15 May 2024

The Australian Government will continue delivering better outcomes for the more than one in six Australians with disability by boosting investments in disability employment and the NDIS.

Following the key findings from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability released last year and the independent Review of the NDIS, the 2024-25 Budget drives quality employment outcomes, strengthens evidence-based approaches to disability support and ensures people with disability can continue to seek independent advice, raise concerns or make complaints in relation to supports outside the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

A new Specialist Disability Employment Program

The Budget advances the Government's commitment to a more inclusive Australia where people with disability have equal opportunities to gain employment.

Our Government has committed an additional $227.6 million, bringing the total funding to $5.4 billion over the next five years to help more people with disability prepare for and find suitable employment including through a new specialised disability employment program commencing on 1 July 2025.

This includes investing in a modern digital platform to deliver better supports to providers and participants and undertaking a procurement to ensure there is a strong, viable market with more specialist providers and increased participant choice.

The new program will seek to shift the culture in employment services for people with disability and set an expectation of high-quality services that delivers on an individual's unique needs. There will be increased flexibility and tailored supports that will better support people with disability and create diverse pathways to find and keep a job, including a single wage subsidy of up to $10,000.

Disability Employment Centre of Excellence

The Government has also committed $23.3 million in funding over four years to establish a Disability Employment Centre of Excellence. The Centre of Excellence will build the capacity of employment service providers to deliver higher quality, more effective services.

The Centre will be established to share innovation and best practice and lift the capacity for a wide range of employment services providers, including those involved in Disability Employment Services, Workforce Australia, Community Development Program and Australian

Disability Enterprises.

The Government's commitment to reforming disability employment in Australia is built on the eight principles for reform outlined in the Government's 2023 Employment White Paper. It also responds to key findings from the Royal Commission and will see an additional 15,000 people with disability able to access the program each year.

The new and improved Specialised Disability Employment program will strike a balance between the needs of employees and job seekers with disability and employers, so they can thrive together in inclusive workplaces.

People with disability deserve no less than excellence in their services and to ensure this, we need to invest in a quality, evidence-based disability employment system.

NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee

The Australian Government has committed $45.5 million over four years (and $13.3 million per year ongoing) from 2024–25 to establish an NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee (NDIS EAC), a key recommendation of the Independent NDIS Review.

The NDIS EAC will provide independent and transparent advice to Government on what works for participants.

The Committee will provide advice on the evidence base for therapeutic supports accessed through the NDIS, improving outcomes and ensuring better value for participants. This will ensure the supports funded under the Scheme are beneficial, safe, evidence based and cost effective.

We have seen too many times what can go wrong when therapies are used that have no evidence that they will work.

This Budget measure will help the Scheme by having an independent and transparent advice mechanism to determine the efficacy and cost-benefits of 'reasonable and necessary' supports, to ensure the NDIS is sustainable and here for future generations of Australians.

National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service

People with disability will benefit from $2.6 million in additional support for the continued delivery of the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution

and Referral Service.

The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service provide a channel through which people across Australia can confidentially report abuse and neglect of people with disability and raise concerns or make complaints about Australian Government funded disability services outside the NDIS.

This additional funding will help ensure service continuity, allowing people with disability to access fair, impartial and independent advice and to voice their concerns regarding the delivery of supports.

We all have a key role to play in protecting the safety and wellbeing of people with disability, but we recognise that when things do go wrong, having access to independent complaint channels is crucial.

The Government is pleased to support the valued work of the Hotline and Complaints Resolution and Referral Service and its commitment to a ‘no-wrong-door’ approach, meaning people with disability can access help when they need it most.

Our Australian Government will continue to work with people with disability and their representatives to ensure a safer, more inclusive future for all Australians with disability.

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