which has resulted in a retrospective reallocation of payments from 'plan-managed' to 'Agency-managed', and impacts all payment quarters since 2021–22 Q3.

⁷³ The number does not include plan managers who received only payment for plan management fees.

⁷⁴ The number includes plan managers who are providing Agency-managed supports.

⁷⁵ A plan manager may provide support to both Agency-managed and plan-managed participants. There is an overlap of 8,203 providers between these categories and the number of active providers by plan management type add up to more than 100 per cent.

In the fourth quarter of 2022–23, of the \$9.3bn in payments, \$1.1bn was self-managed (12 per cent), \$4.9bn was managed by a plan manager (53 per cent), and \$3.3bn was Agency-managed (35 per cent)⁷⁶.

The proportion of payments self-managed, managed by a plan manager, and Agency-managed differs by support category. In the fourth quarter of 2022–23:

- Payments for **participants in SIL receiving core daily activities support** were **\$2.4bn**. Of this, \$1m was self-managed (**less than 1%**), \$456m was managed by a plan manager (**19%**), and \$1.9bn was Agency-managed (**81%**).
- Payments for **participants not in SIL receiving core daily activities support** were **\$2.4bn**. Of this, \$354m was self-managed (**15%**), \$1.7bn was managed by a plan manager (**70%**), and \$380m was Agency-managed (**16%**).
- Payments for **participants receiving core social participation support** were **\$2.1bn**. Of this, \$188m was self-managed (**9%**), \$1.5bn was managed by a plan manager (**73%**), and \$379m was Agency-managed (**18%**).
- Payments for **participants receiving capacity building daily activities support (therapy supports)** were **\$1.2bn**. Of this, \$358m was self-managed (**30%**), \$749m was managed by a plan manager (**62%**), and \$102m was Agency-managed (**8%**).

⁷⁶ Includes cash and in-kind payments.

4.3 Plan managers⁷⁷

The number of plan managers in the Scheme continues to grow as more participants choose to use plan managers.

Provider types

Participants supported by plan managers can use registered or unregistered providers. Unregistered providers are used for more "general" support items which are not necessarily disability specific and can be considered more readily available. For the 12 months to 30 June 2023, an unregistered provider was used less frequently and has a higher proportion of one-off payments (i.e. the unregistered provider is only used once). On average the frequency of one-off payments was approximately 3 times lower for registered providers.

Payment characteristics

In the fourth quarter of 2022–23, 166,641 providers have supported plan-managed participants out of which 13,343 were registered at some point during the quarter.⁷⁸

Payments to plan managers were \$4.9bn in the June 2023 quarter. Of this \$4.9bn, \$130m was for the plan management services, and the remainder of \$4.8bn was for plan managers to pay service providers on behalf of participants.

Participants supported by plan managers can use registered or unregistered providers. Across all plan managers, 56 per cent of the \$4.9bn total plan managed payments in the June 2023 quarter (not including plan management fees) were paid to registered providers, 43 per cent of plan-managed payments were paid to unregistered providers and one per cent of plan-managed payments were paid to providers with unknown registration.

Although only 43 per cent of plan-managed payments went to unregistered providers, the market of unregistered providers is large, which means there are many providers receiving smaller total payments. Although only 8 per cent of providers paid through plan managers are NDIS registered providers, they represent 57 per cent of total payments in the quarter. Further, 32 per cent of NDIS registered providers received over \$100k in NDIS funding for the quarter, compared to only 2 per cent of unregistered providers receiving over \$100k in funding.

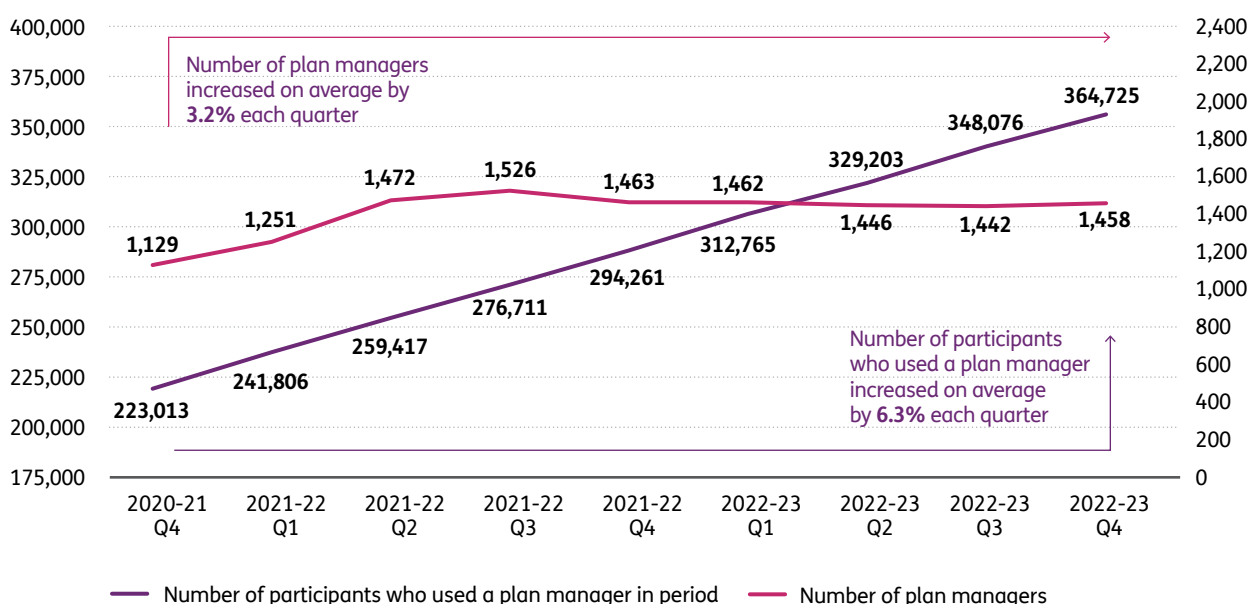
⁷⁷ All figures in this section are impacted by a correction put through for a covid-related data issue, which has resulted in a retrospective reallocation of payments from 'plan-managed' to 'Agency-managed', and impacts all payment quarters since 2021–22 Q3

⁷⁸ Registration status of a provider may move between registered and unregistered over the quarter.

Figure 29: Number of providers servicing participants through a plan manager in Q4 2022–23

Payment band in quarter	Number of providers – plan-managed		Proportion of total payments in quarter	
	NDIS registered ⁷⁹	Unregistered ⁸⁰	NDIS registered ⁷⁹	Not registered ⁸⁰
1. Less than \$1k	1,009	46,350	0%	1%
2. \$1k to \$10k	3,068	67,985	0%	13%
3. \$10k to \$100k	4,990	37,213	7%	47%
4. \$100k to \$1m	3,704	2,796	44%	33%
5. More than \$1m	572	65	49%	6%
Total	13,343	154,409	\$2,717m	\$2,050m
Percentage	8%	92%	57%	43%

Over the past nine quarters, the number of plan managers has increased from 1,129 at 2020–21 Q4 to 1,442⁸¹ at 2022–23 Q3 before increasing over the last quarter to 1,458, an overall quarterly average increase of 3.2 per cent. Over the same time period, the number of participants being supported by plan managers has increased from 223,013 to 364,725 – a quarterly average increase of 6.3 per cent. This indicates that while new plan managers are entering the market, increasing the number of plan managers from which participants can choose from, many plan managers are also expanding as the ratio of participants to providers has increased.

Figure 30: Participants and providers with a plan manager by quarter – all participants⁸²


79 Registration status is determined as at posting date of payment. Some providers may be counted more than once if they changed registration status during the quarter.

80 \$42m of payments made to providers with “unknown” registration status have not been included in this table.

81 The historical number of plan managers takes into account any revisions in their registration status.

82 The historical number of plan managers takes into account any revisions in their registration status.

4.4 Supported Independent Living (SIL)

\$3.1 billion of SIL supports was provided in the fourth quarter of 2022–23.

Total payments to participants in SIL have increased by 20 per cent annually over the last three years, from \$6.7bn to \$11.5bn. The number of participants has also increased from 24,119 at 30 June 2020 to 31,509 at 30 June 2023.

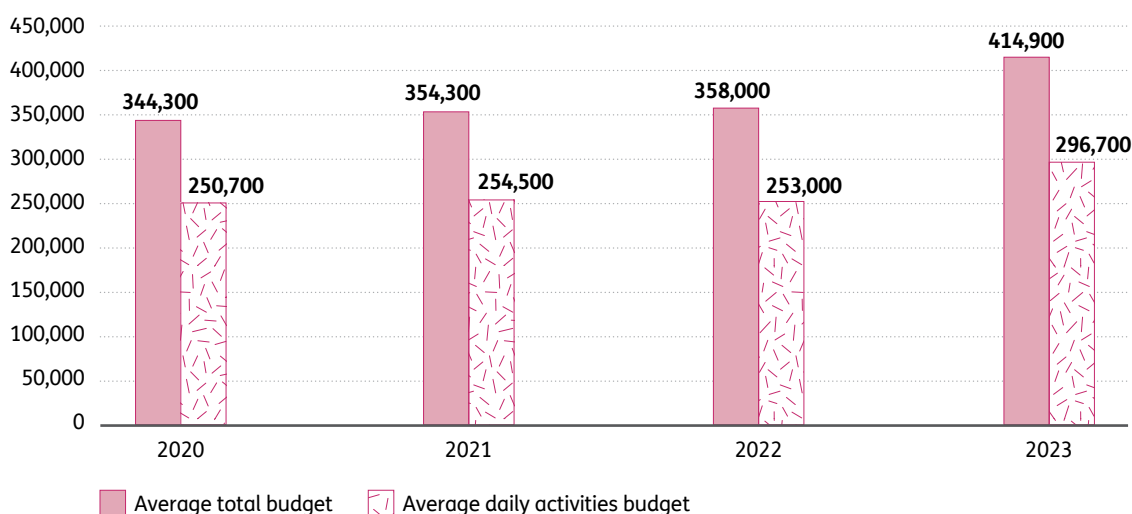
The average payment per participant for SIL supports has also increased and comprises a large component of the total average payment for participants in SIL (noting that participants in SIL also receive other supports, such as core support for community participation, employment, and capacity building). The average payment per participant for SIL supports (core daily activities) has increased by 7 per cent annually over the last 3 years.

Figure 31: Number of participants and payments for years ending 30 June – participants in SIL⁸³

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% increase (per annum)
Active participants	21,052	24,119	24,542	26,950	31,509	9%
Total payments (\$m)		6,702	7,892	8,776	11,481	20%
Average payment (\$)		300,100	330,600	343,900	387,700	9%
Total payments – core daily activities (\$m)		5,423	6,357	6,920	8,837	18%
Average payment – core daily activities (\$)		242,200	258,500	271,100	298,300	7%

In addition to payments, average plan budgets for participants in SIL have also increased over time, including the component of the plan budget for SIL supports (core support for daily activities). Specifically, there was an 6 per cent per annum (or 21 per cent overall) increase in average plan budgets, and a 6 per cent per annum (or 18 per cent overall) increase in the average daily activities component of the plan budgets over the three years to 30 June 2023.

Figure 32: Average plan budgets over time for years ending 30 June – participants in SIL (\$)



⁸³ Due to operational changes since July 2020, there has been an issue with identifying SIL in plans as they are being completed. A temporary and manual solution was implemented to estimate the number of active participants who should be identified as having SIL in their plans but do not appear as such on the Agency's system. From May 2022, an automated and more accurate method has been applied in identifying participants in SIL leading to a restatement in the number of participants in SIL from July 2020 to April 2022. Given the basis for identifying participants in SIL has changed since July 2020, the comparison between 2020 and 2019 is not entirely on a like for like basis.

4.5 Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)

The total number of enrolled SDA dwellings continues to increase.

The number of active participants with SDA supports has increased by 16 per cent annually over the last three years, reaching 23,092 as at 30 June 2023. The average plan budgets for SDA supports have also increased by around 10 per cent per annum, leading to an increase in total SDA supports in participant plans by around 28 per cent per annum, from \$176 million as at 30 June 2020 to \$365 million as at 30 June 2023.

Total SDA payments have increased by 31 per cent annually over the last three years, from \$102 million to \$230 million⁸⁴. The average SDA payments per participant have also increased, by 9 per cent per annum.

Figure 33: Number of participants, plan budgets and payments for years ending 30 June – participants with SDA supports⁸⁵

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	% increase (per annum)
Active participants with SDA funding	14,982	16,033	19,358	23,092	16%
Total SDA supports (\$m)	176	204	271	365	28%
Average SDA supports (\$)	11,741	12,694	14,024	15,802	10%
Total SDA payments (\$m)	102	140	186	230	31%
Average SDA payments (\$)	8,314	8,996	10,523	10,853	9%

The total number of enrolled SDA dwellings at 30 June 2023 was 7,925⁸⁶, up by 22 per cent annually over the last three years, and by 839 dwellings (12 per cent), compared to a year ago at 30 June 2022. This increase was observed across most design categories. The largest relative increase was for dwellings of the Robust category (40 per cent, 191 dwellings) and the High Physical Support design category (36 per cent, 702 dwellings). All states and territories saw increases in enrolled dwellings, with exception of ACT where enrolled dwellings remained the same.

As at 30 June 2023, there were 4,619 participants in an SDA dwelling seeking an alternative dwelling and an additional 1,305 participants who were not in an SDA dwelling seeking a vacancy. Of the combined 5,924 participants seeking SDA dwellings, 2,000 (34 per cent) were for the Improved Liveability design category and 1,600 (27 per cent) were for High Physical Support.

⁸⁴ SDA provider payments have not been handled in a timely fashion due to issues with service bookings. This has resulted in a large backlog of payments. To address the problem, the NDIA has introduced a new SDA line item from 1 July 2022 to ensure providers have an easier way to claim for services delivered to participants. The NDIA has also addressed historic outstanding SDA payments by making off-system payments to providers directly. The \$186m total SDA payments made in the year ending on 30 June 2022 includes off-system payments of \$10.5 million made in June 2022.

⁸⁵ A proportion of participants with SDA funding may never use their SDA funding or only utilise it at a future date and work is underway to better understand this split.

⁸⁶ This includes dwellings funded via “cash” arrangements only. An additional 203 dwellings are funded under in-kind arrangements, bringing the total number of SDA dwellings to 8,128 at 30 June 2023.

4.6 Choice and control, utilisation and market concentration

Comprehensive data on market effectiveness is being used to improve participant outcomes across all regions through identifying thin markets.

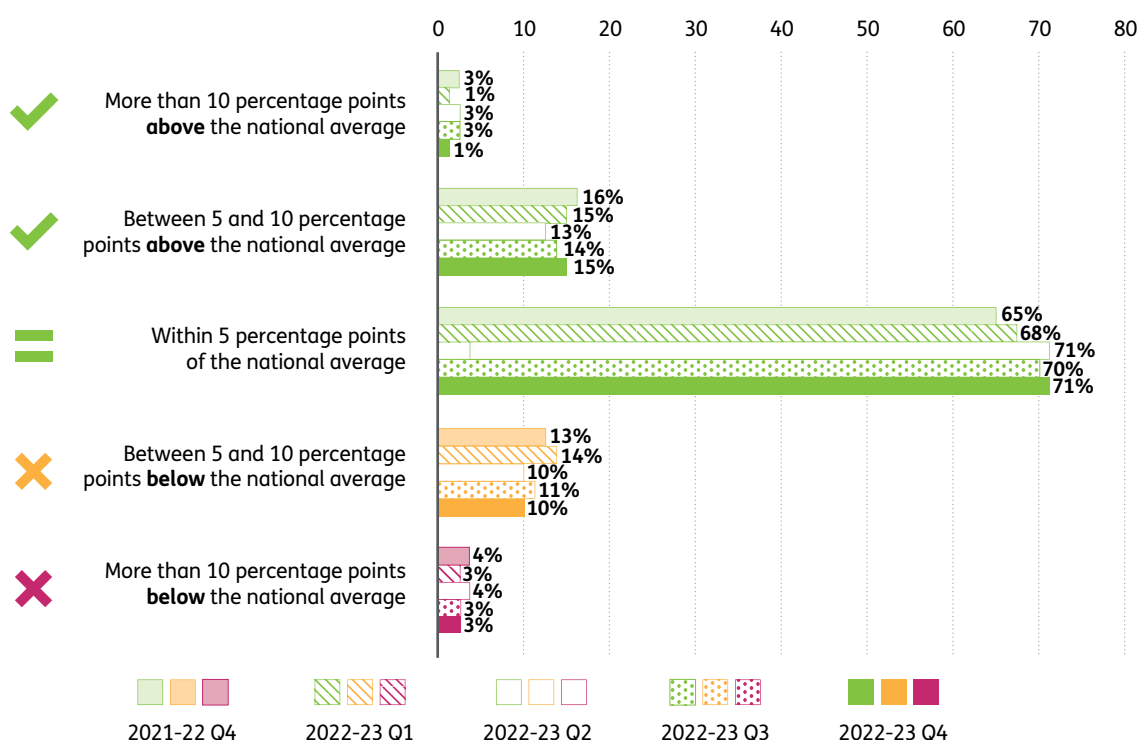
Between June 2022 and June 2023, the choice and control and market concentration performance metrics have improved while the utilisation metric has shown slight deterioration.

Choice and control

Overall, 57 of the 80 service districts (71 per cent) in the analysis were within 5 percentage points of the national average, one service district (one per cent) was more than 10 percentage points above the national average, and two service districts (3 per cent) were more than 10 percentage points below the national average.

Over the last year the percentage of service districts more than 10 percentage points below the national average has stayed consistently between 3 and 4 per cent. The number of service districts within 5 per cent of the national average has increased from 65 per cent to 71 per cent.

Figure 34: Choice and control – distribution of service districts – gap to benchmark – trend



Utilisation

Overall, 59 of the 80 service districts (74 per cent) in the analysis are within 5 percentage points of the national average⁸⁷, no service districts were more than 10 percentage points above the national average, and five service districts (6 per cent) were more than 10 percentage points below the national average.

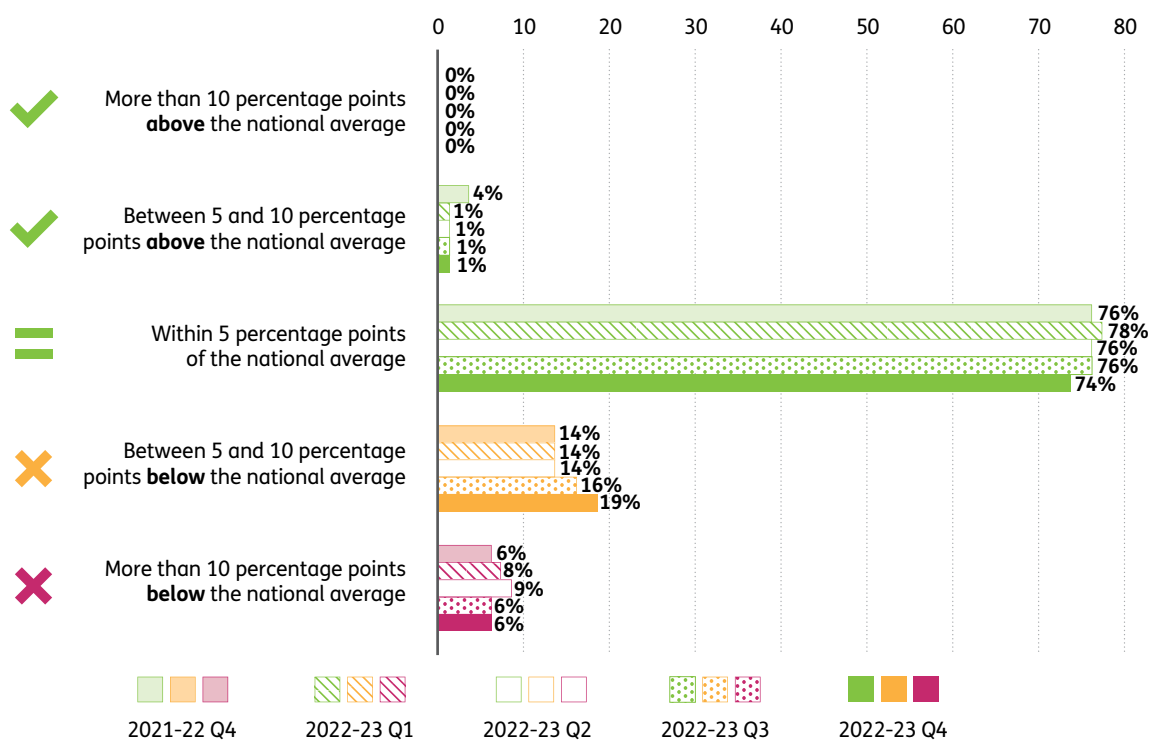
The number of service districts more than 10 percentage points below the national average has remained constant at 5 between 31 March 2023 and this quarter.

There are 15 service districts between 5 and 10 percentage points below the national average.

Over the last year, the number of service districts more than 10 percentage points below the national average has been stable, between five (6 per cent) and seven (9 per cent). The number of service districts within 5 percentage points of the national average has decreased from 61 (76 per cent) to 59 (74 per cent).

The number of service districts between 5 and 10 percentage points below the national average has increased from 11 (14 per cent) to 15 (19 per cent) over the last year.

Figure 35: Utilisation – distribution of service districts – gap to benchmark – trend



⁸⁷ Utilisation has been adjusted to account for the differences in the proportion of participants in each service district receiving SIL, along with the time participants have been in the Scheme.

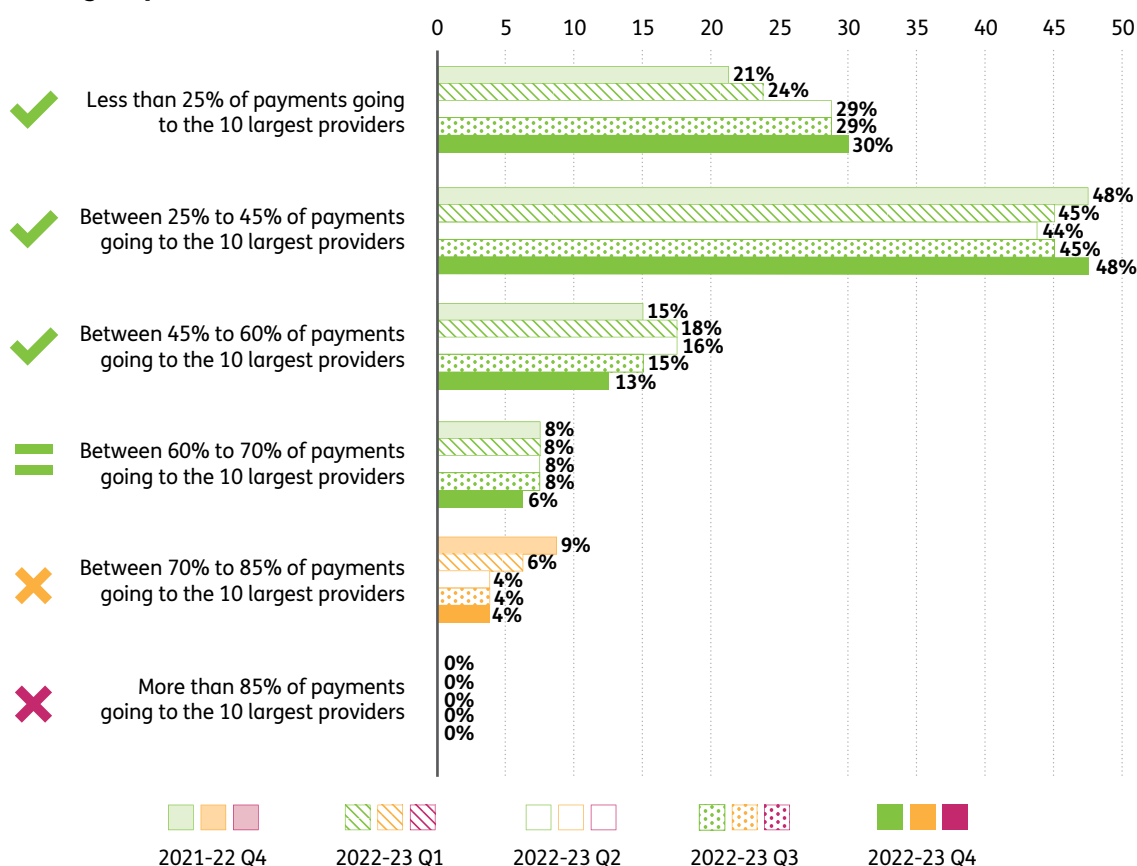
Market concentration

As at 30 June 2023, for the six month period to 31 March 2023, 6 per cent of NDIS payments across Australia were paid to the largest ten service providers, excluding providers paid through self-managed payments.

The analysis below considers payments to providers in the six month period to 31 March 2023. There are three service districts where 70 per cent or more of payments go to the largest ten providers (4 per cent) and 62 service districts where less than 45 per cent of payments went to the ten largest providers (78 per cent).

The number of service districts where 60 per cent or more of payments go to the largest ten service providers has decreased and where less than 45 per cent of payments went to the ten largest providers has increased over the past year. The number of service districts where between 60 to 85 per cent of payments go to the ten largest providers has decreased from 13 (16 per cent) to eight (10 per cent). Further, in the June 2023 quarter, there were no service districts where the ten largest providers received more than 85 per cent of payments.

Figure 36: Market concentration – distribution of service districts by percentage of payments going to the 10 largest providers – trend



4.7 COVID-19 Assistance

The NDIA continues to provide COVID-19 support.

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a priority focus for the NDIA to support continuity of and safe access to services for Participants. Some people with disability remain vulnerable to severe COVID-19 illness and the NDIA continues to offer targeted measures to remove barriers to necessary and critical supports.

The NDIA uses its broad range of communication pathways to share important COVID-19 information to participants and providers including the NDIS website, social media, participant newsletters and the participant portal. We encourage emergency planning and share resources to assist NDIS participants to prepare for and stay COVID-19 safe during winter.

Information about COVID-19 supports for participants and providers can be found on the [NDIS website](#)⁸⁸.

4.8 Market Stewardship activities

The NDIA continues to support the developing NDIS market such as developing home and living options and partnering with the sector to improve quality and outcomes of support coordination.⁸⁹

SDA Pricing Review

The Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) Pricing Review 2022–23 that examines the way the Agency sets limits for pricing SDA has progressed with new prices finalised for 1 July 2023. Further SDA sector engagement for this Pricing Review commenced in March 2023 involving stakeholders who submitted responses to the SDA Pricing Review consultation paper. In total, 47 submissions were received from individuals and groups providing valuable insights regarding SDA costs from a market perspective. The purpose of this second round of engagement is to test and validate the ideas and concepts raised during the consultation process and in the submissions.

The SDA Pricing Review Panel of independent experts met on in February 2023 with a follow up meeting to held in April 2023. The SDA Pricing Review Government Reference Group comprised of nominated representatives across jurisdictions held their second meeting in April 2023.

Home and Living demonstration projects

The NDIA is testing and evaluating alternative models of contemporary home and living (H&L) supports through the establishment of H&L Demonstration Projects. Selected Round 1 Demonstration Projects are testing and evaluating new ways of funding and delivery of improved outcomes for participants through Supported Independent Living supports. These projects focus on trialling bundled funding; service model change and family/participant governance models. Round 1 Projects are being progressively implemented. The NDIA's Research and Evaluation Branch are evaluating the projects over a two-year period.

Round 2 of the H&L Demonstration Projects are currently being considered. Round 2 is an Empowering Participants: Information, Assistance and Connections Grant Round. This round has the aim to test and evaluate different models of delivering high quality information, assistance and connections support to participants looking to explore their H&L options. The grant opportunity opened on 9 March 2023 and closed on 20 April 2023, with up to \$1.5 million of grant funding available over 2023–24 and 2024–25.

It is anticipated that the results of the round will be announced in Q1 of the new financial year, with project delivery to commence shortly thereafter. Projects will be up to two years in duration.

⁸⁸ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/providers-coronavirus-covid-19>.

⁸⁹ <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/market-monitoring#specialist-disability-accommodation-sda-quarterly-report>.

4.9 NDIS pricing

The Annual Pricing Review 2022–23 concluded over the last quarter.

The 2022–23 Annual Pricing Review (APR) was released on 16 June 2023 with the following changes effective 1 July 2023:

- Price limits for supports delivered by disability support workers and level 1 support co-ordinators have increased by 5.3% to account for the following:
 - Fair Work Commission’s (FWC) National Minimum Wage decision to increase award wages by 5.75%.
 - An extension of the temporary loading for a further 12 months at 1% from 1 July 2023 with this ceasing on 30 June 2024.
 - Inclusion of paid family and domestic violence leave into the Disability Support Worker Cost Model – up by 0.1% from 1 July to reflect the new entitlements for workers in the industry awarded by the FWC.
 - The adjustment to price limits to reflect the increase in Superannuation Guarantee Charge of 0.5 percentage points.
- After careful market analysis and consultation, there will be no adjustment to the price limits for therapy, plan management and support coordination levels 2 and 3.
- Maintain the scheduled reduction in the Temporary Transformation Payment (TTP) loading to 1.5% from 1 July 2023, with the loading to cease from 1 July 2024.

The plans of NDIS participants will be adjusted in July 2023, with funding to be indexed to account for these pricing changes.

Further information about the 2022–23 Annual Pricing Review can be found on the [NDIS website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements/making-pricing-decisions/annual-pricing-review#23-annual-pricing-review-apr)⁹⁰.

90 <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements/making-pricing-decisions/annual-pricing-review#23-annual-pricing-review-apr>



After 16 years, Wayne gets back on his favourite beach



Wayne has an unbreakable connection with the ocean and his beloved Freshwater Beach on Sydney's Northern Beaches. "I was in the water from when I was a little kid and started surfing at about 13 years old. My grown-up kids all surf now too," Wayne says.

Wayne remembers the day when everything in his life changed. He was 46 years old. "I was surfing and I couldn't get up on my surfboard. I didn't know what was wrong," Wayne says. Tests showed Wayne had multiple sclerosis (MS) which severely impacted his mobility.

For Wayne, a fit and active surfer and ironman who lived life in and out of the ocean, it was a devastating blow. Now, after 16 years, Wayne returned to the sands at Freshwater Beach, thanks to an NDIS-funded all-terrain wheelchair, and the support of NDIS provider MS Plus.

The all-terrain wheelchair has given Wayne back some independence and opened up his world again. "We can get it into the car so there are lots of trails on the peninsula I can access now," Wayne says.

Wayne has also been using an NDIS-funded powered wheelchair for the last 6 years. "That was a godsend. My wife doesn't need to push me in the old wheelchair if we go for a walk. I was able to take the Parramatta River Cat for the first time, and I can go to the Brookvale Oval to watch the footy," Wayne says.

With support, Wayne has also adapted to life at home. After his MS diagnosis, Wayne found moving around outside his house both difficult and dangerous. NDIS-funded assistive technologies made it safer and easier. Wayne's home is also equipped to help him improve his strength, stability, and fitness.

With hard work and perseverance, Wayne is feeling stronger and healthier and loving reconnecting with his local beach and neighbourhood. Wayne says it wouldn't be possible without the support of the NDIS and his community.

Section five:

Financial sustainability



A financially sustainable Scheme achieves outcomes for participants across their lifetimes, and is affordable now and into the future.

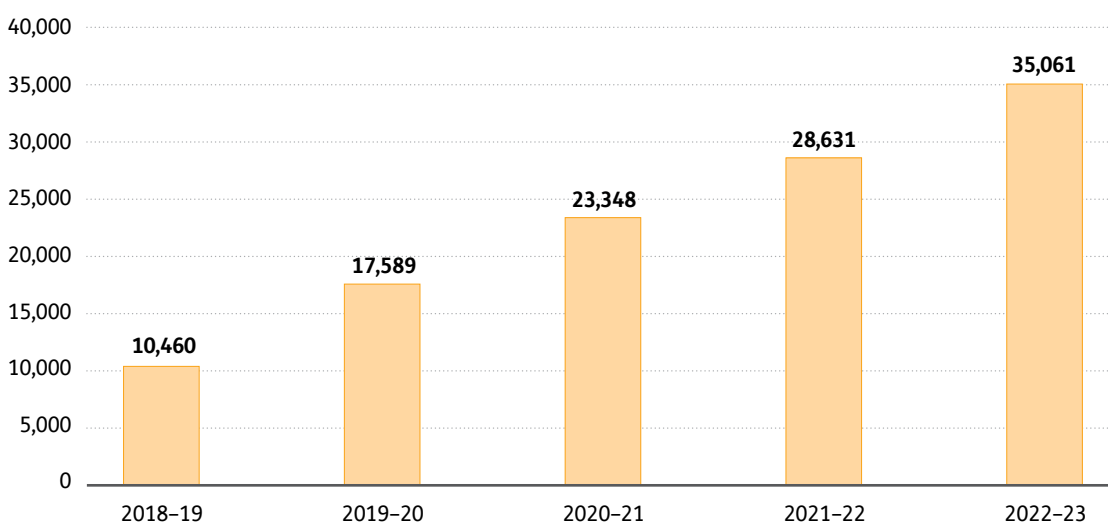
5.1 Total payments

Total payments have grown significantly over the last three years in line with a growing Scheme.

Total payments have increased over the last four years, from \$10.5 billion in the year to 30 June 2019 to \$35.1 billion in the year to 30 June 2023.

The increasing number of participants benefitting from the Scheme is a contributing factor to the increase in payments.

Figure 37: Total payments (\$m) for financial years ending 30 June⁹¹



⁹¹ Total scheme costs are presented on an accrual basis, sourced from the NDIA Financial Accounts. The Scheme costs figure is made of total Scheme expenses, less Scheme grant payments, write-downs and write-offs. The full year Scheme costs of \$35,061m in 2022-23 is a provisional result and subject to change including ANAO audit.

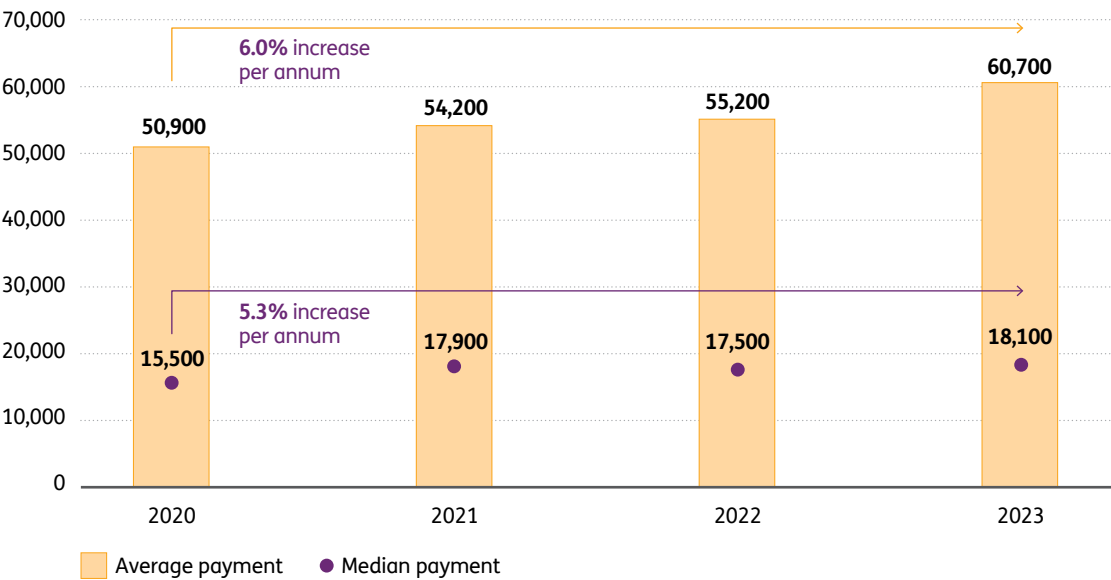
5.2 Average and median payment trends

Average and median payments per participant have increased by 6.0 per cent and 5.3 per cent per annum respectively over the last three years.

Both the average (mean) payment per participant and the median payment per participant provide useful information. In the NDIS, the average payment is much higher than the median payment because there is a skewed distribution with a small number of participants receiving very high cost supports, and a large number receiving low cost supports.

Trends in average and median payments per participant between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2023 indicate that average payments have increased by 6.0 per cent per annum, and median payments have increased by 5.3 per cent per annum.

Figure 38: Average and median payments for years ending 30 June



Trends in average and median payments are affected by changes in the profile of participants in the Scheme over time. Specifically, average payments are much higher for participants in SIL than those not in SIL, by a factor of almost 9 times. Average payments are also higher for adults compared with children, by a factor of almost 3.5 times. Over the past four years the proportion of participants under 15 years of age has increased from 40% to 42% and the proportion of participants of SIL in the Scheme has decreased from 6.7% to 5.1%. The impact of this changing mix is to reduce the average and median payment, all else being equal.

5.3 Average plan budget trends

Average plan budgets have also increased over time for the same cohort of participants.

In addition to average payments increasing over time, average plan budgets have also increased over time, for both participants in SIL and not in SIL.

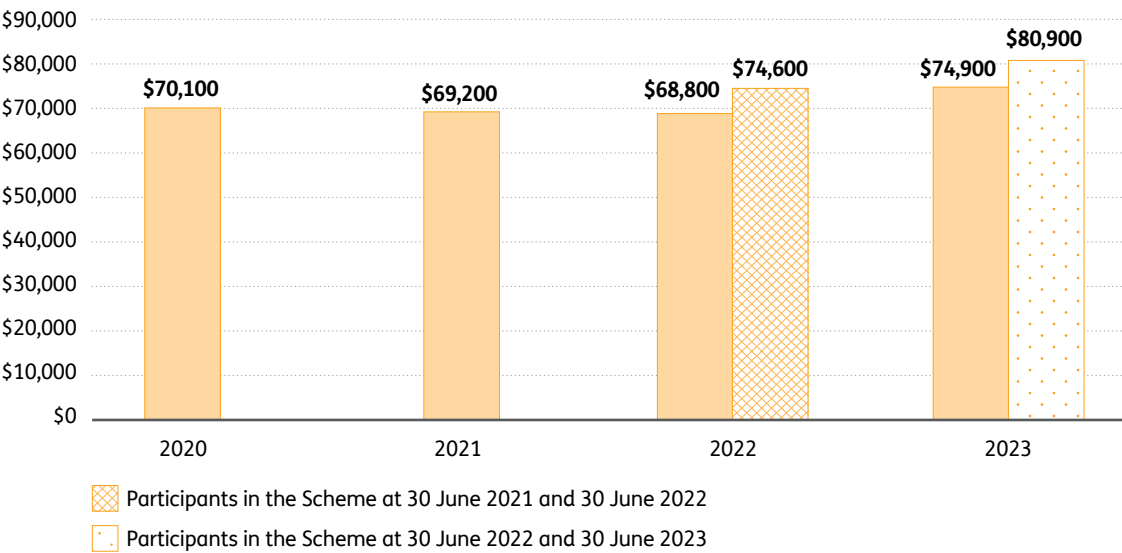
Specifically, over the three year period to 30 June 2023:

- Average plan budgets have increased by **2.2%** per annum for all participants
- Average plan budgets have increased by **6.4%** per annum for participants in SIL
- Average plan budgets have increased by **2.7%** per annum for participants not in SIL.

The slight decreases in the year ending 30 June 2022 is due to new participants that entered the Scheme between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022 having, on average, lower plan budgets. This was driven by high proportions of participants entering the Scheme who were under the age of 18 (as children have lower plan budgets on average than adults), and participants having lower support needs on average, as participants from the State/Territory disability systems with higher support needs (such as those in SIL) transferred into the Scheme earlier.

Importantly, there was no reduction in the average plan budgets of participants continuing in the Scheme. For example, for these existing participants who were in the Scheme at 30 June 2021 and at 30 June 2022, the average plan budget **increased** from \$69,200 to \$74,600 (7.8 per cent). Similarly, for participants who were in the Scheme at 30 June 2022 and at 30 June 2023, the average plan budget **increased** from \$68,800 to \$80,900 (17.6 per cent).

Figure 39: Average annualised plan budgets for years ending 30 June



As the mix of participants has changed over time, understanding trends in average plan budgets for the same group of participants over time is important.

Figure 40 groups participants into cohorts based on the number of plans they have had since joining the Scheme, and shows average plan budgets increase for each subsequent plan. For example, average plan budgets for participants who have had three plans, increased from \$40,000 for the first plan to \$53,300 for the third plan (15 per cent per plan).

On the other hand, first plan budgets for participants joining the Scheme has decreased over time. For example, participants who have had two plans have an average plan budget of \$37,600 for their first plan, compared to a first plan budget of \$40,000 for participants who have had three plans. This reflects the change in the profile of participants in the Scheme over time, with a higher proportion of lower cost participants, especially children, and fewer new participants in SIL.

Figure 40: Average annualised plan budgets for participants over time



Plan reassessments and plan budgets variations

Plan reassessments result in plan budgets varying from plan to plan for a variety of reasons – for example, one-off capital items in one plan and not the next. Another example is investment in capacity building (such as behavioural supports) resulting in less need for core support over time. The NDIA has published an [Operational Guideline on Plan Reassessments](#)⁹² which details the reasons why a new plan could be different to a current plan.

Plan inflation

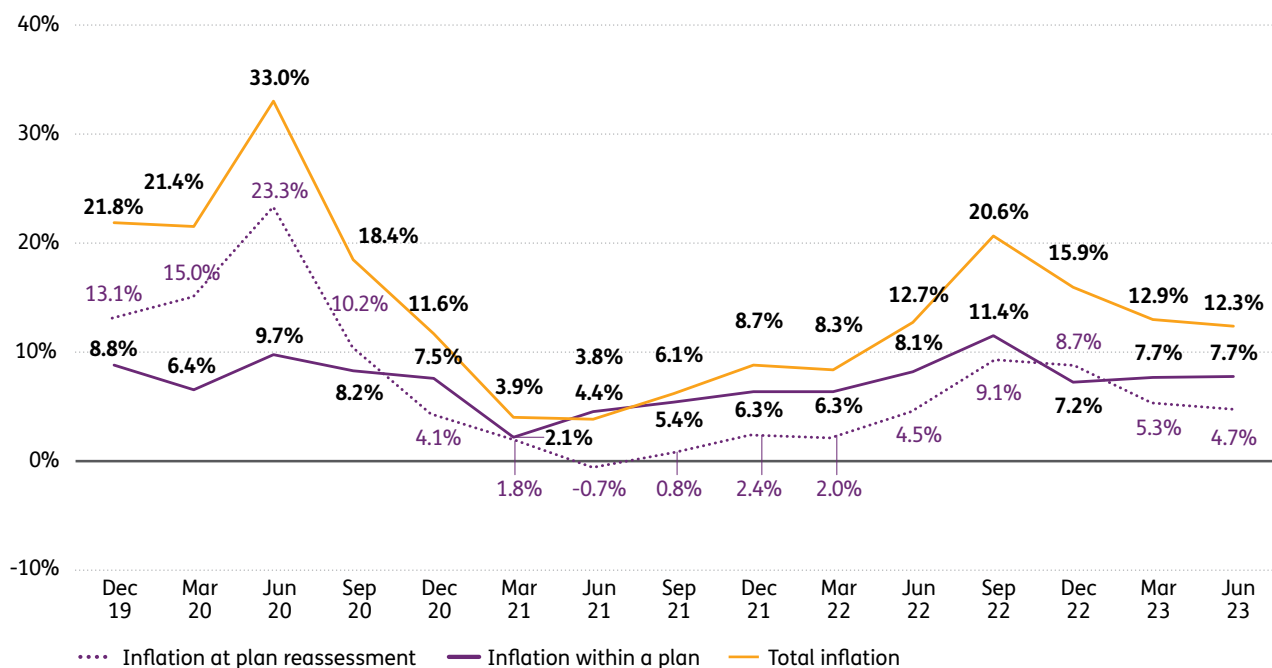
In the June 2023 quarter, total plan inflation was 3.0 per cent (12.3 per cent per annum). Of the 12.3 per cent per annum total plan inflation in the quarter, 4.7 per cent was due to changes at plan reassessment, and 7.7 per cent was due to changes occurring within a plan between reassessments.

The plan inflation of 12.3 per cent per annum in June 2023 compares with plan inflation of 12.9 per cent per annum in March 2023, and 15.9 per cent per annum in December 2022.

Inflation occurring at plan reassessment was 4.7 per cent per annum which compares with 5.3 per cent per annum in March 2023, and 8.7 per cent per annum in December 2022. Inflation occurring within a plan, between reassessments was 7.7 per cent per annum which compares with inflation of 7.7 per cent per annum in March 2023 and 7.2 per cent per annum in December 2022.

When considering the inflation for the 2022–23 Financial year, the total annualised plan inflation for the period is 19.4 per cent (including indexation) per annum. Of this, 7.0 per cent per annum was due to growth in plan budgets at reassessment and 12.5 per cent was due to growth in plan budgets between reassessments.

Figure 41: Annualised percentage change in plan budgets for active participants



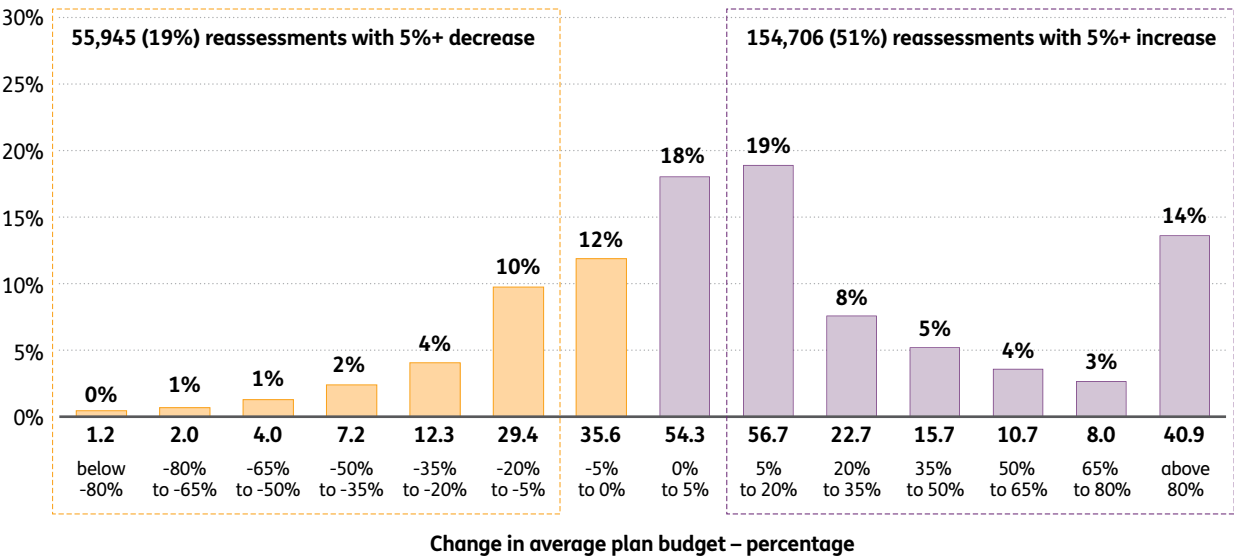
⁹² <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/your-plan-menu/changing-your-plan>

At the individual level, plan budgets can vary significantly. When looking at experience in this financial year (from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), taking account of total plan inflation, plans were more likely to increase rather than decrease.

Specifically:

- 51% of plans increased at reassessment by more than 5%
- 19% decreased by more than 5%
- 30% remained within 5%

Figure 42: Distribution of the percentage change in plan budgets for plans reassessed in this financial year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023)⁹³



93 The number of plan reassessments (in thousands) in each inflation percentage band is shown at the bottom of each bar in the chart. The corresponding percentage of plan reassessments in each band is shown at the top of each bar in the chart.

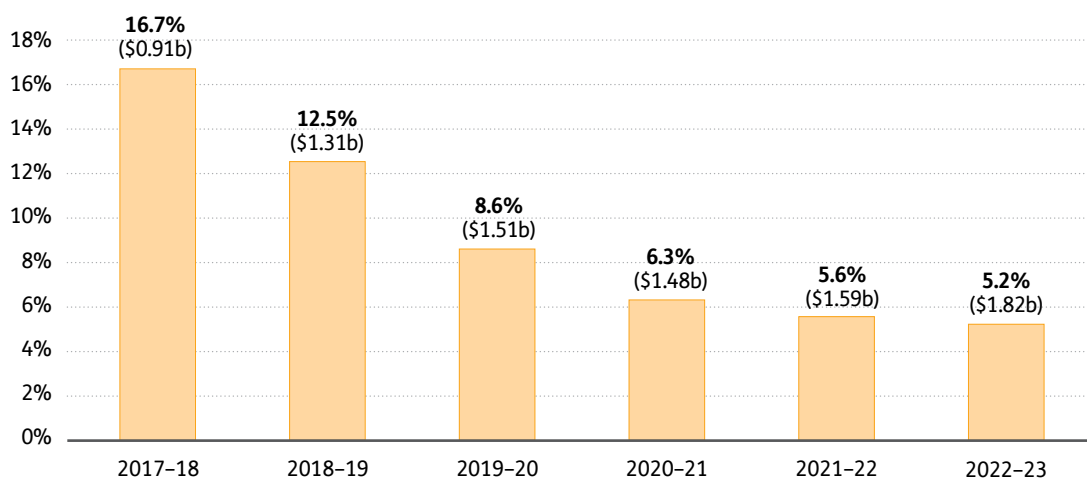
5.4 Operating expenses

Operating expenses per participant have reduced over the last four years.

In addition to the money spent through participant plans on supports for participants, the NDIA receives money to run the NDIA, including paying staff wages. This is referred to as the NDIA's operating expenses. NDIA operating expenses have increased from \$906 million in 2017–18 to \$1,822 million in 2022–23.

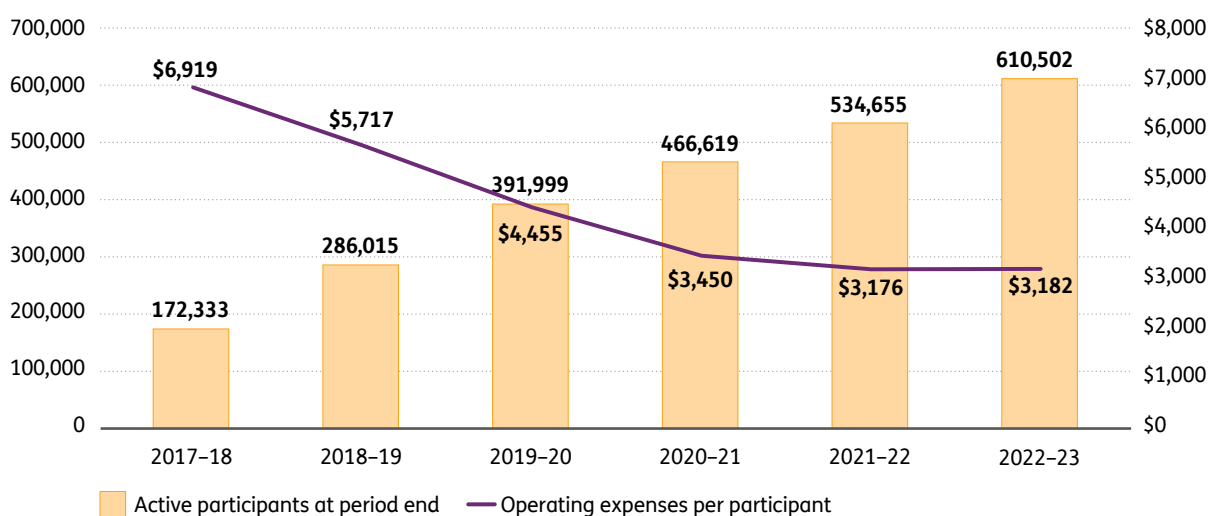
As a percentage of the dollars spent on participants, operating expenses have decreased from 16.7 per cent in 2017–18 to 5.2 per cent in 2022–23. The Productivity Commission in their 2017 Study report⁹⁴ suggests a range of 7 to 10 per cent as an appropriate benchmark for NDIA operating costs.

Figure 43: Operating expenses as a percentage of participant costs



Over time, the NDIA has increased efficiency. The annualised operating cost per participant has reduced by 54 per cent since 2017–18, from \$6,919 to \$3,182 in 2022–23.

Figure 44: Operating expense per participant⁹⁵



⁹⁴ <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/ndis-costs#report>

⁹⁵ Average number of participants is taking a simple average of the two periods (opening and closing) on active participants. Cost per participant uses these average participant numbers to divide the Total Operating Expenses for the 2022–23 Accounts.



Will achieves his dream through customised employment



Will dreamt of working in a job he enjoyed where he could wear corporate clothing and carry a briefcase. Now, thanks to a supportive mum and an employment project funded through the NDIS, Will is working not one job, but two.

“I cannot begin to tell you what these employment outcomes mean to me,” Will said. “Two years ago, I didn’t think I would ever get a job doing what I love. Now I’m saving for a car and a trip to see my family in the U.K. And I’ve moved into my own unit.”

Will, 26, has autism and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

“Learning to live with autism and OCD has been a struggle,” he said.

Will has worked as a Peer Group Researcher for NDIS service provider Rocky Bay since February 2022. In May he also began work as a local area coordinator Support Officer for NDIS Partner in the Community APM, with its customised employment project. The project is offered in Western Australia, Darwin, and parts of regional Queensland.

Will’s opportunities came after he and mum Ruth heard that his NDIS local area coordinator supported connections for participants who were searching for employment and required an individualised approach.

“Will’s local area coordinator explained all the employment support options and how the NDIS could support participants,” Ruth said.

“First, we attended a mentoring session which clarified what was expected of Will and which support providers could assist him,” Ruth said. “We linked Will with one of the customised employment support providers who talked to us about the ‘discovery’ process and worked with Will to discover his likes, dislikes, strengths, and his support needs.

“It was a great process and it really helped to build an employment picture for him. Will, who 12 months ago didn’t believe anyone would hire him, has changed into a positive, caring, and confident young man, and I can’t thank everyone enough.”

Section six:

Staff advisory groups and the NDIS community



Participant and sector engagement activities continue to be a focus.

6.1 A high performing NDIA

Workforce diversity, inclusion and engagement.

As of 30 June 2023, there were 13,690 members of the NDIA workforce. This includes 5,652 APS employees, 2,004 labour hire workers and contractors, and 5,891 people employed by PiTC and the NCC. During this quarter, we have continued to invest in the capacity and capability of our workforce. We have progressed significant recruitment requests to support expected peaks in workforce deliverables in line with budget initiatives.

This quarter, the NDIA continues to improve our representation, inclusion and support of diversity through:

- Undertaking recruitment at the senior level with Affirmative Measures (Disability and First Nations) to increase our leadership for generalist and specialist leaders with diversity in mind. This includes taking some new approaches to recruitment and welcoming applications in a range of formats.
- Continuing to implement our Disability Inclusion Plan (DIP), finalising the findings and recommendations of the Employees with Disability Workplace Experience Deep Dive. 14 recommendations will drive a program of work to improve the experience of staff with disability. The NDIA has established a dedicated team that will drive transformation and activities to increase levels of inclusion, employment, engagement and the overall experience of people with disability in the Agency. Increasing disability awareness for all Agency staff also has an important flow on effect of being able to better support participants.
- Progressing work on the First Nation Employment and Inclusion Plan 2022–25 to improve the cultural capability of Agency staff. The Plan contains 22 actions and as of June 2023, 2 actions are complete, 4 are current and ongoing, 5 are in progress, and 11 are future deliverables.
- Receiving conditional endorsement from Reconciliation Australia of our draft Reconciliation Action Plan, with completion and publication anticipated during FY 2023/24.
- Advancing the NDIA's first Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Inclusion Plan. Focus groups with staff have been conducted, and the CALD Working Group has developed actions to be included in the Plan. The anticipated launch of the Plan is during Q1 FY 2023–24, and the 4 areas of focus will include Cultural Competence and Leadership, Inclusive Culture, Inclusive Policy and Practice, and Career Development and Advancement.
- Having implemented 15 of the 16 actions of the NDIA LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2021–23. Enhancing the Agency's current inclusive practices and behaviours with regard to our LGBTIQ+ staff.

We look forward to continuing work to deliver against the actions in these plans so everyone feels connected, included and able to bring their whole selves to work.

6.2 Co-design and engagement

Co-design projects which are strengthening the NDIA's engagement process.

Refining and embedding our approach to co-design

The NDIA understands the best way to improve the NDIS is to listen to people with lived experience of disability and first-hand experience of the NDIS. This quarter, we continued to work with the disability community to build co-design and engagement capability. The NDIA is also taking a collaborative approach to commencing co-design work on the Reform for Outcomes initiatives.

Co-design Advisory Group

The Co-design Advisory Group (CAG) met twice during the June quarter (1 May and 13 June). CAG has continued to provide valuable input into the NDIA's co-design process. CAG members outlined their support for the NDIA increasing its capability to lead co-design projects internally to ensure the voices of people with disability are heard throughout policy and process design and implementation.

CAG is considering the terms of reference over the next quarter to ensure they are still fit for purpose.

Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCO) Forum

The DRCO Forum met on 12 May 2023. In this meeting, David Gifford, Scheme Actuary, provided an overview of the financial challenges confronting the Scheme. NDIA CEO Rebecca Falkingham and NDIA DCEO Corri McKenzie provided a post-budget briefing.

DRCO members also met twice out of session this quarter in joint meetings with the NDIA and IAC to discuss the approach to co-designing the Reform for Outcomes initiatives.

Information Gathering for Access and Planning

The Information Gathering for Access and Planning (IGAP) project was established in 2021 following the direction from Disability Ministers to “co-design a new person-centred model that delivers consistency and equity in access and planning outcomes, consistent with legislative requirements for assessments as set out under the NDIS Act”. The NDIA is awaiting guidance from the NDIS Review regarding longer-term changes to access and planning processes. In May 2023 the IGAP Steering Committee agreed to pause the IGAP project until the recommendations of the NDIS Review have been delivered, anticipated in October 2023.

Home and Living

The NDIA is co-designing a Home and Living Framework to inform the way the Scheme supports participants to pursue their home and living goals.

The co-designed Framework will deliver:

- A new way to support participants, their families and carers with information, assistance and connections to understand home and living options.
- A new way of gathering information to determine reasonable and necessary home and living funding.
- Flexible budgets that give more choice and control to participants.
- A new home and living approach for participants who need a high level of home and living support.

The NDIA is currently working on an implementation plan to support the Framework.

Participant Safeguarding

The Minister released the NDIA Participant Safeguarding Policy and Implementation Plan on 10 April 2023. The Policy outlines the NDIA's commitment to support people with disability who engage with the NDIS to create or expand safeguards to improve their safety and minimise the risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. It will be rolled out over a 3–5 year timeframe (anticipated to commence in early 2024).

Supported Decision Making

The NDIA has co-designed a policy and implementation plan on supported decision making which was released by the Minister on 4 May 2023. Supported decision making is the process of providing support to people to make decisions to remain in control of their lives. We want to show leadership, stewardship and improve how the NDIS supports people with disability in their everyday lives.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Strategy

The NDIA is co-designing a new CALD Strategy for 2023–2027 (the CALD Strategy) and corresponding Action Plan. The CALD Strategy and Action Plan will enable the NDIA to have a clear strategic approach to ensure that people with disability from CALD backgrounds, families and carers, can access and use the NDIS.

Since April 2023, the NDIA has:

- Completed engagement with people with disability from CALD backgrounds, nominees, families, carers, providers, and sector stakeholders to co-design actions to address identified challenges.
- Used insights from these engagement streams to develop the draft CALD Strategy and Action Plan. The Action Plan includes approximately 30 actions for the NDIA to implement over the coming years.

First Nations Strategy

The NDIA is progressing the development of a new First Nations Strategy, to replace the 2017 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy. The NDIA has publicly committed to working with First Nations people with disability, participants, the broader First Nations disability community, families, carers, and sector stakeholders to co-design a new First Nations Strategy.

Since April 2023, the NDIA has:

- Held the second First Nations Advisory Council (FNAC) meeting, which was an out-of-session virtual meeting on 6 June. The next in-person FNAC meeting has been confirmed for 25–26 July in Sydney.
- Continued to work with, and seek input on community engagement principles from, First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN), the FNAC, the Independent Advisory Council (IAC), and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group. This will inform the drafting of a stakeholder engagement plan for the co-design of the First Nations Strategy.
- Commenced planning to undertake broader public engagement consultations and co-design the First Nations Strategy with First Nations peoples with disability, participants, communities, representative organisations and service providers. Broader public engagement will commence once the stakeholder engagement plan is endorsed.

6.3 Valued input from the Independent Advisory Council

The IAC continues to provide valued advice to the NDIA Board and management.

The IAC continues to work with NDIA management and the NDIA Board to deliver advice to improve the NDIS. This quarter, the IAC has focused on working with the Minister for the NDIS and the NDIA on the key areas of reform announced in the Budget.

In April, IAC also held its first quarterly hybrid meeting since the start of the pandemic. The meeting was based in Tasmania and focused on learning more about the PACE Pilot, as well as meeting with local DRCOs and PiTC.

The IAC's Reference Groups held their official meetings. The Reference Groups are currently undergoing a review of membership and terms of reference. The refreshed Reference Groups will be announced by the Principal Member in Quarter 1 2023–24.

IAC has also endorsed the advice 'Improving the NDIS for children and young people: the importance of being guided by their voice' and is progressing work on the advice 'Enhancing behaviour support in the NDIA'.

More information about the IAC, including meeting bulletins, is available at the [IAC website](#)⁹⁶.

6.4 Public data sharing and the latest release of information

The NDIA continues to release timely data and analysis to stakeholders.

Data on key information about the Scheme is shared publicly to the [data.ndis.gov.au](#) website through interactive tools, download files and reports and analyses.

In this quarter the following public data downloads and reports were published on [data.ndis.gov.au](#).

On 19 May 2023, the second quarter updates were released to the [data downloads](#)⁹⁷ section along with the accompanying [data appendices](#)⁹⁸ to the Quarterly Report to Disability Ministers.

On 22 May 2023, [explore data](#)⁹⁹, an interactive visualisation tool was updated with second quarter data on participant, provider and market demographics.

On 29 May 2023, the second quarter data for the [Participant dashboards series](#)¹⁰⁰ was released, providing a data only update for each of the 13 primary disability types in the Scheme.

On 31 May 2023, easy read versions of the [Participant outcomes report](#)¹⁰¹ to 30 June 2022 and the [Families and carer outcomes report](#)¹⁰² to 30 June 2022 were published. The easy read versions provide a more accessible summary version of the outcomes reports released earlier this year.

Finally, on 16 June 2023, eight [SDA pricing review technical reports](#)¹⁰³ were published as part of the release of the final [SDA Pricing Review – Final Report](#)¹⁰⁴.

Several deep dive reports and analyses have also been released in previous quarters, these reports are available at [data.ndis.gov.au](#).

96 <https://www.ndis-iac.com.au/news>

97 <https://data.ndis.gov.au/data-downloads>

98 <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/quarterly-report-appendices>

99 <https://data.ndis.gov.au/explore-data>

100 <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/participant-dashboards>

101 <http://data.ndis.gov.au/media/3654/download?attachment>

102 <http://data.ndis.gov.au/media/3504/download?attachment>

103 <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/sda-pricing-review-technical-reports>

104 <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/housing-and-living-supports-and-services/specialist-disability-accommodation/sda-pricing-and-payments/sda-pricing-review>

6.5 Fraud and Compliance

The NDIA continues to identify and respond to compliance risks.

The NDIA has substantially boosted its investments in identifying and responding to fraud and compliance risks and improving the integrity of the NDIS. The October 2022–23 Budget invested \$126 million over four years to establish a Fraud Fusion Taskforce (FFT). The FFT brings together the NDIA, Services Australia, law enforcement agencies and regulators, to better enable intelligence sharing, identification and response to fraud perpetrated by serious organised crime entities and others seeking to exploit the Government's system of social supports. A key deliverable of the FFT is the development of strategic prevention capability that will be scalable and reusable across other Government programs and payments.

A further \$48.3 million was announced in the 2023–24 Budget to crack down on fraud and non-compliance in the Scheme by funding National Disability Insurance Agency staff and the development of a business case for ICT systems to detect, prevent and reduce non-compliant payments.

The NDIA has significantly increased its targeted compliance activity by regularly monitoring and responding to incorrect or unusual claims made by providers.

A key element of the NDIA's compliance approach is to collaborate with providers to raise awareness of their responsibilities and to educate them on how to be compliant when claiming. During Quarter 4, while work on proactive compliance cases continued, increased effort was directed towards assessing reactive compliance cases raised via tip-offs.

Quarter 4 continued to see an increase in the number of tip-offs received by the NDIA via the Fraud Reporting and Scams Helpline. The NDIA received 5,540 tip-offs in this quarter as compared to 2,519 for the same period in 2021–22. A total of 17,207 tip offs have been received this financial year, when compared with 9,673 from the same period last financial year.

As of 30 June 2023, there were 44 fraud matters under investigation and an additional 16 matters under preliminary evaluation for investigation. Of these, 14 matters are before the courts under prosecution, with a total alleged fraud value of \$15.5 million. Three matters scheduled for trial in Q3 were adjourned until Q1, Q3 and Q4 of FY2023/24. Two matters are scheduled for trial in the forthcoming quarter.

Key fraud investigation outcomes for Q4 FY2022/23 were:

- On 10 May 2023, search warrants were executed at the private and business residences of a Melbourne resident suspected of colluding with health professionals to facilitate access to the NDIS where applicants may not otherwise qualify for supports. An estimated fraud totalling \$1.5 million is alleged to have been committed. A brief of evidence is currently being compiled for Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions consideration.
- A multi-agency investigation resulted in four search warrants being executed across the Western Sydney premises of four NDIS service providers on 29 June 2023 alleged to have defrauded the Scheme of in excess of \$1.5 million. These providers, both registered and unregistered, are suspected of acting as a coordinated group to perpetrate significant fraud against the NDIS and other Commonwealth support programs. Evidence seized during the warrants is still being assessed, with charges expected to follow.

6.6 NDIA's new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) system

Real-time testing of the new ICT system in Tasmania.

NDIA is developing a fit-for-purpose ICT system

The NDIA is designing and building a new ICT business system, PACE. PACE is a fit-for-purpose business system and will be ready to replace the NDIA's current CRM, portals and payment systems.

PACE is being designed to be more user-friendly and make it easier for NDIA staff and partners to do their job, giving them more time to deliver a quality experience for participants and providers. The design and build of PACE have been strongly influenced through our ongoing consultation with participants, staff, partners and providers. It has also been influenced by the outcomes of prior consultation with participants.

Preparing to introduce our computer system nationally by the end of 2023

NDIA real-time testing of improved processes and our new computer system in Tasmania started in November 2022.

As at 30 June 2023, more than:

- **3,200** Tasmanian participants now have approved plans in our new ICT system.
- **600** new participants have had their access requests and plans developed in our new ICT system.
- **138,000** payments have been made in our new ICT system, equating to more than \$6 million in payments.

In May 2023, we released a [summary](https://www.ndis.gov.au/improvements/checking-your-feedback-tasmania-test)¹⁰⁵ of what we learnt in the Tasmania test between November 2022 and March 2023.

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/improvements/checking-your-feedback-tasmania-test>

6.7 Independent Expert Review model for dispute resolution

Independent Expert Review trial.

The Independent Expert Review (IER) trial officially commenced in October 2022 with the key objectives to:

- improve the participant's experience of the AAT process by making it faster and less adversarial
- reduce the number of matters needing to go through to hearing, reducing the external legal spend
- inform broader changes to the resolution of disputes arising from NDIA decisions.

The NDIA received funding in the October 2022 Budget of \$5.8 million for the FY22–23 to trial the IER to 30 June 2023. The DSS received \$6.6 million to fund legal advice and advocacy services for unrepresented participants in the trial, through the Independent Expert Review Advice Service (IERAS).

The IER trial was developed with participants, disability advocates, government stakeholders and the disability sector more broadly. The IER trial is one of the Alternative Dispute Resolution initiatives introduced by the NDIA to reduce the NDIS AAT case backlog, including introducing an early assessment team and intensive case reviews. The success of these measures has:

- resolved **6,232** cases since 1 June 2022
- reduced the active caseload by **35.2%** from **4,501** cases at 27 May 2022 to **2,915** at 2 July 2023
- resolved **85%** of the legacy AAT matters that were active in June 2022.

There was an initial expectation that a higher number of matters would proceed through the trial. However, the success of other NDIA initiatives has meant that there was lower than anticipated demand for the IER trial.

The IER trial concluded as of 30 June 2023, consistent with Budget funding. As part of the trial:

- the NDIA has issued **197** invitations to participate in the IER trial and **132** participants have accepted the invitation
- **106** matters have been referred to Independent Experts and recommendations have been received on **93** matters
- average timeframes for the IER process (from invitation to NDIA response to the Recommendation acceptance) is **46 days**
- the NDIA accepted approximately **90%** of recommendations in full or part with the majority of those matters proceeding to settlement under Tribunal orders made following s42C terms of agreement.

Work on the public facing consent-based Outcomes Register for anonymous IER matters is continuing. Key concerns in considering the publication of information regarding outcomes is ensuring privacy of participants, while providing sufficient information to be meaningful, recognising that NDIS decisions are complex, fact intensive, and highly dependent on the individual circumstances of the participant.

The NDIA's Research and Evaluation Branch is evaluating the IER trial to assess how effective it has been and an Evaluation Report is expected to be finalised late in July 2023.



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