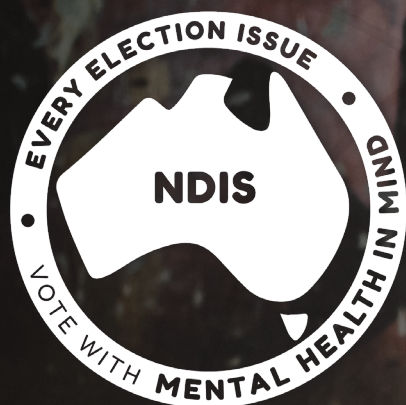




Mental Health
Australia

THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME AND MENTAL HEALTH



Some people with mental illness also experience psychosocial disability. The [National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum](#) explains "Psychosocial disability describes disability experience, impairments and participation restrictions related to mental health conditions". Some people who experience psychosocial disability are eligible to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Through the NDIS people with psychosocial disability often look to engage services to deliver recovery-oriented psychosocial support. These services support people to develop skills, capacity and connections to improve their wellbeing and live a meaningful and contributing

life. They are critical in supporting people with psychosocial disability to maintain their wellbeing in the community, avoiding reliance on more costly acute hospital and clinical services, and interactions with the justice system.

In its first nine years of operation the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has been life-changing for many Australians. However, people with psychosocial disability have faced a number of barriers in accessing the Scheme and implementing appropriate NDIS supports. The transition to the NDIS has also created significant challenges for the psychosocial support workforce both within and outside of the NDIS.

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THE FACTS

NDIS and psychosocial disability



"People experiencing psychosocial disability face specific and particular challenges, and issues when dealing with the NDIS. Mental ill health can be greatly exacerbated or ameliorated, depending on the quality of the individual's experience with a complex and demanding scheme such as the NDIS."

Mental Health Australia - National Disability Insurance Scheme: Psychosocial Disability Pathway

The proportion of NDIS participants with primary psychosocial disability (10.4%) has remained well below the anticipated rate (13.9%), with only three-quarters of the 64,000 people with psychosocial disability anticipated to be eligible accessing the NDIS as of June 2021. Analysis indicates this is due to both low NDIS application rates and low rates of success for those who with psychosocial disability who do apply.

In 2018, Mental Health Australia proposed a number of reforms to improve experience of the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability, based on extensive consultations with over 170 people with lived experience of psychosocial disability, carers and service providers.

Two of the key messages from these consultations were that peoples' journey to access the NDIS starts long before they apply - active outreach is needed to support many people with psychosocial disability to access the NDIS.

And secondly, psychosocial disability specific skills, knowledge and experience amongst front line staff is crucial to support engagement.

To find out more go to <https://data.ndis.gov.au/reports-and-analyses/participant-groups/people-psychosocial-disability> for updates on the report pictured beside.



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WHAT CAN THE GOVERNMENT DO?

Government needs to invest in assertive outreach to assist people with psychosocial disability to access the NDIS. As part of Mental Health Australia's evaluation of the [National Community Connectors Program](#), delivery partners identified the most common barriers for people with psychosocial disability in engaging with the NDIS to be the inappropriateness of NDIA policies and processes for people with mental illness; previous trauma and negative experiences of services or NDIS leading to mistrust and disengagement; and experience of homelessness further amplifying barriers with little flexibility from the NDIA to adapt to this.

Government also needs to Co-design a better approach to NDIS assessment with people with lived experience of psychosocial disability, carers and other key stakeholders, and continue to improve the recovery focused approach to psychosocial support delivery within the NDIS.

Governments should also leverage the good work undertaken by the NDIA in developing the recently released Psychosocial Disability Recovery-Oriented Framework and ensure the framework results in practical improvements throughout the scheme to ensure delivery of recovery oriented psychosocial support is not only possible but thriving in the context of the NDIS.

This momentum towards recovery-oriented support must include analysis of NDIS Pricing with a specific focus on:

- Whether the assumptions which underpin pricing of supports delivered to people with psychosocial disability are an accurate reflection of cost-drivers for delivering those supports.
- Whether the current pricing enables adequate training, professional support and development to enable the delivery of quality and safe psychosocial support
- The extent to which the implementation of the Psychosocial Recovery Coaches support item has enabled the psychosocial service sector to implement recovery-focussed psychosocial support.

In addition, Mental Health Australia also urges all governments to consider issues and opportunities in the interface of NDIS and non-NDIS services, particularly in the areas of clinical mental health care, employment, and housing.

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LOOKING FOR MORE DETAIL OR RESOURCES?

Mental Health Australia Submissions and Reports on the NDIS

November - 2021 - Mental Health Australia Submission to Joint Standing Committee inquiry into NDIS implementation and forecasting

[Submission to Joint Standing Committee inquiry into NDIS implementation and forecasting | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

November 2021 - Mental Health Australia Submission to Senate Inquiry into NDIS Participant Service Guarantee Bill

[Submission to Senate Inquiry into NDIS Participant Service Guarantee Bill | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

October 2021 - NDIS National Community Connectors Program for people with psychosocial disability - Final Report

<http://mhaustralia.org/ndis-psychosocial-community-connectors-program>

October 2021 - Mental Health Australia Submission to consultation on NDIS legislation changes

[Submission to consultation on NDIS legislation changes | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

August 2021 - Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on NDIS Inquiry into NDIS Workforce

[Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on NDIS Inquiry into NDIS Workforce | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

May 2021 - Joint Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on NDIS Inquiry into Independent Assessments

[Joint Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on NDIS Inquiry into Independent Assessments | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

May 2020 - Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS - Inquiry into NDIS Workforce

[CMHA-MIFA-and-MHA-Joint-Submission-NDIS-Psychosocial-Workforce.pdf](#)

October 2019 - Joint Submission to the Review of the NDIS Act and the New NDIS Participant Service Guarantee

[Joint Submission to the Review of the NDIS Act and the New NDIS Participant Service Guarantee | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

March 2018 - Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme on Market Readiness

[Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme on Market Readiness | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

October 2017 - Mental Health Australia submission to NDIS Independent Pricing Review

[Mental Health Australia submission to NDIS Independent Pricing Review | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

July 2017 - Response to the Productivity Commission National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Costs Position Paper

[Response to the Productivity Commission National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\) Costs Position Paper | Mental Health Australia \(mhaustralia.org\)](#)

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LOOKING FOR MORE DETAIL OR RESOURCES?

Further reading and reference material

December 2021 - NDIS Recovery Oriented Framework

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/how-ndis-works/mental-health-and-ndis#new-psychosocial-recovery-oriented-framework>

September 2021 - The Applied Principles and Tables of Support to Determine Responsibilities NDIS and other service

The Applied Principles and Tables of Support to Determine Responsibilities NDIS and other service | Department of Social Services, Australian Government (dss.gov.au)

September 2021 - THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE Good Practice in Recovery-Oriented Psychosocial Disability Support Stage One Report - Mental Health Victoria

[The-Current-Landscape.pdf \(mhvic.org.au\)](https://www.mhvic.org.au/The-Current-Landscape.pdf)

March 2020 - Position Statement - National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum - Unravelling Psychosocial Disability - Position Statement on Psychosocial Disability Associated with Mental Health Conditions

<https://nmhccf.org.au/our-work/position-statements/psychosocial-disability-associated-with-mental-health-conditions>

December 2019 - Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme ACT 2013 - Tune Review

[NDIS Act Review - final - with accessibility and prepared for publishing1 \(dss.gov.au\)](https://www.dss.gov.au/ndis-act-review-final-with-accessibility-and-prepared-for-publishing1)

A national framework for recovery-oriented mental health services - Guide for Practitioners and Providers

[A national framework for recovery-oriented mental health services: guide for practitioners and providers](https://www.mh.gov.au/mental-health-services/national-framework-for-recovery-oriented-mental-health-services-guide-for-practitioners-and-providers)

Mental Health Australia would like to thank its member organisations and key stakeholders for contributing to this extensive body of work on the NDIS and mental health of all Australians. If you are a member of Mental Health Australia and would like to add to these resources, please contact info@mhaustralia.org