

Note: the information on this page was correct at the time of publishing. Find the latest information visit on [Independent assessments](#).

Today we have released a number of consultation papers that explain the proposed changes to the Scheme - what the changes are, how the changes may work and what the changes will mean for participants.

We invite people with disability, participants, their families and carers, and the wider disability sector to have their say on how to deliver changes to improve the Scheme and make the NDIS simpler, faster, fairer and more flexible.

The papers explain how the proposed changes to major aspects of the Scheme:

- how people with disability will access the NDIS
- how planning will work with the introduction of independent assessments and plan flexibility
- how the NDIS can better support young children and their families to access early intervention services.

Many of the improvements we've outlined in the consultation papers will require changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013.

Yesterday [Minister Robert announced](#) the release of a Department of Social Services (DSS) paper on the proposed changes to the Act to support a range of reforms to the Scheme, including those proposed in the Tune Review. The paper is available on the [DSS website](#) . DSS is expected to release draft changes to the NDIS Act for feedback in early 2021.

Combined with the Service Charter and Participant Service Improvement Plan released earlier this year, the DSS information paper and our consultation papers set out a road map for reform to improve the NDIS.

The papers are:

Access and eligibility policy for independent assessments

This policy comes into effect in mid-2021. This paper explains and invites feedback about:

- how independent assessments will be used to help determine eligibility for the NDIS
- when people might be exempted from completing an independent assessment
- what information people applying to access the NDIS will have to provide as part of the access process

- how we will remove the access lists used during the transition to the NDIS
- the process for eligibility reassessments.

Find out more about the [access and eligibility policy for independent assessments](#).

Planning policy for personalised budgets and plan flexibility

This policy comes into effect late 2021. This paper explains and invites feedback about:

- how independent assessments will be used to help determine a participant's NDIS budget
- how participants will have more flexibility in their NDIS budgets
- where funding will be 'fixed' (not flexible)
- plan implementation
- making changes to NDIS plans and check-ins.

Find out more about the [planning policy for personalised budgets and plan flexibility](#).

ECEI Implementation Reset project consultation report and Supporting young children and their families early, to reach their full potential

- These two papers cover the ECEI Implementation Reset project with the background to the project for context, areas for improvement and further detail on how best practice is intended to work.
- We will implement components of the new Early Childhood approach from early 2021 through to 2022.
- The shorter Supporting young children and their families early, to reach their full potential paper invites feedback about:
 - the age group best suited to receive early childhood services and whether this should be changed from under seven years of age, to under nine years
 - how independent assessments will be used to determine eligibility and budgets for participants over 12 months of age
 - Short Term Early Intervention (STEI), which is the early support that is offered whether or not a child is eligible for the NDIS
 - planning and implementation of best practice supports
 - support children and families to exit the Scheme and start the next stage of their life.

Find out more about the [Supporting young children and their families early, to reach their full potential paper](#).

All four papers are available on the [Have your say](#) page. Easy Read versions of these papers are also available.

We have also released an [appendix to the Independent Assessment Tools paper](#), outlining the assessment tools we will be using for young children aged one to six, and the process the Agency undertook to evaluate and determine the most appropriate tools.

All of our papers are open for submission until 23 February 2021.

We are committed to consulting with you, listening and explaining our decisions as we go. In our Participant Service Charter, we committed to empowering participants by including people with disability and the community in developing and testing our processes.

I would like to personally invite your organisations and your members to make a submission, either in writing or in audio or video format. By providing your feedback you'll be helping us deliver a more consistent and equitable experience for all people with disability accessing the NDIS and participants already in the Scheme.

This three month consultation period will allow us to collect and review feedback before we begin rolling out these improvements. This means independent assessments for access will commence in mid-2021 rather than the beginning of next year as originally planned. We recognise the need to take the time to get this right. By moving the introduction of independent assessments to later next year, we have more time to complete our second pilot and receive feedback directly from participants.

A consultation pack will be sent to you next week to support you in making your organisation's submissions, and in encouraging your members to make a submission. We'll provide updated advice as required throughout the consultation period.

If you have any questions about the consultation process, please email stakeholder.engagement@ndis.gov.au

We want to make the Scheme the best it can be for participants now and in the years to come. We need your help to ensure the proposed changes result in a Scheme that works for everyone, so we encourage you to have your say.

I look forward to hearing your views on the future of the NDIS and working together to improve the NDIS for people with disability and participants.

Regards
Martin

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