



National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

The *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020* was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in February 2011. This was an historic day for people with disability, their families and carers.

For the first time, Australia now has a coordinated plan across all levels of government to improve the lives of people with disability, their families and carers.

The Vision

The Strategy has a bold vision for the creation of *'an inclusive Australia society that enables people with disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.'*

A 10 Year Policy Framework

The Strategy outlines a 10-year national policy framework to improve the lives of people with disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. It guides public policy across all levels of government and drives change in all mainstream and specialist programs and services—as well as community infrastructure—to better meet the needs of people with disability, their families and carers.

Areas of Policy Action

The Strategy is based on the belief that all Australians—including the 20 per cent with disability—should have fair and equal access to the full range of mainstream programs and services available, whether it is employment, healthcare, education, transport, or public facilities and infrastructure.

The Strategy has six priority areas for action. They are:

1. **Inclusive and accessible communities**
2. **Rights protection, justice and legislation**
3. **Economic security**
4. **Personal and community support**
5. **Learning and skills**
6. **Health and wellbeing**

Implementation

Three separate implementation plans will be rolled out over the life of the Strategy. The initial plan—*Laying the Groundwork 2011-2014*—is included in the Strategy's first report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The plan focuses on six main actions for driving change across each of the Strategy's priority areas:

1. Influencing the mainstream support system through periodic reviews of COAG National Agreements and National Partnerships
2. The appointment of Disability Champion Ministers
3. Improving the evidence base
4. Developing, reviewing and implementing state and territory government disability plans and initiatives
5. Involving people with disability in the development and implementation of government policies and programs, not just disability-specific policies and programs

6. Embedding change through areas of national cooperation.

The second and third implementation plans—*Driving Action 2015-2018* and *Measuring Progress 2019-2020*—will consolidate actions to drive better outcomes for people with disability.

Every two years, a high level progress report will track achievements under the Strategy and provide a picture of how people with disability are faring. The first two-yearly progress report will be presented to COAG in 2014. The Strategy is a living document that will be updated and reviewed as each implementation plan is developed.

Embedding the voice of people with disability in the implementation of the strategy will occur at three levels:

1. providing advice and feedback to governments on the development and progress of each implementation plan through representative organisations of people with disability and government advisory bodies
2. encouraging government agencies to adopt protocols that ensure people with disability and their representative organisations have the opportunity to contribute to policy and program development
3. ensuring the experiences of people with disability are reflected in the progress reports to the Council of Australian Governments and in the evaluation of the Strategy. This will be done through focus groups with people with disability and feedback from their representative organisations.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

As part of the Strategy the Productivity Commission undertook a public inquiry into a long-term disability care and support scheme for people with disability. COAG subsequently agreed to the need for major reform of disability services through a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Over the next seven years the Australian Government will invest more than \$30 billion to roll out the NDIS. This includes funding of over \$2.4 billion across initial trial sites from 2012-14 to 2015-16. By 2019-20, the Government is expected to invest approximately \$12 billion per annum on the NDIS.

From 1 July 2013, the first stage of the NDIS began in the Newcastle local government area of the Hunter in New South Wales (NSW), the Barwon area of Victoria, Tasmania for young people aged 15-24, and in South Australia for children aged 0-5. From 1 July 2014, the NDIS commenced in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), the Barkly region of the Northern Territory, and the Perth Hills area of Western Australia. Also, from 1 July 2014, the Hunter trial extended to the Lake Macquarie local government area and in South Australia the age cohort increased to 13 years of age. Rollout of the full scheme in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, the ACT and the Northern Territory will commence progressively from July 2016.

While the NDIS represents a significant step forward for many people with disability, the Strategy remains the key to achieving improvements in access to mainstream services and support for all people with disability. These mainstream reforms are an essential element in the successful introduction of the NDIS, both for participants in the scheme and for the many people with disability who may not be participants.

Further Information

The *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020* is important for all Australians. To learn more about the Strategy and what it means, go to the Department of Social Services Website www.dss.gov.au/nds.