

Nursing support and catheter changes in the community - update about NDIS funding.

The Issue

Many people receiving funding to enable them to purchase supports for wound care and/or catheter changes in the community are finding that this funding is not available under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Spinal Life Australia has been supporting members with information on how to continue to access funding for these vital services in the NDIS environment on an interim basis until a clear agreement is reached between the Queensland State Government and the Commonwealth Government.

A final agreement has not yet been reached, and the previously announced deadline of June 30th, 2019 is looming.

This document provides an update on the situation. Spinal Life Australia will continue to advocate for a final clear arrangement to ensure the continued provision of the funding for people requiring these supports.

The Council of Australian Governments Disability Reform Council met late in 2018, and the following decision was reported from the meeting.

Clarifying NDIS and Health System Roles and Responsibilities

The Council noted:

1. the need to prioritise and urgently resolve key boundary and interface issues between the NDIS and health systems;
2. the states and territories, the Commonwealth and the NDIA are also undertaking further work to clarify roles and responsibilities for the NDIS and the health systems where health and disability supports are required concurrently (including supports in hospital settings and the transition from rehabilitation to NDIS maintenance supports) and will provide advice to the first meeting of the Council in 2019.
3. advice has been provided to the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council meeting on 7 December 2018 on improving hospital discharge processes for NDIS participants; and
4. a summary of this advice and outcomes will be provided to the COAG Health Council which discussed the NDIS/health interface at its 12 October 2018 meeting and requested a report in early 2019 on resolving these matters.

The Council agreed:

1. positions, actions and timings on NDIS/health interface issues on: access and underlying conditions, self-care, palliative care, value for money and informal supports;

2. the interim and without prejudice funding arrangements for supports required due to permanent functional impairment that would usually be delivered by clinicians outside hospital settings pending further advice to the Council on enduring roles and responsibilities; and
3. states and territories, the Commonwealth, and the NDIA work collaboratively on:
 - a. clarifying roles and responsibilities for supports required due to permanent functional impairment that would usually be delivered by clinicians outside hospital settings where agreement is yet to be reached;
 - b. subsequently sharing respective costings for the provision of these supports; and
 - c. providing advice to the first meeting of the Council in 2019 on enduring roles and responsibilities.

Actions arising

Actions	Action due	Lead jurisdiction
1. All jurisdictions to share costings for the provision of supports required due to permanent functional impairment that would usually be delivered by clinicians outside hospital settings.	2019	All
2. Provide clarifying advice to DRC on roles and responsibilities for supports required due to permanent functional impairment that would usually be delivered by clinicians outside hospital settings.	First Disability Reform Council meeting of 2019	Commonwealth – Department of Social Services

Based on this advice, we understand that a longer-term position in relation to the health interface issues (including nursing services) will be determined by Disability Reform Council in the next month or so.

Following this decision, the Queensland Government will then formalise a position for the longer term – for example, if the decision is that this remains a State responsibility, the Queensland Government will need to identify a funding source for the support into the future.

What does this mean?

As a result of no decision being reached between the State and Commonwealth Governments, the Queensland State Government are currently not able to provide any clarity about arrangements post 30 June 2019 other than to say that there is a general commitment from all parties that these necessary supports should continue to be available.

Spinal Life Australia will continue to advocate for members for continuation of funding for nursing services for its members, regardless of what level of Government agrees to provide the funding. We will be writing to the Queensland Minister for Disability Services and Seniors and Communities to raise this (and other issues) with her, requesting that she discuss these at the next meeting of the Disability Reform Council, scheduled in first half of 2019.