Answer the following questions.

### General questions

* Do you have any specific feedback in relation to:
  + the increased focus on STEI outside of access to the Scheme
  + We have observed concerns where families do not meet Access criteria for NDIS however they have significant delays (eg language development) and the only options are to ‘go private’ for SLP which is frequently not affordable, or join a waitlist for State Child Development Centre services (approximately a 2 year wait list at the present time) & risk further delayed development
  + the proposed increase in age range for the EC Approach from under 7 to under 9 years of age,
  + This is desirable & will work in better with the school age transition points, provided this does not negatively impact current levels of core funding for children aged 7-9 years of age and, provided there is commitment from Education Departments to recognise this shift may well mean a delay in the availability of assessments to demonstrate a change in diagnosis from GDD to ID yet an ongoing need for tangible educational accommodations for children with disability aged 7-9 years of age and if schools require an ID diagnosis .
  + the desire to see more successful transitions from the Scheme to the next state of life. This sounds good in principle, but what is actually meant by “Successful transitions from the scheme to the next state of life”? What is considered a successful transition? When and why would a transition occur? If it is unsuccessful, does that not indicate that they were not ready to transition out of the scheme and still require NDIS support?
* How can we help families and carers better understand some of the terms the NDIA, and Early Childhood partners use such as:
* The terminology used by the scheme are not clearly comprehensible & could be simplified in the manner of easy-English eg;
  + best practice – most effective
  + capacity building - Therapies
  + natural settings, and/or – at home, school or in the community
  + evidence.- proof

### Support with achieving goals

* What is the best way for us to check in with families and carers on how their child is tracking to meet the goals for their child?
* This can be discussed during the annual / regular plan review process
* Would a mandatory early childhood provider report developed between families and their provider be useful for tracking against their goals?
* No. The Service Provider’s reports and recommendations as required at the end of each plan should suffice for this.
* How can we better support families to connect with services that are either funded or available to everyone in the community?
* For LAC’s to be appropriately trained so that they are aware of both funded and community-based accessible services available locally & to educate the mainstream services on how to ensure that they are providing accessible services.
* How can we make the process of transitioning out of the NDIS something to celebrate?
* Families would be well served to know that they still would have access to supports re-instated if required, rather than feeling that at time of transition they are ‘out for good ‘ with no access future access except by going through full Access process again
* **Targeted support**
* If you live in a remote or very remote part of Australia, what are some ideas you have on how we can get early childhood supports to work in your community or communities like yours?
* How can our Early Childhood partners and mainstream services best support peer-to-peer connections?
* Are you interested in helping us co-design an approach that would make peer-to-peer networks easier to find and join for people?
* How can we better reach and get support to young children and families who experience vulnerability and remove barriers so they can receive outcomes in line with other children and families?

### Tailored Independent Assessments (IAs) approach

It is recommended that the Agency implement a tailored Independent Assessments (IAs) approach for young children to support consistent access and planning decisions. Specifically, we are planning to:

* + Commission Early Childhood partners to administer Independent Assessments for young children rather than use a separate IA Assessor workforce
  + Use IAs for young children above 1 years of age
  + Use the following tools (as outlined in an appendix to the previously published [Independent Assessment Tools Paper](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/independent-assessments/independent-assessment-toolkit)):
    - Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) **OR** Ages and Stages Questionnaire -Talking About Raising Aboriginal Kids (ASQ-TRAK)
    - PEDI-CAT (Speedy) **OR** PEDI-CAT ASD (Speedy)
    - Vineland-3 Comprehensive (Interview Form)
    - Young Children's Participation and Environment Measure (YC-PEM) for children under 6 years
    - Participation and Environment Measure - Children and Youth (PEM-CY) for children 5+ years
* Do you have any feedback on this recommendation and/or any suggestions on how this proposed approach would work best for young children and their families/carers?

This assessment protocol does not adequately consider the needs of children with no speech, complex communication needs, challenging behaviours, mental health or severe/profound intellectual disability.

Additional risk is that the Assessor cannot take into account the usual presentation of the child as it is a one-off meeting which may occur on a typical or not typical day.

### Greater transparency on providers of best practice

It is recommended, from the previous consultation leading to this paper, that a range of mechanisms be considered to enhance providers’ compliance with best practice standards and to provide greater transparency on which providers, both registered and unregistered, are following Early Childhood Intervention best practice.

* What mechanisms do you think could help achieve this?
* Who would be best placed to lead the development of, and manage, any additional complementary mechanisms?
* What do you think of the following ideas for potential mechanisms? What are the benefits or concerns with these potential mechanisms?
  + Provide greater information to families about the benefits of using providers registered by the NDIS Commission. Why? What are the benefits?
  + Establish an industry-led 'best practice accreditation system'.
  + Establish a 'quality feedback / rating system'.
  + A frequent complaint from families is that there is not a good,NDIS provided & easily accessible listing of Registered Providers (eg Therapists) from which participants can select their locally based providers. This would making ‘finding’ providers
  + Make registration with the NDIS Commission mandatory for all providers operating in the EC space.
  + No this takes away the basic tenant of choice & control in the scheme
  + Require self and plan-managed participants in the new Early Childhood approach to use only registered providers.
  + No this takes away the basic tenant of choice & control in the scheme