



Roadmap Implementation Governance Group (RIGG) Meeting Summary – 1 August 2022

Introduction

The theme of the meeting was oral health for people with intellectual disability.

The Chair welcomed all members to the third Roadmap Implementation Governance Group (RIGG) meeting and gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

The Chair gave a verbal declaration about confidentiality and conflicts of interest. Members were asked to declare any conflicts of interest that were not declared at the previous meeting. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

The Chair announced the establishment of an Intellectual Disability Focus Group. The members of the group will be people with intellectual disability. The Department of Health and Aged Care (Department) will consult with the focus group on projects being conducted under the National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability (Roadmap). The focus group will also give feedback on how to improve health outcomes for people with intellectual disability. The first focus group meeting will be on 10 August 2022 with regular updates provided between the groups.

A member moved that the RIGG support a motion to bring to the Minister for Health and Aged Care's attention the importance of urgent implementation of the National Centre of Excellence in Intellectual Disability Health and the need for ongoing funding. Members endorsed this motion and the Chair agreed to action the request as a priority.

Previous meeting

A member noted that while communication issues raised by people with lived experience were accurately recorded, gaps in competency and knowledge of health professionals is a key issue that needs to be addressed.

In response, the Department gave an update on the Curriculum Development Project that aims to improve health professionals' pre-registration education in intellectual disability health. The Department agreed to provide members with an initial scoping and gap analysis report undertaken by the University of Queensland.

The previous meeting summary was endorsed by members with no change.

Setting the scene – oral health experiences

People with lived experience were invited to share their experiences with dentists and oral health care. Issues raised included:

- dentists not telling their clients what they were doing
- lack of informed consent for dental procedures

- oral health workers having poor communication skills
- dentists speaking to the person's carer instead of to them
- lack of public funding for complex dental services
- poor access to care, particularly in rural and remote areas
- facilities unable to complete all required services at the same clinic at the same time
- the risks of multiple episodes of anaesthesia and the inability to arrange other health matters to be dealt with in the same treatment episode
- the wait time for routine and urgent dental care being too long
- not knowing what to expect prior to the appointment, and as a result, not being able to prepare, and
- lack of preventive care.

Presentation by Dr Trudy Lin

Dr Trudy Lin, a Special Needs Dentistry Specialist and South Australia's Young Australian of the Year 2022, presented an overview of special needs dentistry, noting:

- the importance of good oral health
- some of the barriers people with intellectual disability face, and
- some ideas for making these things work better.

Dr Lin discussed the many factors that can cause poor oral health, and how they can lead to poor nutrition, physical health, mental health, and lack of inclusion for people with intellectual disability.

Discussion

Members discussed that poor access to and affordability of appropriate dental treatments increased the risk of other health issues.

Members agreed there is a need to educate oral health professionals during their undergraduate degrees. There was also support for creating and promoting oral health resources through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and increasing regular dental health checks for people with intellectual disability.

Members also identified the need for health practitioners to facilitate supported decision making as an inclusive practice.

While there was some positive feedback about state and territory government health services, members noted there were usually very long wait times.

Initial opportunities for action could include:

- giving people with intellectual disability information and checklists to help them prepare for a visit to the dentist
- ensuring there is funding for preventative care, and
- looking at how we fund services for children and, in particular, including a focus on children with intellectual disability in the Child Dental Benefits Scheme. This could be considered through the Fifth Review of the *Dental Benefits Act 2008*.

Opportunities for action to meet Roadmap oral health objectives

An overview of the Roadmap oral health actions was provided. Oral health for people with intellectual disability is an area where more action is needed. It was agreed that the secretariat would approach members out of session to identify Roadmap oral health actions of the highest priority. Members will also be asked to identify other actions in the Roadmap that could help address oral health.

The Department agreed to report back on priorities and actions in oral health at the next meeting.

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission presentation on current activities that align with the Roadmap

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) presented an overview of the NDIS Commission is doing to improve the health of people with intellectual disability and how their projects align with the Roadmap. Initial actions were aimed at educating providers to improve the quality of support to people with disability.

After completing a scoping review of causes and contributors to deaths of people with disability in Australia, the NDIS Commission created a suite of practice alerts targeting certain health issues. The practice alerts are accessible guidance documents for providers, and include animations, quick reference guides, and Easy Read resources. The practice alerts are based on best evidence guidelines and high quality international and Australian research on health risks for people with disability.

The NDIS Commission also runs master classes on a range of health-related topics for service providers. More information about these is on the NDIS Commission website.

Meeting close

The Chair noted the next meeting will include

- a research presentation from Dr Rachel Skoss, and
- a report on oral health priorities and actions.

The next meeting will be on Monday 14 November 2022.

Next Steps

RIGG members will be asked to provide the following out-of-session:

- information on Roadmap oral health priority actions, and
- input to update the annual progress report for publication on the Department's website in November 2022.