

To the productivity commissioner in regards to NDIS draft report.

As a parent of a young woman with a disability, I have read your report and tried to understand the complexities of such a document. I would like to make some comments.

In section 5.4 regarding who would be the person doing the assessing of people with a disability. This has always concerned me, as I find it confronting and disconcerting that someone would come to our home to assess our daughter and that they wouldn't know her well. It has always been most helpful if people who are assisting with plan writing and the facilitation of plans, knows our daughter well to assist with assessing her needs. I would find it most difficult to have an "unknown" person take this position. I feel this should be the prerogative of the person being assessed to have a say in who assesses them.

Another major suggestion would be regarding respite.

I cannot find enough information around this, and would think it is well and truly time that ALL respite funding should be paid to the person it is intended for directly. Either as direct payments with all the rest of their funding, or for the recipients discretion as to where it is paid.

There is a major flaw in the system presently around respite. The service providers pull all the strings telling families who can have access to their funding and how they can spend it. At most times not for the benefit of the person it is intended for.

The Older Carers Respite Funding that was made available 10 years ago, has been swallowed up in the respite system and very rarely supports the older carers. Some service providers take up to 30% of the funding for doing very little. This is an opportunity to roll all the respite funding into the package as it should be. If families can use it without paying service charges then that's where the funding should be going.

The present system of respite funding is a mine field.

Families don't know who has their funding.

The services have tendered for the funding and keep it well hidden from families. Most families will tell you that funding for respite is like drawing teeth from service providers. This would be a wonderful opportunity to roll the respite funding allocation into people's direct payments, and cut out the "middle man"