07 September 2021

NDIA

Home and Living Policy Community Consultation

Dear NDIA,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation paper, An Ordinary Life at Home, which will inform the NDIA’s new Home and Living policy.

BlueCHP currently provides 610 disability client places being a mixture of SDA and non-SDA housing and continues to expand it disability housing offering.

BlueCHP believes the best way to support NDIS recipients, including those who receive SDA funding, is to provide as much flexibility as possible over spending decisions. We note that in the consultation paper this ambition is articulated, and note that the funding structures for supports will soon be simplified, with care supports and capital supports being separated, with increasing discretion over how funds can be spent.

BlueCHP welcomes this intent, however currently the implementation of the SDA program is working in conflict with this intent. Currently, the NDIA exercises excessive control over participant spending. We are concerned by recent trends that include the NDIA not approving SDA for categories it deems too expensive, like apartments. Often apartments are preferred by people who wish to live on their own, however it appears the NDIA has determined that the associated SIL costs for this dwelling type will be excessive. If this trend continues, choice and control will be consistently contradicted. We believe that to achieve the desired outcome further thought and creating an environment to stimulate innovation is required.

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BlueCHP is also concerned that in the Robust category, funding remains insufficient for people with high needs who need to live on their own. Often these people cannot live with others because of safety concerns. Insufficient funding simply denies these people access to appropriate accommodation and because of their behavioral issues, ensures they remain a risk to themselves and the broader community. Giving participants more flexibility, even between care and capital spending could be part of the solution.

On a broader issue the NDIA has not fully utilised the skills of Community Housing Providers (CHPs). The CHP sector currently houses some 35,000 people on the Disability Support Pension (DSP). As a sector we are national in coverage, highly regulated and can deliver a broad range of housing options. CHPs continue to innovate, and some CHPs have developed real estate businesses. Utilising CHPs would bring consistency to a very fragmented market and simplify the myriad of choices clients face, which often leads to confusion and anxiety. As a regulated industry with high standards clients can source housing options with confidence for SDA and non-SDA housing.

BlueCHP is Australia’s largest developer of new SDA, having recently completed the Hunter Residences Program for the NSW Government. Through Guide You Home, BlueCHP’s SDA initiative, we aim to support 1250 people over the next 5 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation, I we would be more than happy to provide more detail if required.

Yours sincerely

Charles Northcote Chief Executive Officer BlueCHP Limited

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**Home and Living consultation submission**

**Organisation:** BlueCHP (National)

**Date and time submitted:** 9/7/2021 8:07:00 AM

**How do you identify:** A representative of an organisation or group (as detailed above)

# **Do you talk to people about how you would like to live?**

Yes

## **If not, why not?**

* I’m happy with my current arrangements:
* I don’t think I have the money to make changes:
* I don’t know where to start:
* I’m comfortable thinking about it on my own:
* I don’t want to talk about it:
* Other – please describe:

## **What kinds of things do you talk about / would want to talk about?**

* Who I want to live with: Yes
* Where I want to live: Yes
* What supports the NDIS funds: Yes
* What options are available: Yes
* What other people have done: No
* Not sure: No
* Not Applicable: No
* Other – please describe: No

# **Where would you like to get information to think about where and how you live?**

* Internet: Yes
* Social media: Yes
* Service providers: Yes
* Support Coordinator / LACs: Yes
* NDIS / NDIS website: Yes
* Friends and family: Yes
* Other participants / peers: Yes
* Government websites: Yes
* Peak bodies / advocacy groups: Yes
* Other – please describe: No

# **What information, learning and resources could we create to help you choose your home and living supports?**

* Examples of what options other people with disability might have chosen: Yes
* Someone to talk through my options with me: Yes
* Information that I can take away and read on my own: Yes
* Information given to providers: Yes
* Opportunities to talk with NDIS representatives on new options: No
* Other – please describe: No

# **How helpful is the NDIS website to find information on home and living supports?**

I've never looked

## **What would improve the helpfulness of home and living information on the website?**

No answer recorded

# **Would it be helpful if your informal supports (e.g. friends, family and carers) knew more about how and where you want to live?**

Yes

## **How can we work better with your informal supports to help them know more?**

No answer recorded

# **If your NDIS funding was more flexible, would you purchase different support/s for your home life than what you have now?**

Yes

## **Such as?**

No answer recorded

# **Who helps you to organise your NDIS supports?**

* Formal support, such as a support coordinator / LAC / NDIA planner or delegate: Yes
* Informal support, such as family / friends / carer / peer support networks / mentors: No
* No one / I self-manage my funds: No
* Other – please describe: No

## **How helpful is using formal supports?**

Somewhat helpful

## **How helpful is using informal supports?**

No answer recorded

## **How helpful is using other supports?**

No answer recorded

# **Have you ever used peer support networks or a mentor to find / access NDIS supports?**

Not sure

# **Of the following options, who would you be most likely to use to help you implement your plan?**

* Peer support networks: Extremely likely
* Mentors: Extremely likely
* Specialised home and living support coordinators: Extremely likely
* Support coordinator / LAC: Extremely likely
* NDIA planner / delegate: Extremely likely
* Family and friends: Extremely likely
* Other – please describe: Extremely likely

# **How would you like to encourage providers to offer new and innovative service options?**

* Pricing incentives for providers: Yes
* Recognition of innovative providers: Yes
* Newsletters: Yes
* Showcases: Yes
* Participant reviews and ratings: Yes
* Other – please describe: No

# **Appendix D (see consultation paper) lists options for actions we could take to improve home and living in the NDIS. What other ideas would you add to Appendix D?**

No answer recorded

# **Do you identify as:**

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander? No
* From a culturally and linguistically diverse background? No
* Living in a rural and remote area? No
* LGBTIQA? No
* Having a psychosocial disability? No

# **Is there something you would like to see in a home and living policy specific to your response in previous question 12?**

# **Is there anything else you would like to add?**

No response recorded