



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

# Sector Briefing

NDIS National Workforce Plan

29 June 2021

# NDIS National Workforce Plan: 2021–2025

**Building a responsive and capable workforce that supports NDIS participants to meet their needs and achieve their goals**



# The NDIS National Workforce Plan has been subject to extensive consultation

## Types of consultation:

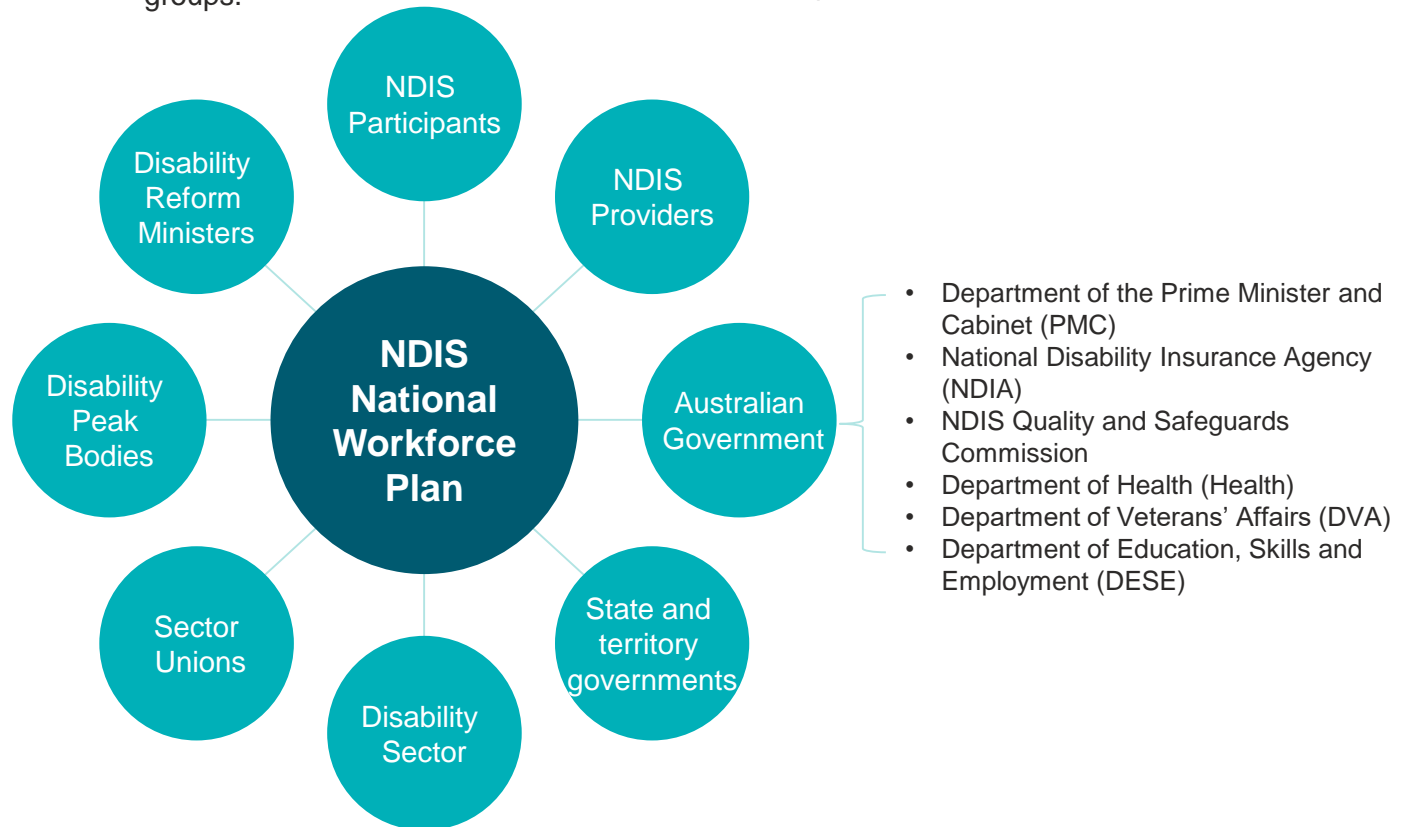


An open survey was conducted and received 570 responses.

Workshops further developed concepts and enabled collaboration with diverse groups.

Meetings were conducted with a range of stakeholders to gain further insights to help develop the Plan.

## Who was consulted:



# The sixteen initiatives in the NDIS National Workforce Plan will be implemented over the next four years, in consultation with stakeholders

**Priority 1: Improve community understanding of the benefits of working in the care and support sector and strengthen entry pathways for suitable workers to enter the sector**

1. Promote the sector

2. Develop tools for job seekers

3. Improve jobs boards

4. Leverage employment programs

5. Better connect providers to enablers

**Priority 2: Train and support the NDIS workforce**

6. Develop micro-credentials and training

7. Develop a professional network for the sector

8. Establish a skills passport

9. Grow traineeships and student placements

**Priority 3: Reduce red tape, facilitate new service models and innovation, and provide more market information about business opportunities in the care and support sector**

10. Align regulation and worker screening

11. Improve pricing approaches

12. Provide market demand information

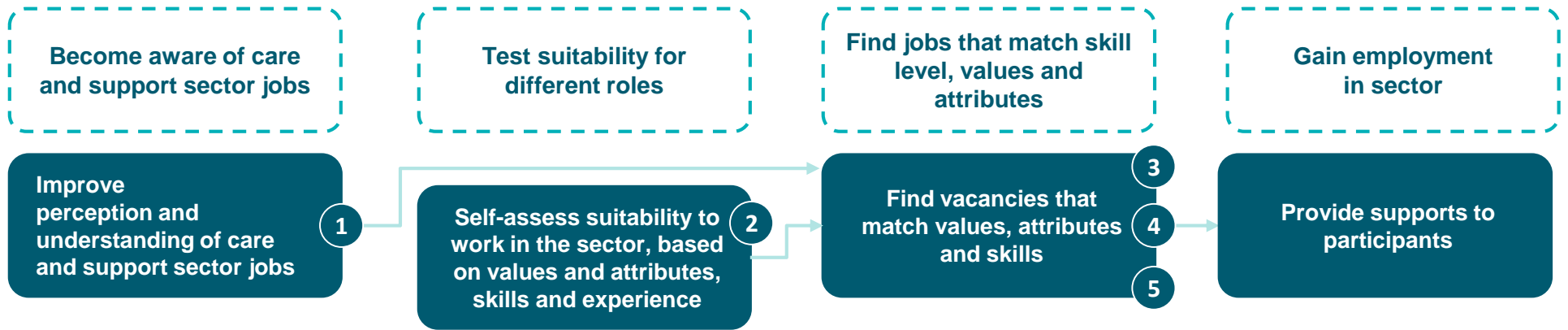
13. Help participants to find supports online

14. More options to use allied health assistants

15. Support telehealth in rural and remote areas

16. Support the indigenous community controlled sector

## Priority 1 – Improve community understanding of the benefits of working in the care and support sector and strengthen entry pathways for suitable workers to enter the sector



- 1** To help raise awareness about opportunities in the care sector, and change public perception of the work, **communication activities** will promote opportunities in the care sector, highlight success stories, promote support work as a career and highlight the benefits of working in the sector.
- 2** As more people become aware of care sector roles, they will need to see if the care sector is the right 'fit' for them. An **online tool for potential workers** to self-assess suitability to work in the care sector, based on values and attributes, skills, and experience, will be an important first step in a more integrated job seeker journey.
- 3** **More targeted jobs boards** will then better match suitable job seekers to vacancies based on their values and attributes, skills, and experience.
- 4** To ensure suitable unemployed job seekers can find work in the care sector, **improved linkages to employment programs** will also be made.
- 5** Australian Government will **use the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program** to support stronger connections between employment service providers, universities, VET and NDIS providers.

## Initiative 1 – Promote opportunities in the care and support sector

### What is the initiative?

To raise awareness through communication activities that promote the benefits and opportunities across the care and support sector.

### Why is it important?

To lift perceptions of the sector encouraging workers to join and remain in the sector, and increase diversity to reflect the participants that are supported.

### Approach for delivery:

- Communication activities will lift public perception of the care and support sector, highlight the benefits of working in the sector, and promote and showcase the opportunities across the diverse care and support sector roles.
- Communications will emphasise the values and attributes required for care and support sector roles to support better attraction and identification of suitable new workers, including driving more potential workers to jobs boards.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will engage peak bodies, industry networks and associations to get input on toolkits and resources to encourage support of potential new workers to consider and take-up work opportunities in the care and support sector.

We are also keen to work with you to ensure awareness is raised around complementary activities that are being conducted by industry, including job advertisements and peak communications.



If you would like more information about these activities please send your contact details to [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au) and we will contact you.

## Initiative 2 – Develop a simple and accessible online tool for job seekers to self-assess their suitability for new roles based on values, attributes, skills and experience

### What is the initiative?

To develop an online tool that job seekers can use to see if the care and support sector is the right 'fit' for them and provide support for how they can enter the sector.

### Why is it important?

To help ensure quality of care for participants, by employing workers with values, attributes, skills and experiences that align to the sector, and supporting suitable job seekers to enter the sector.

### Approach for delivery:

- An online tool for potential workers to self-assess their suitability to work in the care and support sector will include:
  - Suitability assessment based on values, attributes and interests.
  - Skills matching assessment based on experience, skills and certifications.
  - Information on the different roles in the care sector, their growth prospects and career pathways.
  - Recommendations for training to address any gaps.
- A new tool would involve extensive user testing to ensure the assessment is fit for purpose and draws out user information on values, attributes, experience, etc. rather than capturing facts about their profile.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with relevant provider peaks, participant peaks and providers to utilise their insight to support Australian Government with the development and deployment of the online tool.



If you would like to participate in user testing for the development of this online tool please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 3 – Improve effectiveness of jobs boards to match job seekers to vacancies in the sector

### What is the initiative?

To better match job seekers to vacancies by making it easier for them to find care and support sector jobs that are right for them with more effective jobs boards.

### Why is it important?

Effective jobs boards that easily identify appropriate opportunities and are commonly used will help attract and employ suitable workers, particularly during a period of high unemployment.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will explore options to improve jobs boards to effectively match new workers to vacancies in the care and support sector.
- Communications activities from Initiative 1 will draw new workers to the improved jobs boards.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with relevant provider peaks, participant peaks and providers to investigate options that implement improvements to jobs boards to match new workers to jobs in the care and support sector.



If you would like to provide feedback to improve existing jobs boards to connect potential workers to vacancies in the sector please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)



## Initiative 4 – Leverage employment programs to ensure suitable job seekers can find work in the sector

### What is the initiative?

To utilise and enhance employment programs to help job seekers find work in the sector through improvements to existing initiatives.

### Why is it important?

To improve identification of suitable job seekers, raise awareness of and help fulfil opportunities in the care and support sector, and help ensure strong links between employment service providers and care and support workers.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with relevant provider peaks, participant peaks and providers to explore options for better leveraging existing initiatives and establish new initiatives to better link employment programs, new workers and the care and support sector.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will leverage employment programs to ensure suitable new workers can find work in the sector.
- Ensure employment programs, including the New Employment Services Model (NESM), Disability Employment Services (DES), Community Development Program (CDP) and state and territory programs, support placements of job seekers in the care and support sector. The Australian Government will work with local employment service providers and care and support sector employers to deliver information sessions to increase job seeker awareness of employment opportunities and connect them with employers, and design pre-employment programs to prepare job seekers for work in the sector.
- This could include enhancing efforts to identify new workers suitable for care work (through providers and digital services), raising awareness of care workforce opportunities, exploring employment services providers incentive trials, and ensuring strong links between care and support service employers and employment service providers.



If you would like to participate in consultation for how employment programs can be better linked to help potential workers find work please contact

[NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 5 – Better connect NDIS and care and support providers to employment and training providers and workers

### What is the initiative?

To utilise the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program and other government programs to support stronger connections between key stakeholders in the sector.

### Why is it important?

To help job seekers, employment and training providers and workers to find and connect with NDIS and care and support sector opportunities.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will use the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program (the Program) and other government programs to support stronger connections between employment service providers, universities, VET providers and NDIS providers.
- The Program will be extended to 30 June 2023 with a renewed focus on working with education and employment service providers to connect them with care and support providers with the aim of creating a sustainable care and support workforce.
- The current remit of the Program's Regional Coordinators and Subject Matter Specialists will be expanded to leverage their existing networks to provide market demand information on workers to educators and employment service providers.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with industry through the Boosting the Local Care Workforce existing network of Regional Coordinators and Subject Matter Specialists.

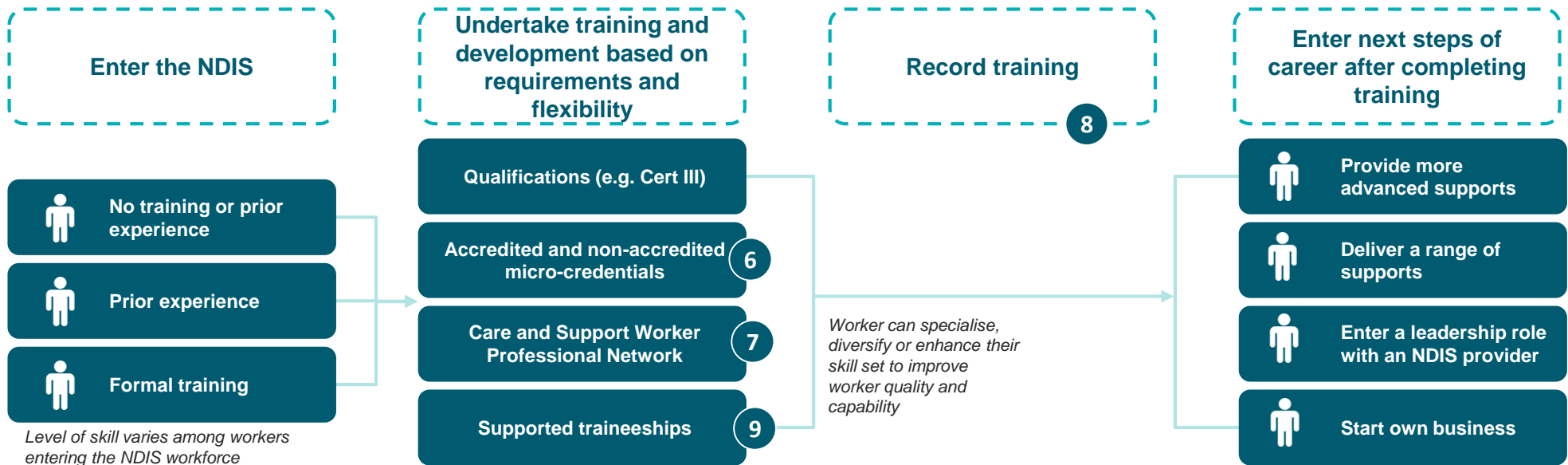
The coordinators cohort will actively engage with:

- Providers in the care and support sector (NDIS, aged care, veterans' care)
- Education providers (universities, VET sector, etc.)
- Employment service providers



If you would like to connect to your local Boosting the Local Care Workforce regional coordinator go to: [info@blcwprogram.com.au](mailto:info@blcwprogram.com.au)

## Priority 2 – Train and support the NDIS workforce



- Accredited **micro-credentials will enable workers to upskill**. Over time, these micro-credentials and other learning activities based on skill sets may build towards a recognised qualification. Non-accredited training remains an important tool for educating staff on NDIS standards and an organisation's service expectations.
- A **Care and Support Worker Professional Network** will promote excellence via a professional network which provides peer mentoring, professional development, and opportunities to collaborate across and deepen practices within disciplines.
- As NDIS workers undertake different training and development based on their needs, **training will be recorded on a skills passport**. The skills passport will strengthen the recognition of training in the sector and support career development.
- Students will be able to discover entry-level pathways into the care and support sector through **supported traineeships**.

## Initiative 6 – Develop micro-credentials and update nationally recognised training to improve the quality of supports and enhance career pathways

### What is the initiative?

To develop accredited micro-credentials that enable workers to upskill and review nationally recognised training that educates workers on NDIS standards and service expectations.

### Why is it important?

To support the skills needs and career pathways of care and support sector workers by improving entry and time restraints and meeting changing needs of participants. This will result in better quality care and support for participants.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will, through the independent organisation, undertake extensive consultation process with provider peaks, participant peaks, providers and NDIS participants, their families and carers to inform training development.

This work is also linked to the current review of Certificate III and Certificate IV in Disability Support.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will commission an independent organisation to consult with service providers, the disability workforce and NDIS participants, their families and carers to:
  - Map disability job families and the various roles and levels within the disability workforce.
  - Identify the skill and knowledge requirements of the different roles and levels to inform training development.
  - Develop and implement micro-credentials to address training needs.
- Training priority areas will be identified based on a range of information to target areas to improve safety and quality of supports and services, drawing on data from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- The approach to consultation will explore the specific requirements of under-represented groups such as people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



If you would like more information about these activities please send your contact details to [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au) and we will contact you.

## Initiative 7 – Support the sector to develop a Care and Support Worker Professional Network

### What is the initiative?

To develop a Care and Support Worker Professional Network that promotes excellence.

### Why is it important?

A Care and Support Worker Professional Network builds the connection of workers through professional development, peer mentoring, sharing of knowledge and collaboration opportunities which will encourage retention and reduce feelings of isolation.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will consult, through the independent organisation, with disability care and support workers, industry experts, NDIS participants, their families and carers to develop, test and implement delivery of national care and support worker professional networks.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will commission an independent organisation to consult with the disability care and support workforce, industry experts, service providers, NDIS participants, their families and carers to:
  - Identify the professional support needs of the disability care and support workforce, especially workers who are isolated or face significant challenges.
  - Analyse a range of professional networking options and identify the most effective way to deliver professional support and networking.
  - Test, implement and modify the most effective options identified.
- This work will consider thematic streams to support recruitment and retention of employees from diverse backgrounds, those working in isolation and those leading and managing teams.
- A range of different communication channels and networking methods will be explored, including analysis of the most effective options to promote and facilitate longer-term participation.
- It is intended that the Professional Network will be able to be self-sustaining after initial establishment.



If you would like to participate in consultation for development of care and support worker professional network please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 8 – Work with the sector to establish a skills passport

### What is the initiative?

To develop a skills passport that allows care and support sector workers to record their development and training.

### Why is it important?

A skills passport supports career development and enables workers greater flexibility with recognised transferrable skills, and enable providers to verify skills and training of their staff and new employees.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will commission an independent organisation to consult with industry experts, the care and support workforce and NDIS participants, their families and carers to:
  - Explore and test the best options to develop a skills passport.
  - Help to define the type of information to be presented in the passport.
  - Support Government in the design, testing and implementation of a skills passport.
- The skills passport will enable current and prospective employees, employers and participants to efficiently verify that workers have attained relevant qualifications or completed related training, have relevant skills and experience, and meet other industry requirements such as worker screening.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will consult, through the independent organisation, with disability care and support workers, industry experts and NDIS participants, their families and carers to develop and test a national skills passport.



If you would like to participate in consultation for development of care and support worker skills passport please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 9 – Support the sector to grow the number of traineeships and student placements, working closely with education institutions and professional bodies

### What is the initiative?

To support traineeships to raise awareness and encourage student attraction to entry-level pathways into the care and support sector.

### Why is it important?

To improve demand and supply of traineeships and student placements as they are a valuable source of training and experience for potential care and support sector workers.

### Approach for delivery:

The Australian Government will work with providers and the Allied Health sector to increase confidence and see value of student placements in disability services.

- Leverage Boosting the Local Care Workforce Program to work with universities and providers to broker student placements.
- Link with Australia's Rural Health Commissioner on work being done to promote attraction and retention of allied health workers in regional and remote areas.
- Work with Commonwealth and state and territory governments on existing initiatives that support traineeships and student placements, including JobTrainer.

Effective implementation will give students contextualised training, increase their interest in the sector and allow another method of screening for potential workers.

### How we will work together

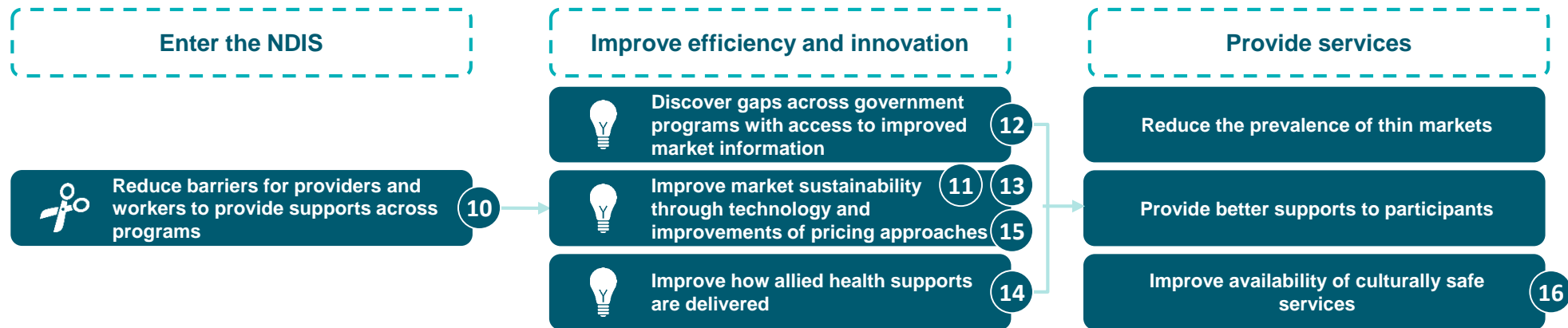
Consultation with disability service providers will inform identification of barriers to delivery of student placements and traineeships. Industry will be engaged on option development to ensure they are fit-for-purpose.

Consultation with disability and education sector stakeholders will guide detailed mapping of options to increase the number of traineeships and student placements.



If you would like to participate in consultation for ways to grow traineeships and student placements please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

# Priority 3 – Reduce red tape, facilitate new service models and innovation, and provide more market information about business opportunities in the care and support sector



- 10 **Aligning provider regulation and worker screening requirements** across the care and support sector will increase the number of workers and providers able to operate in the market, providing greater choice and control for participants without compromising on quality and safeguarding.
- 11 The sustainability and effective operation of the market will also be supported by **continued improvements to NDIS pricing approaches**.
- 12 Providers will be able to expand services across government programs and in thin markets through **access to market demand information** across the care and support sector.
- 13 Participants will be able to more easily **identify services and supports online**.
- 14 **Improved connections between allied health professionals, assistants and support workers** will improve participant supports and health outcomes.
- 15 **Access to professional support via telehealth** will allow allied health professionals in rural and remote areas to deliver a greater range of supports in regional and remote communities.
- 16 Building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector will **enhance culturally safe NDIS services**.



## Initiative 10 – Improve alignment of provider regulation and worker screening across the care and support sector

### What is the initiative?

To improve alignment of provider regulation and worker screening requirements across the sector in an effective way that maintains quality and safety.

### Why is it important?

To increase the number of workers and providers able to operate in the market and meet participant demand by removing barriers to working in different areas of the sector and reducing duplication for workers and providers.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with the sector and industry to consider options for improved alignment following Government consideration.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will explore options to improve alignment of regulation across the social care and support sector (aged care, disability and veterans' care) with a view to developing a best practice approach to regulation and removing unnecessary duplication and barriers to efficiency of the market.
- Sector-wide consultation and co-design process with industry, participants and consumers will be undertaken.



If you would like to participate in consultation for ways to improve provider regulation and worker screening please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 11 – Continue to improve NDIS pricing approaches to ensure effective operation of the market, including in thin markets

### What is the initiative?

To continually assess NDIS pricing approaches and adjust approaches accordingly to enable sustainable and effective operation of the market.

### Why is it important?

To enable an effective care and support market that helps encourage the supply of NDIS supports, productive competition and innovation.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will engage with relevant industry bodies for their input on how improvements to the NDIS pricing and payment approach could better support the scheme to achieve its objectives.

Input and responses will help inform options for the approach to pricing and payments and how and when these options might be implemented.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will consult on how NDIS pricing and payment approaches could be improved or changed to support the Scheme to achieve participant outcomes and Scheme sustainability.
- The project will identify potential alternate options for pricing and payments to inform Government approaches into the future.



If you would like to participate in consultation on ways to improve pricing approaches please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 12 – Provide market demand information across the care and support sector to help identify new business opportunities

### What is the initiative?

To provide ready access to market demand information to potential, new and existing providers, across the sector through sharing consolidated data on the market collected by government agencies.

### Why is it important?

To enable providers to effectively operate and expand services across government programs, and identify opportunities by utilising market demand information.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will provide improved market demand and supply information to support service providers to help in their decision-making, including where to expand their operations.
- Potential and existing providers will be able to access and use market demand information across the care and support sector to identify opportunities and make informed business decisions about market entry and growth, particularly in thin markets.
- Explore options for how the NDIS Demand Map can be improved to better identify new business opportunities.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will to engage with provider peaks, participant peaks and providers across the NDIS, aged and veterans' care sectors, to understand key features and requirements for the care and support sector demand visualisation tool.



If you would like to participate in consultation for how market demand information to providers can be improved please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 13 – Support participants to find more of the services and supports they need online

### What is the initiative?

To support participants to find more of the services and supports they need online.

### Why is it important?

It can be challenging for participants, their families and carers to find providers near them that offer the supports they need in the online environment.

### Approach for delivery:

- The Australian Government will explore options to better assist participants and their families and carers to identify supports online, working closely with participants and providers
- The NDIA is providing access to Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to allow connections between registered providers and some NDIA systems and data.
- APIs are available for registered providers and software developers working with registered providers. More work is being done to release more APIs and allow other businesses to start accessing NDIA APIs.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with provider peaks, participant peaks, participants and providers to ensure tools are available to support participants to better navigate services and supports they need online.



If you would like to more information about accessing NDIA APIs please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 14 – Explore options to support allied health professionals to work alongside allied health assistants and support workers to increase capacity to respond to participants’ needs

### What is the initiative?

To explore with the sector and participants appropriate models and approaches that will support development of better connections between allied health professionals, assistants and support workers.

### Why is it important?

Improved connections between allied health professionals, assistants and support workers will improve participants’ health outcomes.

### Approach for delivery:

- Implementation of this initiative will involve consultation with the workforce delivering allied health services, participants, their families and carers and professional bodies on options to support the workforce to further understand the roles and scope of practice of allied health professionals, allied health assistants and disability support workers.
- Consultation will also inform whether additional professional guidance is required to support existing regulatory requirements on supervision and delegation of allied health services by allied health professionals.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will consult with service providers, participants and the allied health services workforce on options to support more effective delivery of disability supports.



If you would like to participate in consultation for improving connections and supports for allied health professionals, assistants and support workers please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 15 – Enable allied health professionals in rural and remote areas to access professional support via telehealth

### What is the initiative?

To explore telehealth options that enable allied health professionals to access professional support and supervision remotely.

### Why is it important?

To improve the quality of services provided to participants in rural and remote areas by enabling allied health professionals access to professional support that can review practice decisions and provide supervision.

### Approach for delivery:

- The NDIA allows providers to case conference and bill for multiple therapists even if the participant is not present, so long as the participant approves.
  - For example, a psychologist in a rural area seeking input for a client from a specialised psychologist in a metro region.

### How we will work together

The Australian Government will work with provider peaks, participant peaks, providers and participants, particularly those in rural and remote areas, to highlight the availability of this service option.



If you would like more information  
about this service option  
please contact  
[NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)

## Initiative 16 – Help build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled sector to enhance culturally safe NDIS services

### What is the initiative?

To support the build of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector, enabling culturally safe NDIS services to be provided.

### Why is it important?

Culturally safe NDIS services support Indigenous job seekers to overcome barriers to working in the care and support sector and enable Indigenous participants to choose Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services where available.

### Approach for delivery:

- Building the community controlled sector is critical to ensuring the availability of culturally safe services for NDIS participants, as well as culturally safe workplaces for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- The Australian Government will work with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to increase the number of its member Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) registered and delivering NDIS services.
- Additionally, the Australian Government will continue to explore options to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to the disability sector, including leveraging government employment programs.

### How we will work together

To ensure NDIS Ready is delivered in the most culturally appropriate way, NACCHO will lead direct engagement with industry on the progress of NDIS Ready.

The Australian Government is working with NACCHO to develop a program logic that highlights areas to further develop long-term strategies to ensure sustainability.

Additionally, NACCHO will work closely with the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program, which works with industry through its existing network of Regional Coordinators and Subject Matter Specialists.



If you would like to participate in consultation to support culturally safe NDIS services please contact [NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au](mailto:NDISworkforceplan@dss.gov.au)



# Focus in the next 6 months ...





# Questions?

**Thank you**