

To: Members of the Productivity Commission

I am writing this submission on behalf of the Centre for Disability Studies Inclusive Research Network. Our Network consists of 10 co-researchers with intellectual disabilities, 4 co-researchers from support agencies, and 5 university co-researchers.

This group has been researching since 2010, and has investigated various issues that affect Australians with an intellectual disability. The Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2012 published that there are approximately 668,100 Australians with intellectual disability, representing 2.9% of the total population. It is reported in the 2011 Productivity Commission Report that close to half of all NDIS participants will have an intellectual or developmental disability.

In 2014, in recognition of the need for research specifically for and by people with intellectual disability regarding the NDIS, the group undertook an investigation into what people with intellectual disability understood to be the NDIS. Twenty-eight people with intellectual disability took part in a series of focus groups.

Our analysis revealed three themes that emerged from this data:

1. The information people with intellectual disability knew or didn't know about the NDIS
2. What people with intellectual disability thought the NDIS may be able to do for them
3. The various concerns that people with intellectual disability had about the NDIS

The specific outcomes of our research can be found in the attached presentation slides from our address given at the 49<sup>th</sup> ASID (Australian Society for Intellectual Disability) Conference in Fremantle, Australia.

In overview of our findings, participants with intellectual disability told the co-researchers that:

- They saw that the NDIS as a time of significant change
- They required capacity building in understanding the NDIS and its processes
- They saw opportunities for themselves with the NDIS
- They also had some concerns and worries about funding being reduced and feared they lacked confidence to speak up and voice their opinions.

We have attached a picture of the members of the group meeting with Bruce Bonyhady, former chair of the NDIS to share their findings of this research investigation. Being an inclusive researcher also means being an advocate for change.

In sharing our research with the Productivity Commission, we hope that our findings will be considered as part of the review of NDIS costs, specifically for this population which represents a significant proportion of current and future NDIS participants.

Should you wish to discuss this or other research opportunities with us, please contact our Network at [cds@cds.org.au](mailto:cds@cds.org.au).

Professor Patricia O'Brien  
Director, Centre for Disability Studies  
On behalf of The Inclusive Research Network

