# Summary: NDIS Review discussion

#### 17 May 2024

#### Joint DRCO/IAC RFO meeting

## Identifying key themes and opportunities to inform Government response

### Key themes

* It is critical that reforms be informed by the voices of people with disability.
* Changes to the NDIS must be planned, sequenced and consider unintended consequences.
* Foundational supports and more general improvements to the ecosystem of disability supports in Australia must be delivered before there are significant changes made to NDIS access and planning.
* Reforms must be designed for everyone in the Australian disability community and consider the needs of First Nations, rural and remote, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.
* All levels of government need to be accountable for reforms and Scheme sustainability.

### Implementation priorities

* **Fairer and more consistent participant pathway within the NDIS.**
* **Supported decision making** – this must be delivered by the Agency.
* **Foundational supports** need to be in place before changes to access and planning are made within the NDIS.
* Co-design should begin on **assessment tools and approach**, and the **budget model**. New framework plans should not commence until new assessment and budget tools are ready and needs to be co-designed before implemented.
* The new **navigator function** should be defined and designed with the community, to ensure it is a practical model that can be delivered locally and connect people with disabilities to services across all systems.
* **Implementation must be managed well** with good outcomes measurements set at the start, a defined and public roadmap for reform and commitment to delivering reform in a sequenced and planned way.

### Issues and concerns

* **Mandatory provider registration** and potential impact on choice and control. It also suggests self-management is a bad thing when managing things independently should be encouraged and supported.
* **Early intervention pathway** could be a barrier to becoming a participant.
* Critical that reforms to the pathway for children ensure early access to supports and services.
* The importance of **getting foundational supports right**, with buy in from state and territory governments and accessible locally across Australia. There is a concern that this will not be in place before other reforms are implemented, which risks leaving some people with disability behind.
* **Home and living funding** set at one to three ratio is a significant concern, as well as the separation of SDA from service provision. Limiting funding in this way could reduce choice and control over where people can live, how they live and who they live with.
* Concern about emphasis on **evidence-based and best practice supports** as these are not the only way to assess quality and may unintentionally limit flexibility, choice and control and innovation.
* **Removing the role of plan intermediaries** (support coordinators and plan managers). There is an ongoing need for intermediaries to focus on capacity building for participants.
* **Protecting self-management, plan flexibility and choice and control**. There are concerns about the impact of stated supports, new support lists and funding management powers that may limit flexibility.Participants must be in control of their funds to shift power away from providers.
* There is support to eradicate fraud from the NDIS, but some concern about overwhelming **compliance requirements** will reduce the market, number of smaller providers and increase administrative burden of self-management.
* **People with intellectual disability** are at risk of being left behind in these reforms.
* Concern that we are not seeing a clear path for reform and that some **decisions are being made without the disability community**.

### Key dependencies

* **Transition arrangements** are considered and known. Start with designing and defining all reforms before moving to implementation.
* **Navigators** are linked to many recommendations, so getting this role right is critical.
* **Foundational supports** need to be in place first, before changes to access and planning are made within the NDIS.
* **Pricing** must be realistic for participants to be able to best use their funding in all areas of Australia.
* Participant safeguarding, quality service provision and oversight of providers by a strong and capable **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission**.
* **Disability workforce** – funding, resourcing, skills and competencies of workforce to support reforms.