

Submission
No 288

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

Name: Ms Debra Tate
Date Received: 9 August 2018

Partially
Confidential

The Director, Portfolio Committee

Submission to Committee regarding the NDIS

My 26 year old daughter has been on the NDIS since July 2015, we live in the Lake Macquarie area.

Since the inception of the NDIS, her choices have become limited & her independence has been curtailed.

a) Equipment approval & ordering

is in a wheelchair & parts are often needed to be replaced & the chair needs yearly servicing.

The process of approval for a simple thing as the cushion has become long & protracted.

Eg: December 2017 her plan was approved with funds allocated for her wheelchair service & any replacement parts.

February 2018 an OT visited our home to measure her wheelchair cushion for replacement, a second visit was made for an equipment rep. to trial cushions available, even though I knew exactly what required.

The OT Submitted an Assistive Technology request and quote on 18/02/2018.

After repeated phone calls made by myself & co-ordinator of supports to the NDIS & resubmitting the OT's quote the approval finally was made in July 2018.

I was advised that the approval process went as thus;

1. The request is submitted to NDIS by therapist, they review and send to Enable
2. Enable check to see if it's a double up on equipment, make comments and send back to NDIS. sometimes more information for a justification is needed and this goes back to Enable again. Other times Enable give the go ahead (in our case the quote was "lost in the system" & had to be resubmitted)
3. NDIS must review Enables decision and then decide if the request is reasonable and necessary
4. NDIS will place order with supplier or the funds are released and at times no one is informed.

It is now the beginning of August & I have been advised the cushion will not be available until the end of August. During this time has been suffering from pressure sores & skin breaking down due to the current cushion having expired.

This system needs to be streamlined & the double handling also needs to be removed. When it is something as simple as a replacement part & where the funding has already been approved the Carer or Nominee should be able to order & submit the invoice to the NDIS

b) Transport

Previous to the NDIS, was picked up from our home to attend her day program by the centre's bus. Pick up was usually before 9am, in the afternoon she would be dropped off around 3.30pm

Since the implementation of the NDIS I now drive to & from her day program, as if she was to travel on the centre's bus she would not be picked up until after 10am & dropped off around 2 – 2.30pm of an afternoon.

When queried her day program stated that the reason for late pick up & early drop off was due to transport now being individual & "who's plan would the wages come from for the driver"? As her day program is payed from 9am to 3pm I felt this was not suitable & thus losing her independence in having to rely on me to transport her.

With the centre being a mix of people of various disabilities & some who live in group homes their daily activities & outings have been curtailed due to cost & the time factor of having everyone dropped off home & staff returned to centre by 3pm.

c) Respite/Short Stay Accomodation

With the NDIS being now centred exclusively on the client, funding for Respite is a big battle to obtain.

I would like this committee to think of at home carers who are available 24/7 for their person, usually parents who are aging. I am 58yrs & at the moment I am fully capable of fulfilling this role due to being able to have a break to recharge.

Now I have the added stress of trying to tweak her Core Supports to cover respite, there is no family member who can do what I do.

Carers save the system (NDIS) hundreds of thousands of dollars by caring for their person at home & all we ask is support to continue to do this.

Since the NDIS, it has become near on impossible to afford respite on weekends, wherein I can socialise with my friends & the rest of the family who all work weekdays.

Provision needs to be made to support in home Carers & an acknowledgement that the system would completely collapse if we were all to surrender our loved one to a group home, that is if there was anything available.

d) Portal

As her carer I have access to portal & have had numerous issues with the conflicting information it provides.

I have to now be an accountant to work out what funds are available, with due respect things like, Incontinence Products should not be included in Core Funding but be a seperate item which they were originally as unless I stay on top of her funding that money can be consumed elsewhere.

The "pie chart" where it shows funding available is not an accurate assement. I feel there should be another shaded area on the chart showing funds that have been put aside by a Service provider, although not used up.

Case in point her Day program sets aside \$40,000 for the duration of the plan, but in another part of the portal it will show that the amount that has not been used as yet, as available, which is not accurate as the money has been set aside to use till the end of her plan.

e) NDIA contact

When the NDIS was rolled out there was a plan manager appointed to each client to handle enquires regarding plans.

Now when contacting & if an ongoing issue (as in (a) above), we have to deal with a "call centre" operator, then have to repeat the problem to the person who answers, often we are put on hold while waiting for the operator to contact the relevant person who can deal with the problem. In issue a) I spoke to 8 different people to try & get the issue resolved.

The system that was in the original roll out worked & I believe it should be reinstated.

Thankyou for taking time to read my submission

I would appreciate my daughters name not used in public for her privacy.

I am happy to have my name used.

Regards Debra Tate