

# Participant Reference Group

## Meeting summary – 12 March 2025

The Participant Reference Group (PRG) makes sure the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) hears and understands the participant voice. The PRG has 23 members from participant and carer organisations across Australia.

The NDIA uses feedback from PRG meetings to keep making the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) better. PRG members work on what the NDIA plans to do. They work on new and current policies, improving the systems we use, and how we deliver services.

### Chairperson's welcome

Donna Purcell is the Branch Manager, Office of the Participant Advocate, and chair of the PRG. She welcomed members to the first virtual PRG meeting of the year.

### Session 1 – Accountability statement

The NDIA said we worked with the PRG in 2024 to create the accountability statement.

We asked PRG members to look at it before the May meeting. We asked them to see if there are any gaps or anything we need to change.

### Session 2 – Long-Term Vision for changes to the NDIS

The NDIS Review gave recommendations about services outside of the NDIS. These are called foundational supports. Foundational supports will be available for all people who have a disability.

The Department of Social Services will set up foundational supports.

PRG members said nobody knows what those other government agencies are meant to be doing. They said other government agencies think they do not need to do anything once someone is an NDIS participant.

PRG members said five-year participant plans and foundational supports will not work if the participant's plan is not right. The NDIA said we have a project that is working on getting participant plans right. It includes several co-design activities.

The NDIS Review gave recommendations and actions about how to improve the NDIS for people with disability and children with developmental delay. It did not say how the recommendations will impact the participant experience.

The NDIA is working with participants over the next 5 years to define what the participant experience should be. We will co-design this with participants. We call this Scheme Reforms.

PRG members asked how the NDIA uses co-design. The NDIA said we will ask the Co-design branch to come to a future PRG meeting to talk about their work.

The NDIA has worked with NDIS participants and people who work in the disability sector. They have helped us create a draft document. It is called the Long-Term Vision for changes to the NDIS. We will show you this draft document today.

PRG members asked about the people who helped make the draft document. They said the NDIS participant voice was more important than the voice of people working in the disability sector.

The NDIA said the NDIS participant voice is the most important voice in our design. We said that most of the disability sector representatives we work with are also NDIS participants. They bring experience from living with a disability and working in the disability sector.

PRG members said the language needs to be fixed. The NDIA said we want to work out the best words to use. We said PRG members could make suggestions during the breakout activities for different words.

PRG members said a lot of disability organisations have lost their government funding and have closed. They said there is a lot of anxiety and people do not know where to go. They said there are no community supports. They said the education system has not put anything into place.

### **Activity – Long-Term Vision for changes to the NDIS**

PRG members said everyone involved with the NDIS needs to remember to keep the participant at the centre of everything.

PRG members said terms like check in and eligibility reassessment need more descriptions. They said a check in was more likely to mean at an airport.

PRG members said the document did not have a lot of detail about what was going to be done. They said there needs to be transparency about what the NDIA intends to do.

### **Activity – communication tools**

PRG members said people get information in different ways. They said the NDIA needs to communicate in lots of different ways.

PRG members said there is a lot of outdated information on the internet, for example YouTube and the NDIS website. They said this needs to be cleaned up.

PRG members said the term reassessment has been in the legislation for a few years now. They said people may not know what it means. They said when the NDIA talks about changes, we need to explain language and terms that already exist.

PRG members said there is a need for accessible plain English documents. They need to be easy to find and easy to read.

### **Final comments and close**

The co-design team provided an email address. They said PRG members can send more feedback if they think of other things.

Donna thanked PRG members for their time and contribution.

### **Next meeting**

Wednesday 9 April 2025

End of document