Delivering the NDIS plan: new data demonstrates significant drop in NDIS wait times for families

12 February 2020

New data released today demonstrates backlogs for children with disability in accessing Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme has been slashed over the last six months.

Minister for the NDIS, Stuart Robert, today released the latest COAG NDIS Quarterly Report (1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019) that shows:

- The average wait time for children aged 0-6 years to meet NDIS access has reduced from 43 days in June 2019 to an average of less than 3 days in December 2019.
- The average wait time for children currently awaiting a plan has reduced from 104 days at 30 June 2019 to 44 days as at 31 December 2019.
- The average wait time for children from meeting NDIS access to receiving an NDIS approved plan has reduced from 129 days in June 2019 to 54 days in December 2019.
- The number of children waiting greater than 50 days for an NDIS Plan after meeting access reduced from 4,208 at the beginning of June to 712 at 31 December 2019.

The data also shows the NDIS continues to support children in increasing numbers, with 35 per cent of new participants this past quarter in the 0-6 age group, bringing the total of children aged 0-6 in the Scheme to more than 50,000.

There are now 338,982 Australians benefitting from the NDIS as at 31 December 2019, including 134,455 people receiving disability supports for the first time — 40 per cent of the total number of participants.

Minister for NDIS, Stuart Robert, said it was pleasing to see continued progress of the world leading Scheme as part of the Australian Government’s commitment to deliver the last 20 per cent of the NDIS.

‘It is really encouraging to see more Australians than ever before are now receiving disability supports, to ensure they can lead an active and independent life,’ Minister Robert said.

‘It is especially pleasing to see the hard work from the National Disability Insurance Agency is delivering real change to the time taken to access these life changing supports – which many people are receiving for the very first time.

‘There has been a significant amount of work done in ensuring all families and children can access the NDIS as soon as possible, it is reassuring to see this sustained progress.

‘The Australian Government is committed to ensuring wait times and the quality of service provided by the NDIA continues to improve, which is why at the last election we committed to the introduction of a new Participant Service Guarantee from 1 July 2020.

‘Just last month we released the Tune Review of the NDIS Act. It recommended that participants – across all ages – wait less than 70 days from having their access confirmed to having a plan approved from 1 July 2020 and no more than 56 days from 1 July 2021.

‘While acknowledging there is more work to be done, current average wait times in the ECEI pathway are already less than these Tune Review recommendations.’

Over the course of the last six months, the Government has announced and implemented a series of changes to the NDIS, including ICT system enhancements to better record information on families and children receiving support and assistance through the ECEI pathway. This provides the NDIA with better visibility to monitor and respond to volumes and wait times in the ECEI.

The NDIA is continuing to work closely with its Early Childhood Partners to further reduce ECEI gateway volumes and wait times.

Progress is also being made on the Government’s action plan to reduce the number of people entering and living in aged care.

New data shows the number of young people in residential aged care has decreased by 13 per cent since March 2017, with less young people now entering residential aged care – down 39 per cent since the June 2017 quarter.

The Q2 2019-2020 COAG NDIS Quarterly Report and accompanying information is now available.

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