Media Release from the Minister - Participants to have greater say through supported decision making

3 May 2023

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants will have greater support to make their own decisions about their NDIS journey, with the release of the new Supported Decision Making Policy.

This Policy, a result of one of the Agency's co-design projects, will support and empower participants to take control over this part of their lives.

It was developed in close collaboration with people with disability who will benefit most from supported decision making, including those with complex communication access needs, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with an intellectual or psychosocial disability, or who identify as LGBTQIA+ and First Nations.

Supported decision making is the process of providing support to people to make decisions to remain in control of their lives.

The implementation plan has 5 key themes for the NDIA to action, these are:

- Increase opportunities for participants to make decisions
- Support participants to develop skills and knowledge
- Build skills and knowledge of decision supporters
- Build skills and knowledge of NDIA staff and partners
- Strengthen the supported decision making approach in the appointment, operation and review of nominees.

Minister for the NDIS Bill Shorten said this policy leveraged the disability community's expertise to co-design policy that will empower people with disabilities to make their own decisions about their own lives.

"People with disability have the right to make their own decisions and have those decisions respected," Mr Shorten said.

"The Supported Decision Making Policy takes a rights-based approach to assist participants to make decisions in the NDIS, while building the skills and knowledge of decision supporters, NDIA staff and partners."

The NDIA also partnered with Inclusion Australia, the national peak body that represents people with intellectual disability, to lead the co-design sessions with people with disability.

Inclusion Australia CEO, Catherine McAlpine said the feedback will build a strong and shared understanding of challenges faced, and how suggested recommendations and solutions may be

appropriately integrated into the NDIS.

“Supporting people with disability to make decisions is a shared, system wide responsibility between people, organisations and levels of government. While the policy will uplift supported decision making for NDIS related decisions, all levels of government have a key role to ensure people with disability have choice and control over all the decisions in their lives,” Ms McAlpine said.

NDIS participant Luke Nelson co-facilitated the sessions, helping attendees feel comfortable to express their thoughts.

“I think this policy will give people with disability a chance to know that supported decision making is a real thing, that it can be delivered and that the NDIA is willing to work with people with disability to make them feel included,” he said.

Please view the Supported Decision Making Policy.

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