

NDIS NDIA FAILING CLIENTS ALREADY IN ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT

The NDIS & NDIA knew well before hand that the State were transferring to the NDIS clients in state funded group homes and even state operated group homes. Yet the NDIS incompetently did not prepare for this easy and definable implication.

The provision of accommodation, i.e. is the property is quiet a separate issue to operating accommodation support. The NDIS service categories do not differentiate these.

They deliberated over property and the issue of unmet need for accommodation (properties) and developed a framework which is commendable. But is primarily focuses on the property for developers, investors, landlord and the investment aspect, physical accessibility, building standards and property maintenance that a landlord would be concerned with.

BUT FAILED to understand the real world experience of providing the support services within those properties. There are many issues in operating accommodation support THAT ARE NOT ADDRESSED IN THE NDIS SUPPORT CATEGORIES AND PRICING OR BENCHMARKING.

Accommodation service providers are not being paid by the NDIS / NDIA after clients transferred from the state funding to the NDIS. One group home we operate is now over \$100,000 in deficit and the NDIA have not allocated a budget for high intensity behaviour support 4 months after the clients state funding ceased and the client transferred to the NDIS. Yet for safety the client requires 24/7 high intensity staff support.

Group home minor and medium property repairs - not covered by landlords or property insurance.

Landlord will not cover, and the accommodation funding model, does not adequately address the maintenance of extra ordinary wear and tear that wheel chairs can cause to the premises i.e. damage to walls, and the damage that clients with serious behaviours of concern can inflict on a property and with the disability pension they can not afford to pay for. Grounds maintenance (lawns, gardens, pools) costs can be above the clients means and fees. These have been considered in state funding budgets for the operation of the group home by the support provider who arranges these minor and medium repairs a landlord or property insurance will not cover.

House hold operating costs above pension means.

In high intensity behaviour support accommodation for clients where it is not safe for them or others to live in shared accommodation, their board and lodging fees do not cover the house operating expenses of utilities & telecommunications and these have been covered in previous state funding of these types of group homes.

Group Home vehicle operating costs.

A number, if not many group home clients, because of high intensity physical support for wheel chairs, unstable epilepsy and other complications can not safely travel by public transport, or because of high intensity behaviour support not safely travel with others on public transport and in both cases require the accommodation to have available a vehicle for transport to appointments, daily activities, evening activities, week-end life enrichment and community access excursions with trained and qualified staff. Previously the state funding either provided one off funding for purchase

or high recurrent funding for leasing these accommodation support vehicles and funded any safety shield and other disability accessibility modifications as well as subsidised the ongoing operating costs of the vehicle. The clients NDIS transport concessions do not even cover a small proportion of these costs, and with it automatically paid to the client or their guardian it is not available for service provider to bill against.

The NDIS NDIA have failed terribly in planning for a known and predictable issues with the real support necessary in group homes.

When I worked in the state social policy reform that created the first state group homes - we knew about these issues before we set up the first group home. We had our finance people workout realistic financial modelling after consultation with people who knew about these types of services, we prepared and published guideline for operating accommodation services and I developed in partnership with the University of Sydney continuing education a course to train the new accommodation managers. We had no problems as we took action on a foreseeable issue - something the NDIS NDIA have failed to do.