

DISABILITY REFORM MINISTERIAL COUNCIL (DRMC)

Brisbane – 21 April 2023

COMMUNIQUÉ

Commonwealth, State and Territory Disability Ministers met on 21 April 2023 in Brisbane. Ministers welcomed the New South Wales Minister for Disability Inclusion, the Hon Kate Washington MP, to her first meeting.

Ministers unanimously welcomed the Commonwealth announcement of the NDIS reboot at the National Press Club, to get the NDIS back on track by ensuring that every dollar goes towards improving outcomes for participants that need it.

Co-Chairs of the NDIS Review Panel, Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM, updated Ministers on the NDIS Review's initial work in relation to pricing and payments and participant safeguarding. Consultation papers are expected to be released within the next two weeks.

Ministers discussed progress on the NDIA's work to transform the NDIA's National Contact Centre (NCC) including measures to improve the experience of participants and their families by reducing double-handling of calls, by re-designing processes and improving training for NCC staff. Ministers also welcomed the disability inclusion recruitment target of 40% for staff identifying as having a disability or lived experience of caring for a person with disability.

Ministers heard an expert report on the FNQ Connect initiative on integrated care in thin markets.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner, Ms Tracy Mackey, provided an update on the implementation of the plan that accompanied the release of the NDIS Commission's Own Motion Inquiry into aspects of Supported Accommodation in January 2023.

Ministers agreed to continue to work together to:

- Increase supply of safe, affordable and accessible housing for people with disability. Ministers also agreed to advocate on accessible housing more broadly and to work with their Housing counterparts and task housing and disability senior officials to scope a program of joint work to deliver improved housing outcomes for people with disability.
- Develop the plan to enact the guiding principles for supported employment with a view to having a final plan developed in consultation with the disability sector, for DRMC endorsement in August 2023.
- Maintain an effective COVID-19 response for people with disability ahead of an expected increase in cases over the winter months noting the coordinated actions underway across the Commonwealth to encourage uptake of the 2023 booster, and other COVID-safe behaviours.

To progress *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31*, Ministers endorsed proposals presented by Minister for Social Services, Amanda Rishworth:

- Australia's Disability Strategy – Safety Targeted Action Plan (Safety TAP) Forward Work Plan 2023-2024 and agreed to work collaboratively to progress the remaining cross-government elements of the Safety Tap, over the next 12 months.
- National Disability Advocacy Framework 2023-2025 (the Framework) and the Disability Advocacy Work Plan, noting their shared commitment to disability advocacy and to work together on implementation of the Framework.

Ministers noted data continued downward trends in the number of younger people entering and living in residential aged care and average days between an NDIS participant being medically ready for discharge from hospital and reported discharge.

Ministers agreed to meet again on 23 June 2023 in Canberra.

