26 August 2022

The purpose of this communique is to detail the key outcomes of the Co-design Advisory Group's 12th meeting, which took place on Wednesday 10 August 2022.

The primary purpose of the Co-design Advisory Group is for the Independent Advisory Council (IAC), Department of Social Services (DSS) and the disability sector to provide strategic advice to the NDIA on the implementation of co-design and engagement processes within the disability community.

The Co-design Advisory Group works collaboratively to:

- ensure disability community perspectives on issues facing the NDIS are represented
- gather feedback on the co-design priorities and approaches with peers and members and
- provide and receive strategic advice on the design, implementation and evaluation of co-design and engagement, among other things.

The following members and NDIA representatives were in attendance.

Chairperson

- Jamie Lowe, NDIA General Manager, Communications and Engagement

Members

- Ross Joyce, CEO, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Mary Sayers, CEO, Children and Young People with Disability Australia
- Ellen Skladzien, CEO, Down Syndrome Australia
- Neha Prakash, A/g CEO, National Ethnic Disability Alliance
- Lean Van Poppel, Principal, IAC
- Sharon Boyce, IAC
- Leighton Jay, IAC
- Jennifer Cullen, IAC
- Julie Yeend, DSS

NDIA representatives

- Sam Bennett, General Manager, Policy, Advice and Research
- Joshua Ng, Branch Manager, Strategy
- Liz Callaghan, Branch Manager, Co-design and Engagement

- Jess Walker, Branch Manager, Agency Policy
- Kate Judd, Assistant Director, Co-design and Engagement Branch
- Alexander Gillingham, A/g Director, Media and Marketing Branch

Secretariat

- Matthew Wright, Director, Sector Engagement and Advice
- Caitlin Haddad, Assistant Director, Sector Engagement and Advice
- Jo Chadwick, Engagement Administrative Support, Sector Engagement and Advice

Apologies

- David Gifford, Deputy Scheme Actuary
- Donna Purcell, Branch Manager, Participant Advocate

Meeting summary

The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land, paying respect to their Elders, past and present, and also paid respects to people with disability.

Co-design project update

The Chair introduced Sam Bennett, NDIA General Manager, Policy Advice and Research who provided an update on the 6 co-design projects currently underway:

- There are currently 25 workshop engagements across all of the co-design projects
- These projects are primarily focused on developing a policy, which will need further work on implementation later down the track
- The NDIA is making sure diverse voices are heard by working with Disability and Carer Representative Organisation’s (DRCOs) and their networks to connect with diverse communities
- Emphasis was placed on the NDIA’s commitment to ‘learn by doing,’ which means that each co-design project has a different approach
- The NDIA will continue to provide updates to the Co-design Advisory Group and get further feedback from the disability sector and the IAC.
- The NDIA will host out of session workshops on the 4 co-design projects with the Independent Advisory Council, the DRCO Forum, and other key stakeholder groups in September/October 2022.

Sam introduced his colleague Joshua Ng, NDIA Branch Manager, Strategy to provide an update on the Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) strategy and the First Nations strategy:

- The strategies are currently in the 'discovery phase' with many focus groups and engagement sessions underway
- An EOI process will be undertaken soon to confirm membership of a First Nations Strategy steering committee including the nomination of a First Nations Strategy Champion

In response to the co-design project update, Co-design Advisory Group members provided the following feedback:

- Request for the NDIA to consider the importance of ensuring the safety of children and young people from abuse and reflecting this in the Participant Safety co-design project
- Ensure there is two-way communications between the Co-design Steering Committees and the DRCOs.

This feedback was acknowledged by the NDIA, noting:

- the Participant Safety policy is an umbrella policy, and further work on safety for particular cohorts may be done subsequent to the release of the policy.
- Feedback from the Information Gathering and Planning (IGA) survey will be collated and communicated to the DRCOs. This survey has already received over 1000 responses and will close soon.

'Have your say' website refresh and communications plan

The Chair introduced Kate Judd and Alex Gillingham from the Communications and Engagement Division to provide an update on the 'Have your say' website refresh project and communications plan.

The NDIA is refreshing the 'Have your say' section of the website to make it easier to read for to easily read and access engagement opportunities, and follow how they are progressing

The presentation and project was well received by the Co-design Advisory Group who provided further feedback to the NDIA to consider, including:

- Incorporating a page that shows the actions the NDIA has taken on specific projects
- Ensuring that information is available in different languages and
- Including a link to the NDIA's general feedback/complaints form in this part of the website.

The NDIA committed to reviewing these suggestions and encouraged Co-design Advisory Group members to provide more feedback after the meeting.

Co-design Evaluation Framework update

The Chair introduced Liz Callaghan, Branch Manager, Co-design and Engagement to provide an update on the Co-design Evaluation Framework.

This project is an important piece of work which will be led by an external consultant.

The NDIA is currently reviewing recommendations of preferred external consultants provided by the Co-design Advisory Group. This review is in line with Commonwealth procurement guidelines. An update will be provided to the Co-design Advisory Group members by September 2022.

Meeting close

The Chair farewelled Mary Sayers who will finish her role as CEO, Children and Young People with Disability Australia on 26 August 2022. The Chair thanked Mary for her invaluable advocacy and input over the last few years and wished her well in her next endeavours.

The Co-design Advisory Group meeting concluded with the Chair acknowledging the enormous amount of work and contributions of Co-design Advisory Group members in improving the NDIS.

The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 13 September 2022.
If you have any feedback or questions about the Co-design Advisory Group, please email stakeholder.engagement@ndis.gov.au.

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