



MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Parliament House  
State Square  
Darwin NT 0800  
[minister.elferink@nt.gov.au](mailto:minister.elferink@nt.gov.au)

GPO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801  
Telephone: 08 8928 6615  
Facsimile: 08 8928 6590

Ms Vanessa Harris  
Executive Officer  
NT Mental Health Coalition  
PO Box 1128  
NIGHTCLIFF NT 0814

Dear Ms Harris

The Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments have formally agreed on the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), commencing from 1 July 2016. The *Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory: Transition to a National Disability Insurance Scheme* was signed on 3 May 2016 and is part of the most significant and broad-ranging change to how services are provided to help improve the lives of people with a disability across Australia and to enable them to achieve their individual goals. The negotiations have ensured that the unique circumstances of the Northern Territory are acknowledged and incorporated into the NDIS model.

Funding of disability programs in the Northern Territory will more than double with the Commonwealth providing \$105 million per year and the Northern Territory \$99 million. This additional funding and the new service delivery model will mean that people in the Northern Territory who have a disability will have opportunities over their lifetime to make decisions about the types of support they access, how this support is provided and who provides it.


One of the key administrative changes will be the National Disability Insurance Agency taking over responsibility from the Northern Territory Government for funding disability services to eligible clients. These changes, which are welcomed by clients, their families and service providers, will need to be introduced carefully so that existing clients and providers are not unduly inconvenienced during transition. For this reason, and because of the Territory's unique geographical, service delivery and cultural considerations, NDIS will be introduced progressively over the next three years.

The first stage will include a continued rollout of the Barkly trial from 1 July 2016. This will be followed by the East Arnhem region and Supported Accommodation services in the Darwin region from 1 January 2017. From 1 July 2017, the second stage will include Top End Regional and Remote areas, including Katherine as well as Supported Accommodation services in Katherine and Alice Springs. From 1 July 2018, the third and final stage will include the rest of the Darwin region and Central Australia, including Alice Springs. When the third stage is completed, NDIS will be Territory-wide.

The Department of Health will work with clients, service providers and the National Disability Insurance Agency throughout the transition to full Scheme implementation across the Territory. Further details about the Scheme and its implications for people with a disability, their families and carers as well as service providers are available at [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au).

If you have any questions about the introduction of NDIS in the Northern Territory please contact the Office of Disability on telephone 08-8999 2809 or the Mental Health Directorate on telephone 08-8999 2717.

Yours sincerely



JOHN ELFERINK

10:13  
18/5/16