

Submission
No 348

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

Organisation: Cranes, Grafton, NSW

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Individualised Accommodation Support

Across Australia many people with disability require 24/7 support but do not want to live in institutional settings such as group homes. There has been a long history of people being supported in individualised accommodation arrangements via as host arrangement and co-resident support. Many of these people have not been able to continue in these arrangements since the introduction of the NDIS.

The NDIS has recently removed the 'Host' arrangement line item from the pricing guide in July 2017 and understandably LAC's and planners have a lack of understanding of these approaches and the NDIA appears to be actively discouraging them from engaging service providers as it may be viewed as being showing bias towards a particular NDIS product. Host arrangement is however in the CVS under the line item. Latest 201819-Vic-NSW-QLD-TAS Price guide states 01_026_0115_1_1 Assistance In Living Arrangements (Host Family/Alternative Family Situation) and similarly with the 201819-Vic-NSW-QLD-TAS- Price Guide.

In NSW, families who were under the out of home care /foster arrangement were funded by FACS (Department of Families and Communities Services) through its Extended Family Support program (which is continuing) and the NSW Disability (ADHC) division, Leaving Care Program (LCP) which has been discontinued under the NSW bilateral with NDIA. The LCP funded a program for people with significant disabilities who had been in the care of the NSW Minister for Community Services but aged out of the out of home care system at 18. These foster carer should transition into the host arrangements and need to be advised by LACS and planners to join service providers who are contracting hosts/live-in carers.

NDIS registered organisations involved in individualised accommodation support arrangements (like host arrangements) across Australia have come together to submit a joint proposal. The organisations are CRANES (NSW), Homelink (SA) and One2One (WAWe'd like the NDIA to increase the understanding amongst LAC's and planners that 24/7 support need should be not be limited to living in institutional settings such as group homes and that any applictaion by foster carers should be redirected to service providers to be approved as Hosts and be contractors to be in line with the NDIA system.

Individualised 24/7 support arrangements offer flexible, tailored and inclusive alternatives to group homes and other institutional settings. We believe that individualised 24/7 support arrangements have great outcomes for NDIS participants. Many of these arrangements are built around 'live-in' care models such as hosts and co-residents. Live-in support arrangements provide robust 24/7 care through strong relationships, deep understanding of the participant and lead to improved outcomes. Given that hosts and live-in carers are paid at a daily rate rather than an hourly rate, these arrangements are also cost effective in that they can usually be delivered at the same cost or lower than institutional supports such as group homes.

Individualised accommodation support providers bring overarching systems, processes, policies and procedures and ensure safeguards are in place for NDIS participants. Our organisations also manage contractual arrangements with hosts and other live-in carers.

In the instance of host-family support, NDIA participants receive support and housing in one approach as they live with in the home of the support provider. Given the shortage of accommodation in SDAs, the NDIS will benefit from host-family support approaches as in reduces the demand for housing. We also seek flexibility in the SDA in the event a potential live-in carer with a customer decides to apply for SDA but would like to continue to the host arrangement. Thus the SDA budget must be flexible so that service agreements can adapt to both SDA and host arrangements in the future.

Group homes are not suitable for everyone and many of the participants need and desire a stable family environment setting to be able to meet their NDIS goals. Given choice and control is a central principle of the NDIS, participants should be able to choose individualised accommodation arrangements or congregated and segregated ones.

Strengths

- Community driven
- Cost effective as Hosts are paid weekly along with rental and food costs
- Matching and introductions to ensure good fit
- Intense Assessment process and consistent support and monitoring and oversight
- Back up families who act as respite support for host placements
- Cost effective
- Considered a best practiced now widely offered in the UK, Canada and US

These services provide an innovative approach that widens the customers choice in accommodation. As it doesn't require any investment into builds, offers a practical solution to the accommodation crisis. We would argue that providing a benchmark and clarity to this kind of support product will allow many ad-hoc arrangements enter as contractors with service providers who provide the safeguards thereby reducing and mitigating risks to the service providers and NDIA.