

**DISABILITY REFORM MINISTERS' MEETING**  
**TELEPRESENCE – 15 APRIL 2021**

**COMMUNIQUÉ**

Commonwealth, state and territory disability ministers met on 15 April 2021 by telepresence. Ministers welcomed the new Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Minister for Government Services, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC, as Chairperson. Ministers also welcomed the new Western Australian Minister for Disability, the Hon Don Punch MLA.

Ministers discussed progress on the development of the new National Disability Strategy (NDS). The NDS will be finalised in the second half of 2021.

To support the NDS, Ministers agreed the development of Targeted Action Plans. The Plans will include specific deliverables that will improve outcomes for people with disability. Ministers agreed initial action plans should cover employment, community attitudes, early childhood, emergency management and safety.

Ministers discussed proposed reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), including the NDIS Participant Service Guarantee, the recommendations of the 2019 Independent Review of the NDIS Act, and the pilot currently underway of independent assessments. Ministers discussed the concerns raised by the sector in relation to independent assessments and the importance of further comprehensive consultation with states and territories, the disability sector and people with disability occurring. The NDIA will provide detailed briefings to each Minister on conduct of the pilot to date. Ministers agreed their next meeting, to occur in July this year, will focus on considering the outcomes of the independent assessments trials and the results of these further consultations, prior to finalising the proposed reforms.

Minister Reynolds confirmed she would take time to consult further with state and territory disability ministers and with the disability sector on draft legislation and proposed reforms to the NDIS.

Ministers agreed information in relation to financial performance of the scheme will be made available to all Ministers on a quarterly basis to enable ministers to continue to monitor scheme sustainability and performance.

Ministers discussed the progress jurisdictions have made towards implementing the National Principles for Restrictive Practices Authorisation.

Ministers noted the status of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, and in particular the concerns raised by disability stakeholders about delays in the rollout of Phase 1A. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring a safe and effective rollout to all people with disability and those who support them.

Ministers discussed their revised priorities for 2021 and agreed to finalise a comprehensive workplan out-of-session to ensure the staging of reforms and critical issues occur in a cohesive and well structured manner.

Tasmania is currently in caretaker mode, and as a result the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MLA was unable to attend.