18 February 2024

The Australian Government will provide initial funding of $83.9 million to strengthen the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and make sure every dollar is going to participants who need it.

The new funding will go towards the Crack Down on Fraud program and will boost fraud-detecting IT systems to better protect monies allocated to Australians living with disability who are on the NDIS.

The National Disability Insurance Agency will use the funding for a number of fraud-busting IT activities, including:

- building a new fraud case management system that will interact with other enforcement agencies;
- building new IT systems to connect with other agencies, providers and banks so that transactions can be actioned faster with reduced errors;
- improving the systems that assess, process and pay over 400,000 NDIS claims per day;
- improving identity proofing systems to increase safety and privacy; and
- improving the NDIS mobile app and online interfaces.

The program and the funding will also help safeguard the sustainability of the Scheme, and ensuring that legitimate participants continue to have access to supports and services they need to thrive.

This investment will complement the work of the Fraud Fusion Taskforce and has been designed to respond to areas of vulnerability that have been identified by the intelligence and analytics obtained by the Taskforce since it commenced in November 2022.

Minister for the NDIS Bill Shorten MP said the new program reflects the Government's commitment to get the NDIS back on track and restore Australia's trust in the scheme's ability to meet the needs of participants now and into the future.

"The Crack Down on Fraud program includes a number of ICT improvements that will be implemented progressively and are designed to make it easier to get it right, and harder to get it wrong for everyone engaging with the scheme" Minister Shorten said.

"This investment is not only about catching criminals who may target Australians living with disability, but also enhancing the systems we have in place to detect and prevent fraud and non-compliant activity.

"The Crack Down on Fraud program represents significant further progress in safeguarding the Scheme's integrity, and will not only optimise NDIS resources, but will also ensure that honest participants who depend on the Scheme can be better supported into the future."

The Government recognises that stakeholder collaboration lies at the heart of responsive policy, and will ensure the voices and perspectives of NDIS participants, their carers and families, and those in the disability sector inform the new program's design.

"We have already started consulting with the disability community and will continue to do so, to ensure that participants are fully supported in transitioning to the improved systems", Minister Shorten said.

"One of the key Independent NDIS Review observations was concerns around integrity of the scheme. This is a critical area of reform because it's our fellow Australians with a disability who suffer most from any fraud and exploitation in the NDIS."

The NDIS review recommended that the Australian Government invest in the underpinning digital infrastructure and capability needed to protect the integrity of the NDIS.

"This investment is another step in the right direction in protecting the Scheme's integrity and sustainability, and ensuring the NDIS reaches its full potential," Minister Shorten said.

To ensure all NDIS participants can understand the upcoming changes, the Government is developing accessible communication materials, including AUSLAN, Braille and Easy Read.

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