



NDIS White-Anted by States and Territories failure to use the National Disability Standards

The fact that all States and Territories will not be using the new National Standards for Disability Services is a gross injustice to all people with a disability.

People with disabilities must have the certainty of knowing that disability service providers have to measure up to the same standards, no matter what the postcode or service type. The fragmentation, inefficiencies and inequities inherent in eight States and Territories making their own rules is why the Productivity Commission determined that a coherent and certain system for people with disabilities was required, and recommended the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

In December 2013 ministers from all jurisdictions endorsed new National Standards for Disability Services. These new standards were the result of more than three years of exhaustive stages of consultation, validation and user testing.

Yet the answer to the question “Will all States and Territories be using these new standards?” is a resounding “No.” This is stated in a roundabout way: “Some jurisdictions intend to adopt the standards as they are; others are making sure that their own standards are consistent with the national standards.”⁽¹⁾ In other words, “No, not all States and Territories will be using these new standards.”

And if you want to know what a particular State or Territory is doing, you are advised to direct your questions to “the relevant jurisdictional department.”⁽¹⁾

The outline of standards and quality assurance in each State and Territory in the 2014 Report on Government Services, Chapter 14 on Disability Services demonstrates why change is needed to eliminate the duplication and waste and bring coherency and certainty for people with disabilities.⁽²⁾

The unwillingness demonstrated by entrenched bureaucracies to accept the change which is the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is nothing short of the undermining, the white-anting, of the NDIS.

We call upon the Federal Minister responsible for implementing the NDIS, the Hon Mitch Fifield, to work with each and every State and Territory Minister for Disability to strengthen their commitment to the NDIS and to strengthen the implementation of the NDIS by enacting the same National Standards for Disability Services.

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(1) <http://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/standards-and-quality-assurance/new-national-standards-for-disability-services> Frequently Asked questions

(2) http://www.pc.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/132355/rogs-2014-volumef-chapter14.pdf pages 378 to 417