

Submission
No 108

**INQUIRY INTO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL
DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME AND THE PROVISION
OF DISABILITY SERVICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 30 July 2018

Partially
Confidential

Implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the provision of disability services in New South Wales

Due to long-term Multiple Sclerosis, I have been receiving (self-managed) assistance through the NDIS since mid-November 2017.

My experience has been very positive with the only negative aspects relating to IT-System and Communication issues.

Benefits:

NDIS-funded advice by an Occupational Therapist (OT), continence aids and home assistance have enabled me to delay early medical retirement from work (part-time tertiary education governance role).

Transport funds and Mobility aids provided through the NDIS have allowed me to participate in more family, volunteering and social activities again and also help care for my 90-year old mother.

IT issues:

For self-managed clients it would be preferable to be able to directly attach scanned receipts to the claims instead of having to file them for potential future audits. This would also allow the NDIS to conduct spot-audits and pick-up any issues with claims earlier rather than later.

More thorough IT system training for planners as well as well-organised leave cover for planners seems necessary as my largest claim (mobility aid) was initially not processed properly and due to the planner being on leave, nobody seemed to be able to assist in her absence. This meant that I was out-of-pocket for \$4,000 for about a month.

I find the user portal very helpful, particularly as it easily allows me to check the status of claims and the balance available for various parts of my budget.

Communication:

While everyone answering phone enquiries is usually friendly and helpful, communication between departments seems to be problematic and promises of call-backs are often unfulfilled, requiring persistence on the side of the client. This is a typical problem with large organisations and government departments and not NDIS-specific but should nevertheless be addressed.

I would like to stress that I particularly enjoy the self-managed aspect of my plan as it allows me to feel 'normal'. As I am used to admin and finance work through my employment, I have the required skill and would certainly not like to be dependent on decisions made by third parties. However, the initial advice provided by the NDIS

coordinator and planner and by the OT have been priceless and have allowed me to re-assess my employment and overall life plans.

I sincerely hope that the NDIS will continue to be funded so that more people with disabilities can enjoy improved participation. Consistent staff training and matching planners to clients is key. I believe that I benefited from a planner and coordinator with knowledge of my particular condition and adjustment needs which was particularly helpful as small adjustments can often make a huge difference to a person's life.

Please feel free if you would like to contact me for further details.

Kind regards