

**A level negotiating table is not for NDIS participants.  
This is an old block funding captive market power over people adage**

Within traditional captive market, block funding power over people, People with disabilities/families/stakeholders (consumers) with concerns about disability service level and quality hope for at least a level playing field between service providers, and consumers. Sounds very democratic in theory, but is mostly not good in practice.

A level playing field is a situation in which everyone has a similar/equal chance of succeeding. Achieving this with traditional service providers, most especially DHHS in Victoria, and consumers, necessitates consumers being provided with similar resources to those at the disposal of most service providers. Legal and financial resources, and not the 'service-provider-knows-best' attitude. Not so! This is not how it should be, no matter how equal this might appear.

Ensuring support services are as intended by care policies and service agreements is most difficult for consumers – especially those in covert situations like group homes and day services. Service providers must, therefore, be accountable and obligated to consumers who are accepted as in the driver's seat - This is the intention of the NDIS, that the consumer be front, centre and valued.

Given the extensive unmet needs being funded by extensive NDIS public purse resources being streamed on to the streets by the NDIA, this is highly unlikely to occur in the near future – needing a situation of more supply than demand.

Under the NDIS the following traditional attitude must cease: "If you don't like what we do, go elsewhere, if you cause any problems we will throw your family member out, if you question our service we will take action against you and/or place a PIN on you – or similar".

Rather, service providers must be encouraged to do as good restaurant management and staff - totally respect the customer, or the customer will bad-mouth the restaurant. This is the marketplace where the NDIS is intended to be, and where NDIS service provider management and staff should be treating the consumer as totally valued at all times.

In practice however, the excessive shortage of direct care staff generated by extensive NDIS money coming on the streets, consumes could be less valued under NDIS than they were under traditional captive market block funded services. This is especially so for those with high support needs within the NDIS principle of individualisation being digital (tick-the-box) support services.