



NORTHERN TERRITORY  
**MENTAL HEALTH**  
COALITION

8 June 2016

John Elferink MLA  
Minister for Disability Services  
Minister for Mental Health Services  
GPO Box 3146  
DARWIN NT 0801  
Email: [minister.elferink@nt.gov.au](mailto:minister.elferink@nt.gov.au)

Cc: Chief Minister, Adam Giles

Dear Minister Elferink

**RE: Community Mental Health Services transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**

Thank you for your letter 18 May 2016 regarding the Northern Territory (NT) Government's formal signing of the Bilateral Agreement with the Commonwealth Government on the introduction of the NDIS commencing from 1 July 2016.

The Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition (Coalition) on behalf of our members is keen to work with the NT Government on an effective NDIS transition process for the applicable organisations. The Coalition is keen to ensure that the transition process is financial sustainable and has minimal impact on the consumers of mental health services.

The Coalition is the peak body for community mental health services in the NT. The Coalition has a network of around 200 individuals, organisations and stakeholders and 35 registered member organisations across the NT. Our members have expressed concern about elements of the NDIS, in particular the psychosocial disability criteria and the applicability of the NDIS in the NT context.

The Coalition has been working with our members and the Department's Mental Health Directorate, Department of Health to consider types of service provision for people who are likely to be ineligible for NDIS and or people who may be outside the scope of the NDIS. Part of this work has included the Coalition engaging a researcher in consultation with the Mental Health Directorate and a number of NT Government funded community mental health services to conduct a 'snap shot' of service profiles.

The Coalition together with our local and National partners regularly communicate mental health opportunities and challenges throughout the mental health sector. We have

prepared forums in Darwin and Alice Springs for the end of June 2016 and know that NDIS will be a key topic of discussion. Key note speakers from our National partners include:

- Frank Quinlan, Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Australia and
- Rod Asbury, Convenor, Community Mental Health Australia.

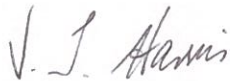
The Coalition is currently developing additional forums in September 2016 which will have a mental health workforce theme.

As you are no doubt aware, the mental health sector is currently undergoing multiple reform processes in addition to NDIS. The lack of any detailed plans or agreements to ensure a smooth process continues to raise concern within the mental health sector. The Coalition has a consultative relationship with National key stakeholders. The Coalition is in a position to value add to discussion and planning to continue to work towards improved, quality mental health services across the NT.

The Coalition would like to nominate to be involved in meetings with the NT Government and key stakeholders to support the rollout of the NDIS across the NT.

If you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss our work further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 8948 2246.

Yours sincerely



Vanessa Harris  
Executive Officer

CC: Helen Egan, President NT Mental Health Coalition