



The Hon Clayton Barr MP
Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Via email: communityservices@parliament.nsw.gov.au

25 November 2024

Dear Mr Barr

**Response to question on notice
following Committee appearance on 20 November 2024**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide further information in relation to our statement in our [Submission on improving access to early childhood health and development](#) checks dated 29 February 2024.

The Committee asked for further information regarding our experience with children not being able to access local health services for health and development checks following receipt of a successful outcome on their National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) application.

We wish to clarify that all children should, under current policy settings, be able to access health and development checks through local health services under the *Principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other service systems*, as per the division of responsibilities agreed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2013¹. Under the Principles, the health system is responsible for diagnostic assessment and specific screening for developmental delay and other mental or physical conditions that are likely to lead to a disability (Applied Principles – Early Childhood Development) and the diagnosis, early intervention and treatment of health conditions, including ongoing or chronic health conditions (Applied Principles – Health). As such, the delivery of health and development checks remain the responsibility of the Local Health Districts (LHDs), regardless of NDIS status. Once accepted into NDIS, the Principles state that scheme will provide further assessment for support planning and review as required.

The comment in our original submission referred to the experience of some children, which has been observed by our front-line staff. Acceptance into NDIS does not result in a child's automatic access to specialist services, particularly in areas where there is a

¹ Department of Social Services. (2013). Principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other services systems. [ndis-principles-determine-responsibilities-ndis-and-other-service-1.pdf](#)

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shortage of allied health professionals such as in regional, remote and very remote communities. Where LHDs wind down support following a diagnosis, this can lead to a gap in continuity of support for some children, who have been accepted onto NDIS but not yet allocated a funding package (which can take up to 90 days) or before actual commencement of NDIS supports.

We would be pleased to provide more information if required. For more information, please contact Dr Tom McClean, Head of Research and Social Policy, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,

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Dr Andrew Montague
Director Communities