

**++ ON BACKGROUND – NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION ++**

## **NEW TOOL TO DELIVER SIMPLER PATHWAY TO DISABILITY SUPPORTS**

- The NDIA is introducing a comprehensive support needs assessment which will include the application of the I-CAN version 6.
- This means participants are no longer required to source their own, sometimes costly reports ahead of a planning meeting, for the agency to assess their disability related support needs
- The **new** support needs assessment will be based on the I-CAN v6 and is a semi structured interview that will focus on their strengths & support needs, rather than functional impairments
- I-CAN questions are related to 12 domains and some examples include questions about:
  - Mobility: this covers how you move about, any equipment you need to get about and any transport support needs.
  - Communication: this covers your preferred methods communicating and any support needs you have.
- The tool will be modified over time to improve how it is used in the NDIS and with NDIS cohorts.
- The new support needs assessment will also include targeted modules and be tailored for use within the NDIS environment – to assess more complex support needs, such as assistive technology and home modifications
- Where a participant has an impairment that impacts their communication, assessors will adapt the assessment for that participant.
  - For example, assessors will be trained to support non-verbal communication, and participants can also be supported in their assessment by trusted support people.
- It is not an automated system: Assessments will be conducted by trained and accredited assessors.

- All assessors will undertake an onboarding program and formal training across a suite of modules, which will be developed in partnership with University of Melbourne and Centre for Disability Studies.
- In its **current form**, the assessment usually takes 1.5 to 3 hours, depending on the complexity of the individual's support needs.
- As the new tool is modified to suit NDIS participants' needs and preferences, this time may change to support better participant experience.
- The need for participants to source their own supporting documents can disadvantage those without the means to provide extensive medical reports

### What's new?

- The NDIA has procured a license for a new needs assessment tool, known as the Instrument for Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6.
- It is a key element of the new NDIS Planning Framework

### How will it work?

- It is one component of needs assessment
- It will be used by trained, accredited assessors through a semi structured interview process
- Assessors will meet with participants aged 16 and over
- The tool will be applied alongside questionnaires assessing each individual's personal and environmental circumstances.
- Further targeted assessments will be used for people with more complex disability support needs.
- It's been used in the national Disability Support for Older Australians program.
- The final design is still in progress

### Why is it needed

- It focuses on a participant's disability support needs rather than functional impairments
- Aligns with the 2023 NDIS Review recommendations.
- Feedback that planning process needs to be fairer and more consistent

### How was it chosen?

- Its selection follows a competitive procurement process, supported by a disability lived experience expert advisory group.

- The University of Melbourne has partnered with the Centre for Disability Studies to provide the I-CAN.
- The two bodies will work with the NDIA to use and modify the tool to ensure it is fit-for-purpose within the scheme.
- The procurement includes a 5-year partnership to implement & adapt the I-CAN to NDIS context

### **When?**

- The new framework will be introduced in stages from mid-2026. The staged rollout is designed to allow participants to provide real-time feedback.

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the Freedom Of Information Act 1982 by  
the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

## PLANNING

- We want to build an NDIS that is fair, consistent and empowering for people with permanent and significant disability.
- We are implementing the recommendations of the NDIS Review, which heard from thousands of people with disability and their family members, Disability Representative Organisations, providers and workers.
- One of the ways we're doing this is by helping people get the budget right the first time around and know how they can use their funds.
- The Albanese Government is making planning fairer and more consistent so people with permanent and significant disability get the support they need.

## VALUES

When Labor set up the NDIS, we made a promise to people with disability, to families and carers – not to leave you behind.

We're getting the NDIS back on track – so it's there for future generations.

NDIS is vital – measure of our character, our values. Labor values.

## OPPOSITION RECORD

- When we came to Government, decisions about NDIS funding for participants were inconsistent and unfair. It meant participants didn't trust the NDIA, they were confused and disempowered, disputing with the NDIA.
- These were feelings that came to characterise participants' experience of the NDIS under the Liberal Government.

## LABOR RECORD

- The Albanese Government has introduced significant reforms to put participants back at the heart of the NDIS. And that includes listening to the recommendations made by the Independent Review, which heard from thousands of people with disability and their families, alongside disability representative organisations, providers and workers.
- Our reforms aim to ensure every dollar in the Scheme makes a difference in participants' lives, and that the NDIS is sustainable into the future.
  - The NDIS Review found that people were confused about what they could use their funding on.
  - Participants found the rules about how funding could be spent opaque and confusing.
- This Government is ensuring the Scheme is equitable and inclusive, so that participants with significant and permanent disability receive the supports they need.

- We are midway through this reform journey. We are listening to feedback from the community on how these changes are being implemented.

#### **IF ASKED – NEW PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

- We want to make planning easier, fairer and more consistent for participants, in line with the NDIS Review recommendations.
- We often hear from participants that sourcing supporting evidence for planning meetings can cost a lot of money and time, and the outcomes are inconsistent and opaque.
  - Our new planning approach will mean more transparent and consistent decision-making and funding.
  - It will be based on a holistic assessment of a person's disability support needs, so we're accounting for a person's strengths and their personal and environmental circumstances
- Better and fairer assessment of participant support needs will result in more consistent and transparent budget setting.
- We have made a significant step forward in agreeing a partnership with the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Disability Studies.
  - We will use the Instrument for the Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) v6 as a key part of the new support needs assessment for people aged over 16.
  - The new support needs assessment approach will make the planning process fairer, easier to navigate and more transparent.
  - Accredited assessors will meet with participants and have a strengths-based conversation using the I-CAN to understand each individual's disability support needs.
- The I-CAN is only one part of the support needs assessment process.
  - It will be complemented by questionnaires focused on a person's individual situation.
  - Participants can still submit medical reports and other forms of evidence as part of the process if they desire, but it will not be compulsory.
- Work to progress the new planning approach is continuing in preparation for a gradual transition over a 5-year period, commencing from July 2026.
  - We are taking the time to get this right – working with states and territories and in consultation with the disability community on the

design of the new planning framework rollout and the finalisation of new rules.

#### **IF ASKED – ALGORITHM BEING USED TO DETERMINE BUDGETS**

- The new approach to planning will result in fairer and more consistent outcomes for participants. Participants will undergo a support needs assessment to understand their disability support needs.
  - We are taking the time to make sure that this assessment is a collaborative process which understands a participant's support needs and personal environmental circumstances holistically.
- The new planning framework will incorporate a funding method which will use the outcomes of the support needs assessment to determine a participant's fair and equitable budgets.
  - This method will be incorporated in NDIS legislation so that it is clear and understood. It will not be a faceless algorithm.
- The funding method will include process steps which enable Agency decision-makers to confirm that a budget is suitable for participants. There will be checks and balances put in place before any major changes to a participant's budget.
- In addition, the funding method will continue to include human decision-making steps, such as the Agency's existing process for evaluating quotes for complex supports.
- This process will ensure greater consistency and equity of NDIS budget decisions.

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the Freedom Of Information Act 1982 by  
the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 21:59 WEDNESDAY SEPT 24**

## **Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister**

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **NEW TOOL TO DELIVER SIMPLER PATHWAY TO DISABILITY SUPPORTS**

The National Disability Insurance Agency has taken a major step towards creating a simpler, fairer pathway for NDIS Participants to access the disability supports they need.

The NDIA has procured a license for a new needs assessment tool, known as the Instrument for Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6.

The NDIS Review recommended a better, clearer planning process to assess disability support needs and build plan budgets.

This tool will make it easier for people with disability and their families to navigate the NDIS. It will focus on a participant's disability support needs rather than functional impairments.

It will be used by trained, accredited assessors, who will meet with participants aged 16 and over, to help assess their disability support needs, as part of the New Planning Framework under the NDIS Act.

The tool will be applied alongside questionnaires assessing each individual's personal and environmental circumstances. Further targeted assessments will be used for people with more complex disability support needs.

It has been refined over 20 years and is used in programs including the national Disability Support for Older Australians program.

Its selection follows a competitive procurement process, supported by a disability lived experience expert advisory group.

The University of Melbourne has partnered with the Centre for Disability Studies to provide the I-CAN.

The two bodies will work with the NDIA to use and modify the tool to ensure it is fit-for-purpose within the scheme.

The new framework will be introduced in stages from mid-2026. The staged rollout is designed to allow participants to provide real-time feedback.

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL 21:59 WEDNESDAY SEPT 24****Quotes attributable to Senator Jenny McAllister, Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme:**

"It's fantastic that an Australian innovation will make the NDIS fairer, simpler, and just plain easier for people to use.

"It can take a long time and cost a lot of money for people to source supporting evidence to have a planning meeting. There is a better way."

This is a crucial step towards ensuring that we use the latest technology to make sure that we meet the needs of Australians with disability."

**Quotes attributable to University of Melbourne Professor of Mental Health System Reform Jason Thompson:**

"The University of Melbourne is proud to partner with the Centre for Disability Studies so we can both help the NDIA develop an assessment process that is grounded in evidence and lived experience and will uphold values of validity, fairness and transparency."

"This collaboration shows how strong research partnerships can translate into practical, real-world solutions."

**Quotes attributable to Centre for Disability Studies CEO Associate Professor Mary-Ann O'Donovan:**

"We are immensely proud to see the I-CAN v6 assessment tool adopted as the starting point in the development of the NDIA's new approach to assessing the support needs of NDIS participants."

"This evidence-based and person-centred tool has been researched and refined here in Australia over many years. We look forward to working with the disability community and the NDIA to further refine the tool for use in the new assessment process."

## **SNA tool – Virtual roundtable – TPs**

### *Welcome*

- Acknowledge Traditional Custodians – Gadigal people of the Eora nation.
  - Pay respects to elders past and present and extend to all First Nations people joining us today.
- We have turned on live captioning for this session, which also means the recording function has been turned on. Please let my team know if any issues.
- Four months since I was sworn in as Minister for the NDIS.
  - Many of you have been generous in offering me your time and expertise
  - Built the foundations for some positive working relationships
  - Intention to provide clarity and advance notice on reform agenda.
- The purpose of today's roundtable is to share with you – as key representatives of the disability community – the outcome from the Support Needs Assessment tool procurement
  - Also discuss our approach to the timeframe for the new planning framework over next 9 months.
- Keen to hear your perspectives, and look forward to some constructive discussion today.
- Joined today by Scott McNaughton, Andrew Maitland and Damien Poel from the Agency and Robyn Shannon and James MacIsaac from the department.
  - They will assist with answering technical questions – thanks for their time today
  - The NDIA will be running an information session later next week with DRCOs, the IAC and the co-design reference group.
- Keen to give this group early insight into the outcome of the procurement but also appreciate if it can be kept close until the announcement has been formally made.
  - Keen to give this group early insight as I'm sure you will have questions from your networks and organisations.
  - Appreciate the trust we're building.

### *New planning framework outcome*

- Before going to detail of the procurement outcome, acknowledge collective asks for a careful and considered approach to the rollout of the new planning framework.

- Appreciate the need for a well-paced process that bring the community along as a key pillar of this reform.
- Recognise we need to make changes carefully, once we have been through a co-design process and consulted with a wide range of stakeholders.
- I have been working closely with the NDIA to restructure the timeframe for rollout from 1 July 2026
  - Allows more time for testing and trialling to ensure we understand how the new planning framework works for participants and families
  - Means the Agency can incorporate lessons learned into the new planning framework
- Thank DROs, Every Australian Counts and the RAC co-chairs for their advocacy, which has helped inform our decision making.

#### *Support needs assessment*

- Recognise that there is keen interest in how the new support needs assessment process will work – a critical step in a fairer, more equitable experience for participants
  - Should mean more consistent decision making and a process that easier for people to understand
  - More transparent decision making also means people will have a better understanding of how their plan is constructed and what their budget means
- The tool which has been procured is the Instrument for the Classification of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6.
- The University of Melbourne has partnered with the Centre for Disability Studies to provide the tool, as well as a range of services to implement and embed the tool in NDIA operations.
  - A few things to note, which I think are important.
  - This tool will only be used to assess the disability support needs of participants over the age of 16. It will not be used to assess the support needs of children.
  - The tool is only one part of the needs assessment process. It will be used alongside personal and environmental circumstances questionnaires and targeted assessment models.
- This is a step forward in a fairer and consistent approach to support needs assessments as part of the NDIS, reflecting some of the recommendations made by the NDIS Review.

- Part of the shift towards a strengths-based approach to understanding a person's support needs, rather than basing decision making on deficit and diagnosis.
- I know there is a significant amount of work still to do as we develop the new planning framework
  - Part of that will be careful consideration of how the tool works in practice and making sure the transition is handled carefully
  - This will be particularly important for participants with complex needs and varying circumstances, including the diversity of disability, people living in remote areas, First Nations participants, and participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Thank you for your time today – welcome the opportunity to engage with you on this milestone.
- Pass to Scott McNaughton and Robyn Shannon to share perspectives on what the tool does in practical terms and process around consultation and rollout.
  - Open to comments and questions.

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the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

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[NF, IW 1/10/25]

## NDIS RECENT REFORM

- The NDIS Review recommended a fair, consistent and empowering NDIS experience, so people with disability, planners and providers understand what the NDIS funds and what it doesn't.
- This includes rules that give greater clarity on what are NDIS supports (section 10), and the period that funding is intended to cover (section 33).

## OUR RECORD

- This Government has introduced significant reforms to get the NDIS back on track, consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Review into the NDIS and in line with the original intent of the Scheme.
- The important reforms progressed by this Government aim to ensure every dollar allocated to the Scheme makes a difference in participants' lives, and that the NDIS is sustainable into the future.
- In 2022, we established the independent review of the NDIS to understand participants' experience of engaging with the Scheme.
  - The NDIS Review found that people were confused about what was considered reasonable and necessary, and what they could use their funding on.
  - The rules guiding how funding could be spent were opaque and confusing.
- This Government is committed to ensuring that the Scheme works equitably and inclusively for people, so that participants with significant and permanent disability receive the supports they need.
- We are midway through this reform journey and are listening to feedback from the community on how these changes are being implemented.

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[NF, IW 1/10/25]

**IF ASKED – NEW FRAMEWORK PLANNING**

- The Government is committed to rolling out a new framework planning process to improve how participants experience the NDIS. It will mean more transparent and consistent decisions and funding for their plans, based on a holistic assessment of their disability support needs.
- While work to establish the new approach to planning is progressing this year, a gradual transition will occur over a 5-year period, commencing from July 2026.
- Over coming months, the Government will continue to work with the disability community and states and territories around the design of the new framework planning rollout and the finalisation of new rules under the NDIS Act to establish these new arrangements.
- We are taking the time to get this right – working with states and territories and in consultation with the disability community.
- Better and simpler assessment of participant support needs will deliver more consistent and transparent budget setting by the National Disability Insurance Agency.
- We have made a significant step in delivering the new framework planning. We are partnering with the University of Melbourne and Centre for Disability Studies for this new approach with the Instrument for the Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6.
  - We often hear from participants that sourcing supporting evidence for planning meetings can cost a lot of money and time.
  - This new approach aims to make the assessment process fairer and easier.
  - Using the ICAN-6, accredited assessors will meet with participants and have a strengths-based conversation to understand their disability support needs.
  - It is only one part of the needs assessment process. It will be used alongside personal and environmental circumstances questionnaires and targeted assessment models. Participants can still submit medical reports as part of the process.

**IF ASKED – SECTION 10 RULES ON NDIS SUPPORTS / 'IN/OUT' LISTS**

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[NF, IW 1/10/25]

- NDIS Supports lists were introduced in October 2024 as part of these legislative changes to clarify what supports and services can be purchased using NDIS funding.
- This is assisting participants to more clearly understand what supports can be funded by the Scheme and what are the responsibility of other service systems.
- The Department recently undertook a public consultation to understand the experiences of participants in using the new NDIS Support lists, which will be used to understand how and where they need to be adapted.
  - We will engage meaningfully with the feedback provided during the public consultation in the process of strengthening and streamlining the NDIS Support lists.
- The NDIA is also conducting an ongoing evaluation of implementation of the NDIS Supports lists throughout 2025.

#### IF ASKED – FUNDING PERIODS

- Funding periods were introduced to ensure supports for the duration of a participant's plan and to reduce the risk of funds running out early.
  - Participants raised concerns that 12 month funding periods can increase the risk of overspending or running out of funds.
- These changes are being rolled out gradually. Participants are not being affected until they receive a new plan or reassessed plan following discussion with a delegate to understand their circumstances.
- A participant's individual circumstances and preferences are considered when finalising the funding period for a person's plan. These funding periods will generally be three months but the Agency is working flexibly with individual participants to ensure their plans are fit for purpose.
- Importantly, the total value of a participant's plan does not change because of funding periods. Any funds that are unspent in one period are rolled over to the next funding period, until the end of their plan.
- The Agency is evaluating the implementation of section 33 changes, including consultation and surveys with participants, providers and representatives, and will provide updates to the community via Disability Representative and Carer Organisations in coming weeks.
- I am working closely with the disability community, including Every Australian Counts, to understand the experience of participants throughout this process and to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

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[NF, IW 1/10/25]

## IF PRESSED – ELIGIBILITY REASSESSMENTS

- Eligibility reassessments are a standard process undertaken by the NDIA to make sure people who receive supports through the NDIS are eligible.
- Reassessments for children aged 6 and above are important check-in points which help ensure they are receiving the right supports.
  - The needs of children on the NDIS vary considerably.
  - Some children enter with a permanent and significant disability, under section 24 of the NDIS Act. These children are eligible for ongoing disability supports through the Scheme.
  - Some children enter through the early intervention pathway, as a way of providing early supports that likely mean they have less need for support in the future.
  - Eligibility reassessments are a standard process under the NDIS Act to determine if a child still requires supports after accessing the Scheme via the early intervention pathway.
  - These eligibility reassessments can find that the early supports have improved outcomes for children early in life, thereby reducing their need for ongoing intensive disability supports.
  - A dedicated Quality Assurance team checks all revocation decisions for accuracy and procedural fairness. When a participant has their access revoked after an eligibility reassessment, the NDIA explains their review rights and provides referrals to Partners in the Community to assist with connection with other available services.
- If someone is unhappy with the outcome of an eligibility assessment, they should first apply for an internal review. Following the review, individuals may apply for the decision to be appealed through the independent Administrative Review Tribunal.

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## Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### MAJOR STEP TO CREATE FAIRER, SIMPLER PATHWAY FOR NDIS PARTICIPANTS

A world-leading Australian innovation will sit at the heart of a new way of assessing the supports that people need through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

A new way of planning to be introduced in stages from mid-2026 will be fairer, more consistent and easier to navigate for people with disability and those who support them.

The Australian Government commissioned the landmark NDIS Review because many people said the Scheme had strayed from its original intentions.

Delivering a better pathway to assess disability support needs and build plan budgets was a key recommendation that came out of the Review.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has worked with the disability community through co-design sessions and other engagements to develop an assessment approach that is focused on individual support needs, not a person's impairment.

This work with the disability community will continue to refine the new planning approach, which will cut out the need for costly specialist reports funded by individuals and provide consistency.

It will reduce hassle and stress when Australians with disability engage in the NDIS planning process, and ensure participant outcomes remain at the core of the Scheme.

Following a competitive procurement process that began in February, the NDIA has taken a major step towards delivering this goal, signing a contract with the University of Melbourne to use and adapt a proven strengths-based and person-centred tool for support needs assessments.

The University of Melbourne has partnered with the Centre for Disability Studies to provide the support needs assessment tool, as well as a range of services required to implement and embed the tool in NDIA operations.

The Centre for Disability Studies developed the Instrument for the Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6 as an evidence-based tool for people with disability aged 16 and over.

The tool has been refined over 20 years and is used in programs including the Government's Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA) program.

The NDIA tender evaluation was supported by a disability lived experience expert advisory group.

Under the new way of planning accredited assessors will meet with participants and have a strengths-based conversation to understand their disability support needs. One of the strengths of the I-CAN is that it is adaptable to participants' individual circumstances.

The tool will be used alongside other elements of the NDIS needs assessment, which will include a personal and environmental circumstances questionnaire and further targeted assessment for more complex disability support needs.

The NDIA, the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Disability Studies will work together to consider and test modifications to the tool.

This will ensure it is effective for all participants including those with complex needs and varying circumstances including different disability types, participants in remote areas, First Nations participants and participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The new way of planning will be introduced across several years – starting from mid-2026 – so participants can provide feedback to ensure it provides the best outcomes.

Updates on the new way of planning including support needs assessment will be advised as they become available – find more information at [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au).

**Quotes attributable to the Minister for the NDIS, Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister:**

“The NDIS means everyone gets a fair go. The world looks to the NDIS as something to aspire to, and we’re making sure it becomes only stronger for the people it supports.”

“This is a significant step in a major change that will make a real difference for people with disability and their families and supporters.”

“It’s fantastic that an Australian innovation will make the NDIS fairer, simpler, more consistent – just plain easier.”

“It can take a long time and cost a lot of money for people to source supporting evidence to have a planning meeting. There is a better way.”

“We’ll continue to work with the disability community to deliver a pathway that is easy to understand and effective.”

**Quotes attributable to University of Melbourne Professor of Mental Health System Reform Jason Thompson:**

“The University of Melbourne is proud to partner with the Centre for Disability Studies so we can both help the NDIA develop an assessment process that is grounded in evidence and lived experience and will uphold values of validity, fairness and transparency.”

“This collaboration shows how strong research partnerships can translate into practical, real-world solutions.”

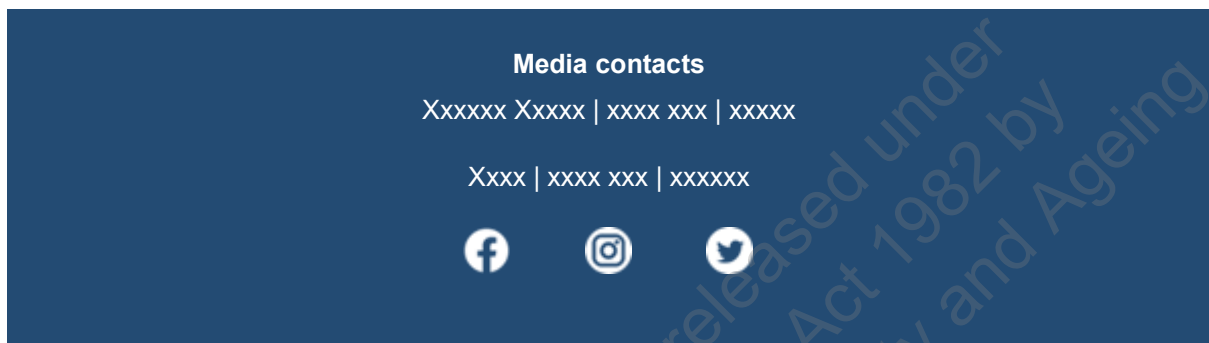
**Quotes attributable to Centre for Disability Studies CEO Associate Professor Mary-Ann O'Donovan:**

“We are immensely proud to see the I-CAN v6 assessment tool adopted as the starting point in the development of the NDIA's new approach to assessing the support needs of NDIS participants.”

"This evidence-based and person-centred tool has been researched and refined here in Australia over many years. We look forward to working with the disability community and the NDIA to further refine the tool for use in the new assessment process."

**DATE: Xxxday SEPTEMBER 2025**

**[ENDS]**



## 4 December 2025, Senate Estimates: New framework planning

### *Introduction*

- The NDIS is a world leading Scheme, which has changed the lives of countless Australians with disability. However, we have heard for years about the challenges faced by NDIS participants in navigating the Scheme's complexity.
- The intention of New Framework Planning is to restore the Scheme to its original intention by making it simpler, fairer and more person-centred for the 750,000 NDIS participants.
- At the heart of this reform is the idea that participants understand their lives and needs better than anybody else. To support and empower participants to pursue their goals, NDIS plans should not be a prescriptive list of supports that must be purchased, but flexible budgets that can be used to purchase the supports they need.
- That's what new framework planning is all about: providing participants with plans that are fairer, and easier to use and understand. In order to achieve this, the NDIS Review noted that the NDIA needs to develop and implement a new needs assessment process.

### *The support needs assessment process*

- I recently announced that the Agency has selected the Instrument for the Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN v6) as the base for developing the new NDIS needs assessment. The tool will be used alongside a new personal and environmental circumstances questionnaire which will collect additional information required to understand a participant's support needs.
- Participants will continue to be able to provide reports from their treating health professionals, on request by the Agency, if they have more complex support needs, including for needs such as assistive technologies, home modifications and disability related health supports.
- It is not an automated process; we will be spending more time with Participants than we do today. The support needs assessment will be undertaken by trained and skilled assessors using a semi structured interview approach. Assessors will meet with the participant, their family, support people and carers at a suitable time and place to have a conversation about their needs.
- The NDIA is working with the University of Melbourne and Centre for Disability Studies to develop training and guidance to make sure the assessor workforce is able to implement this process in a valid and strength-based way. The assessment process will be collaborative and provide opportunities for the assessor to play back what they have heard and correct any errors with the participant.
- The assessor will use the information about frequency and intensity of support need in domains of a participant's life to identify a participant's need for NDIS supports. For example, the assessor may ask whether a participant is looking for a job and then determine if they require disability supports to work in employment by using scores in the lifelong learning domain in the assessment tool.

- In new framework plans, funding will be provided through either a stated item or as part of the flexible budget. While funding for stated supports must be used for a particular purpose or support, funding in the flexible budget may be used flexibly on NDIS Supports.

#### *Approving a plan*

- The needs assessment report is prepared by trained and skilled needs assessors. While the delegate cannot change the contents of the needs assessment report, they may arrange a replacement assessment if the assessment process isn't completed correctly.
- As with old framework planning, the CEO's delegate must approve every plan. There will always be a human delegate reviewing a plan before it is approved. The delegate's decision to approve the statement of participant supports in the participant's plan will still be a reviewable decision.
- If participants are not satisfied with their plan, they may request an internal review. If they are still not satisfied after the internal review, participants have the right to apply to the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) for review.
- When a reviewer or the ART reviews a delegate's decision to approve the statement of participant supports, they have the same powers the delegate who made the original decision. This includes decision making powers across all the discretionary components of the plan, such as:
  - Plan duration
  - Funding periods
  - Plan management type
  - Restricting a portion of the flexible budget to specific supports
  - Requirements on how certain supports must be used
  - Whether to arrange for a replacement assessment.

#### *Plan implementation*

- Under new framework plans, we are moving to longer plan periods, so participants will likely have less regular plan reviews. Longer plans, supported by funding periods, will create much more certainty for participants and allow them to get on with accessing their supports and living their lives.
- We are continuing to work closely with the disability community to design, test and implement new framework planning. This includes ensuring the assessment approach can be tailored for different disability types across the NDIS population.

*Guardian article on support needs assessment*

- I note the Guardian Article released yesterday.
- The Guardian referred to the NDIS Review's recommendations and the recent procurement of the I-CAN, the new Assessor, the individual's personal and environmental circumstances questionnaire and other targeted modules. These are all correct and key components of new framework planning and the introduction of a Support Needs Assessment.
- What isn't correct, the new Supports Needs Assessor we will be spending more time with Participants than we do today. Assessors will meet with the participant, their family, support people and carers at a suitable time and place to have a conversation about their needs.
- The assessment process will be collaborative and provide opportunities for the assessor to play back what they have heard and correct any errors with the participant.
- The article also referred to "Funding and support plans for national disability insurance scheme participants will be generated by a computer program". This needs to be clarified that as with current planning, the CEO's delegate must approve every plan. There will always be a human delegate reviewing a plan before it is approved.
- The article finally indicated that "there would be no requirement for staff to consider independent medical evidence provided by NDIS participants in the development of plans". Again, this is incorrect, Participants will continue to be able to provide reports from their treating health professionals, on request by the Agency, if they have more complex support needs, including for needs such as assistive technologies, home modifications and disability related health supports.