

Media Release



For immediate release

26 February 2021

Two days notice not enough for NDIS participants to coordinate plans

Eight of Australia's leading for purpose, community managed mental health providers are calling for a delay to the decision by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to remove – almost immediately – support coordination funding from NDIS participants' core supports budgets.

From Sunday, 28 February, NDIS participants will no longer be able to claim support coordination line items under their Core Supports budget in NDIS plans. For many, this means being disconnected from an important lifeline at short notice. This is unfair and, in some cases, unsafe.

The chief executive officers of Mind Australia, Neami National, Open Minds, Flourish Australia, One Door, Stride, Mentis Assist and Wellways Australia are all in agreement that the short notice the NDIA has provided to NDIS participants – of just two days – has seen the NDIA pull the rug from under some of the most vulnerable Australians, especially at a time when the Commonwealth Government is winding back Job Keeper and the impacts of the global pandemic continue to be felt.

Laura Collister, CEO of Wellways Australia and group spokesperson said "support coordination helps participants to build connections with informal, community and funded supports and assists them to build skills to understand, implement and use their plans".

"Our organisations collectively call on the NDIA to rethink this move that will see Wellways participants without access to much needed support coordination," said Ms Collister.

"We are all extremely disappointed the NDIA has not consulted with or given any advance indication of the forthcoming change to NDIS participants, disability peak bodies or NDIS providers before making this change.

"Participants must be given more than two days to come to terms with changes to their plans. It is only fair that the NDIA immediately delay the decision to cease funding at short notice and give participants ample time to consider this impact on their NDIS plans," said Ms Collister.

Access to support coordination out of participants' core supports budgets was put in place during COVID-19 in 2020, to give participants access to more support coordination funds, including to those who required increased support due to crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ENDS -

General media contact:

Scott Samson, Public Affairs, Wellways Australia

Email: ssamson@wellways.org or Phone: 03 8486 4208 or 0429 022 248

Media Release



An introduction to the eight organisations:

About [Mind Australia](#)

Mind Australian (Mind) is one of the country's leading community-managed specialised mental health service providers. We have been supporting people who are dealing with the day-to-day impacts of mental ill-health, as well as their families, friends and carers for 40 years. Our staff deliver a range of services and supports to people challenged by mental ill-health. Mind also operates as a provider of services and supports to individuals who have NDIS funding packages in multiple locations across Australia.

Mind significantly invests in research about mental health recovery and psychosocial disability and shares this knowledge, developing evidence informed new service models, evaluating outcomes, and providing training for peer workers and mental health professionals. We also advocate for, and campaign on basic human rights for everyone; constantly challenging the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with mental health issues.

About [Neami National](#)

Neami National (Neami) is a not-for-profit Community Managed Organisation providing specialist, community-based mental health services. Neami has over 31 years' experience supporting people along the continuum of mental health need, with a focus on those people experiencing severe mental ill-health and the most complex needs. We support over 9,000 people nationally each year across a range of services.

Neami's overarching vision of full citizenship for all people living with a mental illness in Australian society underpins an emphasis on social inclusion and community connection in the way we collaborate with people and work to our mission of improving mental health and wellbeing in local communities. We use a collaborative recovery approach, which is informed by current research and backed by over three decades of experience in the community managed mental health sector.

About [Wellways Australia](#)

Wellways Australia is a leading for-purpose mental health and community services organisation dedicated to ensuring all Australians lead active and fulfilling lives in their community. We work with people with mental health challenges and people living with disability and others facing disadvantage to help them create the life they want to live. We have a commitment to ensuring that all the people we serve have opportunities to fully participate in the community, and we actively work to embed ourselves in communities to build communities that seek out and welcome the participation of everyone. Community inclusion underpins all our efforts as an organisation.

We advocate for policy change to make sure people can access the best possible care and information when they need it. because we recognise for people to succeed there needs to be equitable access to services and supports for all people, and the elimination of barriers to community participation, including stigma and systemic discrimination.

Media Release



About [Open Minds](#)

Open Minds is a leading provider of mental health and disability support services in Queensland and Northern New South Wales. With more than 100 years of history, Open Minds is committed to its purpose of enabling an independent and positive future for people living with mental illness and disabilities. Open Minds is also a registered NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) provider, with more than 400 employees spread across 35 locations.

We provide Support Workers and other professionals to enable our clients to live as independently as possible. Our services include: Supported Independent Living, Support Coordination, Community Access, Complex Care, and more. We believe in working closely with the individual, their family and carers, professionals, and other stakeholders in their life, to deliver high quality support services suited to their unique needs.

About [Flourish Australia](#)

Our name, Flourish Australia, reflects our fundamental and enduring commitment to people's mental health and wellbeing, supporting them to thrive and live a contributing life. Flourish Australia today is the result of a proud 60-year history. Known as RichmondPRA from 2012 to 2016, Flourish Australia's origins stem from the successful amalgamation of two longstanding mental health organisations, the Richmond Fellowship of NSW and Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia (PRA).

Our mission of working together for optimal mental health and wellbeing is the continuance of the dedication of our founding organisations. We continue the legacy of recovery-oriented community support, a fundamental commitment to improving outcomes for people with a lived experience of a mental health issue, and the pursuit of independence and a contributing life. As an organisation we strive to ensure our professionalism and expertise are balanced by our personal connections. Flourish Australia reflects the good heart that everyone in this organisation has – they simply wouldn't be here without it.

About [One Door](#)

Through One Door Mental Health, people living with mental illness and their families find an inclusive community, innovative services and advocacy support.

For many years One Door, has designed and delivered expert mental health programs that are now available through the NDIS.

About [Stride](#)

Founded in 1907, Stride (formerly known as Aftercare) is a not-for-profit organisation delivering programs and services across the mental health care and disability sectors. Stride is dedicated to providing specialist mental health services which improve the lifelong mental health of children, young people and adults – and help people with complex needs live better.

About [Mentis Assist](#)

Mentis Assist is one of Victoria's primary not-for-profit, non-government, community managed mental health service providers supporting people with mental illness and psychiatric disabilities. Mentis Assist supports individuals and their families, offering a range of services including one on one outreach and in office support, service and care co-ordination, group activities, family support and a suite of training and meaningful activity options.