

## December 2016 Information update around the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Family Advocacy continues to share the experience of families accessing and using the NDIS. We will guarantee that real family experiences inform our systemic work. So all barriers and issues expressed here are part of the comment we can provide back to the NDIA and other relevant government departments.

### Support Coordination

- There is still a lot of confusion about the role of support coordinators  
Coordination of support provides
  - 1) Connection - Linking people to places, providing ideas
  - 2) Coordination - Organising and arranging these connections
  - 3) Specialised- requires medical qualifications
- Families are saying that the local area coordinators are not able to add this to plans, if you would like support coordination you will need to be very clear with the Lac/planner and also have put some thought into why this is important for your family member.
- At the moment a support coordinator has to be a registered NDIA provider and receives funding to assist in the ways described above. Sometimes they are only needed for a short time to get things started and arranged. For people with more complex needs this support may be ongoing – it really depends on the individual needs and the support they may have via families and others to assist in this work.

**Self Management** and **Plan management** pathways are being overlooked by planners and Local Support Coordinators which is then pushing people into plans that are only agency managed. This is the most limiting pathway to achieve change for your family member as it only allows support from NDIA approved providers. If you want to expand the choice of people supporting your family member than you will need to speak up for self managing or plan managing. Remember that plans can use a mix of these approaches to managing the plan.

## **Float or advanced emergency payments**

Originally people choosing to self manage the plan had the ability to have a monthly float of money available to pay up front for services provided. This option has been removed which means people will have to pay for a service from their own money and then claim back or have an arrangement to pay for the support after it has been provided. This is a difficult situation for families and participants who are not using organisations that offer post payment terms.

## **Family Advocacy Ideas to assist**

- Know that there is a review process and a complaints process, find out more on our [/the-importance-of-advocacy-in-a-changing-disability-sector/ webpage](#). If you go through an internal review and are still not happy with the outcome there is an appeals process that we can discuss further with you.
- Enhance your advocacy skills to speak out for your family member, view some great clips and articles to help become an effective advocate, [Advocacy- making it happen](#)
- Never underestimate your [natural authority](#) as a family
- Keep connected- with other families and organisations aligned with your values who truly wish to see better outcomes in the lives of people with disability.
- Gain ideas and inspiration from other families' stories, [visit Resourcing Families website](#), visit Family Advocacy's [YouTube channel](#) to hear more from families and other speakers around having a good life and how this can be distinctly different from the more traditional approaches for people with disability.
- Consider the power of developing Valued Roles for our family member see [The Purpose of Life is a Life With Purpose: Creating Meaningful Lives Through Valued Roles](#), [Valued Social Roles: Pathways to Full, Meaningful and Inclusive Lives](#)
- Revisit planning ideas to continue to improve and nurture the goals and vision around your family member, [Planning tools](#)

- If your family member hasn't gone through the NDIS process yet then planning is the key to a beneficial plan being developed. If you are short of ideas then enlist the support of family and friends to help generate some valued roles for your family member. One way to do this is by starting a [Circle of Support](#). This [video](#) shows what can be achieved with the help of a circle of support.
- Write the plan down with clear rationale about how this is meeting the needs and aspirations of your family member and bring to the planning meeting. Attached is an example of a plan that links the overarching goals to the practical implications of the goals. Please note, line items and goals may be framed differently in your family members plan and their goals should be personalised to them.
- [rethinking respite](#) article by John Armstrong and Lynda Shevellar provides a new way of thinking around this program.

This is national reform that provides an important opportunity to reach for more ordinary pathways for people with disability. We have a chance to really push for a system that focuses on meeting the needs of individuals rather than services. Our advice to all families is to **'dream big'**.

**CALL FAMILY ADVOCACY- 1800 620 588 (outside metro Sydney) OR 02 9869 0866**

**Our role is to assist families to make this scheme work in the best interests of your family member.**