18 December 2025

The Children’s Expert Advisory Group (CEAG) met on 18 December 2025. The meeting was held online.

Focus of the meeting

The Chair, Amity Durham, Deputy CEO, Children, Specialised Services and Scheme Interfaces, National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) opened the meeting.

The focus of the December 2025 meeting included updates on work to review the pricing of NDIS supports, early work developing a new support needs assessment approach for young children in the NDIS, and outcomes from workshops held with members out of session.

Market reforms – pricing update

The NDIA has released 2 discussion papers and surveys seeking input to the Annual Pricing Review.

The NDIA has also published a 3-year work plan to show what pricing review work is coming up.

The NDIA is moving to a new pricing system that better reflects the real cost of services and the benefits for participants.

Next year, the NDIA will run more quality supports pilots that are designed for the NDIA to work with the sector to get evidence to help shape the new pricing model.

Members provided the following feedback:

- The NDIA needs to clearly explain the new pricing system and how it will support provider training and workforce development.
- Price settings must assist in supporting safe and high-quality services.
- The quality supports pilots need to clearly reflect how children’s services work, across all providers.
- The NDIA should use both pricing and non-pricing approaches to support safe and effective services.

Support needs assessment

The NDIA gave an update on early work to develop a new support needs assessment approach for children younger than 9. A support needs assessment will be part of new approach to planning, called new framework planning. No timeframes have yet been set for introducing new

framework planning for children.

Extensive work has been undertaken to review a wide range of standardised assessment tools for children younger than 16, including tools identified through a public 'Request for Information' issued in early 2025.

To align with best practice principles and evidence, a support needs assessment approach for children should be culturally safe and developmentally suitable, strengths based and include assessment of functioning, environment and support needs relevant to children and their families.

Members provided the following feedback:

- Aligning work with the development of the future Thriving Kids program to reduce duplication of work and create a more integrated system for families.
- Ensure assessors work in culturally safe and developmentally appropriate ways that recognise children’s strengths.
- Consider the child’s broader environment when assessing their needs and avoid repeated assessments unless necessary.

Workshop outcomes

The NDIA summarised the key outcomes from two workshops held on 27 November and 8 December 2025.

The 27 November workshop discussed early ideas for new framework planning with young people aged 9–15. It looked at how clear language, good timing and privacy can support better assessment conversations.

- The session discussed assessor qualifications and the need to show support options outside the NDIS. It highlighted the value of three-way conversations between the young person, their parent or carer, and the NDIA.

The 8 December workshop focused on guiding principles for Agency decision-making on operational policy for children and young people in the NDIS, and the use of strengths-based language.

Members provided the following feedback:

- Guidance for Agency staff should clearly show differences between age groups to support consistent decision-making.
- A simple digital checklist for ages 0–6, 6–12 and 12–18 may help participants, families, carers and staff understand what to consider at each stage.

- Guidance should use consistent age-related terms and clearly reflect the child’s own voice and participation in the decision-making process.

Children’s Expert Advisory Group next meeting

The next Children’s Expert Advisory Group meeting is Thursday, 26 February 2026

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