



PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

INFORMATION ANALYSIS ADVICE

CHRONOLOGY

RESEARCH PAPER SERIES, 2018–19

13 JULY 2018

The National Disability Insurance Scheme: a chronology

Luke Buckmaster and Shannon Clark
Social Policy Section

Contents

Brief history of the NDIS	2
Introduction.....	2
2007–2011: proposals for alternative models	2
Senate inquiry into disability services	2
Australia 2020 Summit	3
National Disability Strategy	4
Disability Investment Group.....	4
Productivity Commission report	5
Early development, passage of legislation	7
Debates about funding.....	7
Implementation issues	8
NDIS milestones	10

Brief history of the NDIS

Introduction

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides support to people with disability, their families and carers. It is jointly governed and funded by the Australian, state and territory governments.¹ It is intended to replace the previous system of disability care and support provided under the National Disability Agreement.²

The NDIS was introduced by the Gillard Labor Government on 1 July 2013, beginning with a trial phase known as the NDIS Launch. The NDIS began to be introduced across Australia from July 2016. It is being progressively rolled out and is not due to be completed until 2019–20.

This section provides a brief history of the NDIS, including the context from which it emerged, the NDIS's early development and the passage of legislation, and debates and issues. This is followed by a table listing milestones in the development of the scheme from 2007 until 30 June 2018.

2007–2011: proposals for alternative models

The NDIS is a major reform of disability support in Australia. The NDIS emerged from years of discussions about problems with the existing disability support arrangements, the need for reform, and proposals for new models of disability support. Key developments in the realisation of the NDIS are discussed below.

Senate inquiry into disability services

A 2007 Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs (the Committee) inquiry report, [Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement](#), made several recommendations relevant to the eventual introduction of the NDIS. Nationally, responsibilities for specialist disability services had been defined through a multilateral agreement between the Australian Government and the states and territories, known as the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA), and since 2009, as the National Disability Agreement.³

As the inquiry report noted, at this time:

... there had been criticism of the CSTDA on many fronts: by people with disabilities; by advocacy groups; by State and Territory Governments; and by the Australian National Audit Office ...⁴

In addition:

A number of issues were raised in debate to support an inquiry. People with a disability had pointed to a lack of clarity in the intent of the [Commonwealth State/Territory Disability] Agreement and changes to the Agreement over time. As a result, people with disabilities and their advocacy organisations and services commented that they were unsure and unclear about what the detail of the Agreement actually entailed. People with disabilities reported a lack of consistency in the application of the Agreement, not only State to State but also within States and Territories. They also stated that there is no portability of funding and support for those moving between States and Territories. It was also noted that people with a disability are ageing and that there was therefore a need to understand nationally the interface between the ageing portfolio and the disability portfolio.⁵

-
1. L Buckmaster, [The National Disability Insurance Scheme: a quick guide](#), Research paper series, 2016–17, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2017.
 2. Under the National Disability Agreement, the Australian Government has responsibility for providing employment services for people with disability and funding for states and territories to assist with meeting the objectives of the agreement. State and territory governments are responsible for specialist disability services, such as accommodation support, respite care, community support, community access, and advocacy and information for people with disability. Until the full rollout of the NDIS, responsibilities under the National Disability Agreement remain.
 3. Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, [Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement](#), The Senate, Canberra, 2007, p. 2.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid.

The Committee recommended the development of ‘a National Disability Strategy which would function as a high level strategic policy document, designed to address the complexity of needs of people with disability and their carers in all aspects of their lives’.⁶ It said that this more strategic approach was necessary in order to:

... ensure a coordinated national approach to improving the delivery of disability services, to ensure that people with disability services access the services they require throughout their lives, to address interface issues within the disability sector and to ensure that future need for services is adequately addressed.⁷

In addition, it recommended that ‘a review of alternative funding arrangements be undertaken through the research and development program of the next CSTDA’.⁸ This would consider such matters as:

- the likely costs and benefits of individualised funding
- the issues encountered in the introduction of alternative funding overseas
- provisions and alternatives to allow people with disabilities to choose the level of self-sufficiency with which they are comfortable
- the provision of decision support tools and services to assist people with disabilities, their families and carers.⁹

During the 2007 election campaign, the then opposition Labor Party committed to negotiate a National Disability Strategy with the states and territories, which would canvass, among other issues, ‘how to fund, finance and deliver disability services in the future’.¹⁰

Australia 2020 Summit

In April 2008, a submission to the Rudd Labor Government’s Australia 2020 Summit (the Summit) by disability advocates, Bruce Bonyhady and Helena Sykes, argued that the cost of caring for people with disabilities ‘represents a very large unfunded liability’ which would continue to grow significantly.¹¹ Bonyhady and Sykes argued that the situation was ‘similar to the problem identified in the 1980s, when it was recognised that an ageing population dependent on old age pensions would place an unacceptable burden on taxpayers’, and which ‘led to the introduction of compulsory superannuation’.¹² As such, they argued that:

The time is right to reform the disability sector: to shift from the current crisis-driven welfare system to a planned and fully-funded National Disability Insurance Scheme that will underwrite sustained, significant long-term improvements in meeting the needs of people with disabilities and their families.¹³

They suggested that the model for an NDIS already existed in the form of various fully-funded no-fault insurance schemes for people injured at work or in motor vehicle accidents in the states and territories. Bonyhady and Sykes proposed that the advantages of such a scheme would be significant:

First, with an insurance model the families of people with disabilities can have confidence that the needs of their family member will be met, reducing stress and risks of family breakdown. Second, a life-time approach to care ensures that early intervention and equipment is available immediately following diagnosis or injury, leading to better and lower cost long-term outcomes. Third, active case management facilitates as normal a life as possible and minimises the risks of over-dependence on publicly funded support. Fourth, a NDIS would provide funding for

6. Ibid., p. x.

7. Ibid., p. 21.

8. Ibid., pp. xii.

9. Ibid., pp. xiii.

10. J McLucas, [Disability and carers](#), Australian Labor Party policy document, Election 2007.

11. B Bonyhady and H Sykes, [Submission](#) to Australia 2020 Summit, ‘Disability reform: from crisis welfare to a planned insurance model’, April 2008, p. 2.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., p. 1.

research, development of best practice models and public education to reduce the incidence of risky behaviours leading to disability.¹⁴

They argued that the contrast with the current scheme would be stark: 'it would be equitable and enable people with disabilities and their families to be in control, make choices and plan their lives with confidence'.¹⁵

This idea was supported at the Summit and, accordingly, the Final Summit Report recommended:

Establish[ing] a National Disability Insurance Scheme, similar to a superannuation scheme, to support the families of children with brain injury from birth and other non-insurable injuries.¹⁶

The recommendation was not among those accepted for implementation by the Rudd Government when it announced its response to the Summit recommendations in April 2009.

Nevertheless, the Government did commit to considering:

... the development of an insurance model to meet the costs of long term care for people with disabilities in conjunction with the development of the National Disability Strategy.¹⁷

As noted above, the development of a National Disability Strategy in partnership with the states and territories was a 2007 Labor Party election commitment.

National Disability Strategy

The National Disability Strategy (the Strategy) was developed by the Commonwealth, and state and territory governments under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).¹⁸ The Strategy built on the National Disability Agreement signed in 2008 and it was intended to support Australia's compliance with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (the UN Convention) which the Government ratified in 2008. The purpose of the Strategy is to guide the development of disability policy across the jurisdictions.¹⁹ It is a ten year plan (2010–20) setting out six priority areas for action: inclusive and accessible communities; rights protection; economic security; personal and community support; learning and skills; and health and wellbeing.²⁰ The Strategy was formally endorsed by COAG on 13 February 2011.²¹

As part of the development of the Strategy, new avenues for the funding and delivery of disability services were explored. Two key investigations were conducted by the Disability Investment Group and the Productivity Commission.

Disability Investment Group

In April 2008, the Government announced the establishment of the Disability Investment Group (DIG).²² The role of the seven-member DIG was 'to explore innovative funding ideas from the private sector that will help people with disability and their families' [sic] access greater support and plan for the future'.²³

The DIG submitted its report, [The way forward: a new disability policy framework for Australia](#), to the Government in September 2009. The group's principal recommendation was that 'the Commonwealth

14. Ibid., p. 3.

15. Ibid.

16. [Australia 2020 Summit final report](#), Canberra, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, 2008, p. 175.

17. Australian Government, [Responding to the 2020 Summit](#), Canberra, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 22 April 2009, p. 158.

18. Council of Australian Governments (COAG), [National Disability Strategy 2010–2020](#), DSS, Canberra, 2011.

19. See '[National Disability Strategy](#)', DSS website.

20. COAG, [National Disability Strategy 2010–2020](#), op. cit.

21. S Smith (Minister for Foreign Affairs), R McClelland (Attorney-General) and B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services), [Government welcomes convention on disabilities](#), media release, 3 May 2008.

22. B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services), [Government announces Disability Investment Group](#), media release, 23 April 2008.

23. Ibid.

Government, in consultation with States and Territories, should immediately commission a comprehensive feasibility study on a National Disability Insurance Scheme'.²⁴

The DIG considered drawbacks of the current system and the future pressures that the ageing Australian population would place on the existing disability services and concluded that 'a transformational shift in policy approach and service delivery is needed'.²⁵ The group recommended that the welfare model of disability services be replaced with a three pillar policy to support people with disability. They proposed the following three pillars:

- a new and comprehensive National Disability Insurance Scheme to deliver care and support for life for people with severe and profound disability using an individualised and lifetime approach, including reform of state/territory-based insurance schemes to include all traumatically injured people
- a strong income support system that facilitates people with disability who cannot support themselves through work, to live in dignity and
- a range of measures to enable increased private contributions.²⁶

The DIG noted that an NDIS-like scheme had also been recommended at the Summit and in three other recent reports:

- J Harmer, [The Pension Review report](#), Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Canberra, 2009.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth Report, [Who cares...? Report on the inquiry into better support for carers](#), House of Representatives, Canberra, 2009.
- National Disability Strategy Consultation Report prepared by the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, [Shut out: the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia](#), FaHCSIA, Canberra, 2009.

Productivity Commission report

In December 2009, as part of the development of the Strategy, the Government requested that the Productivity Commission investigate 'the feasibility of new approaches, including a social insurance model, for funding and delivering long-term disability care and support for people with severe or profound disabilities however they are acquired'.²⁷ The Productivity Commission reported to Government on 31 July 2011, finding that:

The current disability support system is underfunded, unfair, fragmented, and inefficient. It gives people with a disability little choice, no certainty of access to appropriate supports and little scope to participate in the community. People with disabilities, their carers, service providers, workers in the industry and governments all want change.

Most people know little about Australia's current disability system and do not know how poorly they would be served were they to need it—this is a system marked by invisible deprivation and lost opportunities. Yet major disability can happen to anyone and at anytime [sic]—a simple fall can lead to quadriplegia, and an illness to severe brain damage. Most families and individuals cannot adequately prepare for the large costs of lifetime care and support. The costs of lifetime care and support can be so high that the risks and costs need to be pooled.²⁸

The Productivity Commission recommended that the current system be replaced by a new disability care and support scheme, the NDIS. The scheme proposed by the Productivity Commission would have three tiers, focused on three groups of people.

24. Disability Investment Group, [The way forward: a new disability policy framework for Australia](#), Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Canberra, 2009, p. 1.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

27. B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services) and J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), [Disability Investment Group report released](#), media release, 3 December 2009.

28. Productivity Commission, [Disability care and support: executive summary](#), report no. 54, Productivity Commission, Canberra, 2011, p. 3.

Tier 1 of the NDIS would effectively focus on the entire Australian population in that it would provide insurance (in the form of guaranteed support) for all Australians who acquire a significant disability. A further focus of Tier 1 would be to 'minimise the impacts of disability' through such activities as promoting opportunities for people with a disability and creating awareness in the community about issues affecting people with a disability.²⁹

Tier 2 would include anyone with a disability and their primary carers (estimated by the Productivity Commission at around 4.8 million people).³⁰ The primary form of support provided in Tier 2 would be information and referral services, as distinct from funded care and support.

Tier 3 would provide long-term care and support to people with a significant and ongoing disability and who meet age and residency criteria (estimated at the time to be around 410,000 people).³¹ People receiving supports under Tier 3 would have a disability that is, or is likely to be, permanent (that is, irreversible, even though it may be of a chronic episodic nature).³² They would also have 'significantly reduced functioning in self-care, communication, mobility or self-management and require significant ongoing support' and/or be assessed as belonging to a group 'for whom there was good evidence that [early] intervention would be safe, significantly improve outcomes and would be cost-effective'.³³

The Productivity Commission proposed that Tier 3 would include the following features:

- entitlements to individually tailored supports based on the same assessment process
- certainty of funding based on need
- genuine choice over how needs are met (including choice of provider)
- local area coordinators and disability support organisations to provide grass roots support and
- a long term approach to care with a strong incentive to fund cost effective early interventions.³⁴

The Australian, state and territory governments would establish a single agency, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), to administer and fund the NDIS. Services would be provided by non-government organisations, disability service organisations, state and territory disability service providers, individuals and mainstream businesses.³⁵

The Productivity Commission emphasised the role of increased choice for people with disabilities under the proposed NDIS:

... support packages would be tailored to their individual needs. People could choose their own provider(s), ask an intermediary to assemble the best package on their behalf, cash out their funding allocation and direct the funding to areas of need (with appropriate probity controls and support), or choose a combination of these options.³⁶

The Productivity Commission estimated that the NDIS would require an additional \$6.5 billion annually. When added to the then annual expenditure on disability services of \$7.1 billion, this would amount to an increase in funding of around 90 per cent. Noting that 'current funding for disability is subject to the vagaries of governments' budget cycles', the Productivity Commission proposed that the Commonwealth Government 'should finance the entire costs of the NDIS by directing payments from consolidated revenue into a "National

29. Ibid., p. 11–12.

30. Ibid., p. 12–13.

31. Ibid., pp. 13–16. The estimated number of recipients of individualised supports has since been increased to 460,000 people. See '[About the NDIS](#)', NDIS website, 2017.

32. Ibid., p. 14.

33. Ibid. The Productivity Commission also recommended a second, smaller scheme, the National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS), which would cover the lifetime care and support needs of people who acquire a catastrophic injury from an accident (based on the motor accident compensation schemes that operate in some states and territories).

34. Ibid., p. 2.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., p. 3.

Disability Insurance Premium Fund”, using an agreed formula entrenched in legislation’.³⁷ The NDIS was ultimately funded using a shared funding model, rather than the Commonwealth entirely funding the scheme.³⁸

The Productivity Commission proposed the NDIS would commence in stages with:

- regional implementation in several states and territories beginning in July 2014 and
- progressive coverage of all groups in subsequent years, with a fully operational scheme by 2018–19.³⁹

On release of the Productivity Commission’s report, the then Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, announced that the Government would ‘start work immediately with states and territories on measures that will build the foundations for a National Disability Insurance Scheme’.⁴⁰

Early development, passage of legislation

Following work through COAG and bilateral negotiations with state and territory governments, the legislative framework for the NDIS launch was established with the passage of the [National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013](#) (NDIS Act) on 21 March 2013.⁴¹

The NDIS commenced in stages from 1 July 2013 (one year ahead of the timetable proposed by the Productivity Commission), beginning with a pilot phase known as the NDIS Launch (later changed to NDIS ‘trials’ by the Abbott Government). Full rollout of the scheme commenced in all jurisdictions except Western Australia (WA) from July 2016. In WA a ‘nationally consistent’ but state operated NDIS was introduced from July 2017.⁴² In December 2017, it was announced that the national NDIS would be rolled out in WA, with the NDIA assuming responsibility for the NDIS in that state from 1 July 2018.⁴³

Debates about funding

Since 2013, much of the parliamentary debate about the NDIS has focused on how it will be funded.⁴⁴ Arrangements for funding the NDIS are complex, and exact settings for the full scheme are still under consideration, as outlined in a 2017 Productivity Commission position paper on NDIS costs.⁴⁵

There is an ongoing debate about whether the initial funding arrangements for the NDIS were sufficient to cover the full, continuing, costs of the scheme. Labor has maintained the ‘NDIS was fully funded by the former Labor Government in the 2013-14 Budget’.⁴⁶ However, this has been challenged by members of the current Government. For example, the former Minister for Social Services, Christian Porter, has said that ‘the previous Labor government failed to fully-fund the NDIS, leaving a substantial funding gap of \$3.8 billion for when the scheme is fully operational from 2020’.⁴⁷ In the 2017–18 Budget, the Government announced it would increase

37. Ibid.

38. L Buckmaster, ‘[Paying for the National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)’, *Briefing book: key issues for the 44th Parliament*, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2013.

39. Productivity Commission, *Disability Care and Support*, op. cit., p. 90.

40. J Gillard (Prime Minister), J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Bill Shorten (Assistant Treasurer) and J McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers), [Productivity Commission’s final report into disability care and support](#), media release, 10 August 2011.

41. Legislative instruments known as the [NDIS rules](#) set out the operational details of the scheme.

42. C Porter (Minister for Social Services), C Barnett (WA Premier) and Donna Faragher (WA Minister for Planning; Disability Services), [Governments sign bilateral agreement on local delivery of NDIS in WA \[and\] Western Australia \(WA\) roll out schedule](#), media release, 1 February 2017.

43. M Turnbull (Prime Minister), C Porter (Minister for Social Services), J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Disability Services), [Western Australia to join the nationally-delivered National Disability Insurance Scheme](#), media release, 12 December 2017.

44. L Buckmaster, ‘Paying for the NDIS’, op. cit.

45. Productivity Commission, [National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\) costs: position paper](#), Productivity Commission, Canberra, June 2017, chapter 10.

46. J Macklin (Shadow Minister for Families and Social Services), [Morrison can’t hold the NDIS to ransom again](#), media release, 9 May 2017.

47. C Porter (Minister for Social Services), Z Seselja (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), [Guaranteeing the NDIS and providing stronger support for people with disability](#), joint media release, 9 May 2017.

the Medicare levy from 2.0 per cent to 2.5 per cent of taxable income to ‘ensure the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is fully funded’.⁴⁸

In the 2018–19 Budget, however, the Government reversed its decision to increase the Medicare levy.⁴⁹ Shortly before the 2018–19 Budget, the Government announced that it could ‘fully fund’ the NDIS without it due to a stronger economy and an improved budget fiscal position.⁵⁰ In response, Labor argued that the Government’s funding of the NDIS was ‘a clear admission’ that the NDIS has always been fully funded.⁵¹

Implementation issues

As with any large-scale reform process, there have been some implementation challenges with the NDIS. Major and/or recurrent issues have included information and communications technology (ICT) problems, planning processes and quality, continuity of support arrangements, market readiness and workforce capacity.⁵² Many of these challenges have been attributed to the speed and scale of the rollout of the NDIS.⁵³

The NDIS began in four trial sites across Australia from 1 July 2013, with another three sites commencing on 1 July 2014. Following the trial, the national rollout of the NDIS began on 1 July 2016. At this time, the NDIA launched its new ICT system, the MyPlace Portal. Shortly after, media articles began to report that providers were not receiving payments due to MyPlace Portal problems.⁵⁴ In early August 2016, the Government announced an independent inquiry would be undertaken into ICT problems and payment failures.⁵⁵ The review by PricewaterhouseCoopers found that there was not a single cause of payment failures, but ‘a series of compounding issues which prevented a viable option to delay ICT implementation’.⁵⁶ The report further stated:

The Full Scheme ICT Implementation ran out of time to fully complete the required implementation activities and proceeded with the acceptance of the identified implementation risks with the intention of applying maximum response to the problems. However, the change effort and overall program was under-resourced and underprepared in order to provide the accurate and timely support required by participants and providers when faced with ICT challenges.⁵⁷

The NDIA acknowledged that the problems with the ICT system ‘adversely impacted on both participants and providers and caused a loss of community confidence in the NDIA’s administration’.⁵⁸ The NDIA accepted the findings of the review and is implementing its recommendations.⁵⁹

The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS investigates a range of matters in relation to the NDIS, including the implementation, performance and governance of the NDIS, and the administration and expenditure of the NDIS.⁶⁰ In its inquiry into ‘General issues around the implementation and performance of the NDIS’, the committee heard evidence about participants’ difficulties accessing the NDIS and long waiting times between being approved as a participant and receiving a plan; and participants’ dissatisfaction with the planning process, including plans being made over the phone, participants not having the opportunity to review a draft of their

48. Australian Government, [Budget measures: budget paper no. 2: 2017–18](#), p. 24.

49. Australian Government, [Budget measures: budget paper no. 2: 2018–19](#), p. 32.

50. D Tehan (Minister for Social Services), [A fully funded NDIS](#), media release, 26 April 2018.

51. J Macklin (Shadow Minister for Families and Social Services), [Budget shows the NDIS has always been fully funded](#), media release, 9 May 2018.

52. S Groch, [‘NDIS shake-up after problematic roll-out’](#), *The Canberra Times*, 20 October 2017; Productivity Commission, [National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\) costs: study report](#), October 2017.

53. C Wahlquist, [‘NDIS costs and demand overwhelming disability service providers, report says’](#), *The Guardian*, 4 December 2017.

54. R Morton, [‘NDIS tech bungle delays payouts’](#), *The Australian*, 8 July 2016.

55. C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), [Review of the implementation of the NDIS MyPlace Portal](#), media release, 5 August 2016.

56. PricewaterhouseCoopers, [National Disability Insurance Scheme MyPlace Portal Implementation Review—final report](#), DSS, Canberra, 2016, p. 2.

57. Ibid.

58. NDIA, [NDIA submission to Productivity Commission issues paper on NDIS costs](#), Submission 161, Productivity Commission, Canberra, 2017, p. 15.

59. Ibid.

60. Australian Parliament, [Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS](#), Committee homepage, Parliament of Australia, accessed 16 May 2018.

plan, concerns about planners' skills and competencies, inconsistencies in planning decisions, delays in planning and plan reviews, and the NDIA's lack of transparency.⁶¹

The committee has also conducted inquiries into the provision of services under the Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach, and for people with psychosocial disabilities.⁶² Current inquiries are underway to investigate the provision of hearing services and market readiness.⁶³

In response to feedback from stakeholders—participants, families, carers and providers—in April 2017, the NDIA announced the NDIS Pathway Review. A specific concern responded to was the NDIA's use of telephone planning, which 'did not promote the development of an informed relationship about a person's needs and requirements against their desired outcomes'.⁶⁴ In October 2017, the NDIA announced a 'new participant pathway' to improve participants' and organisations' experience with the NDIS.⁶⁵ Face-to-face planning meetings would be a key aspect of the new pathway. In November 2017, the NDIA announced the pilot of the new participant pathway would begin in mid-December 2018 in two NDIS regions in Victoria.⁶⁶

In November 2017, the Parliament passed legislation to establish the NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission (the Commission).⁶⁷ The Commission will oversee the quality and safety of services and support that participants access through the NDIS and ensure a nationally consistent regulatory framework for providers.⁶⁸ Establishment of the Commission was in part in response to the Community Affairs Reference Committee's report in 2015 on violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings.⁶⁹

An independent study by researchers from the University of Sydney examined the impact of the NDIS on people with psychosocial disability, that is, disabilities that may arise from mental health issues. Released in January 2018, the report found low participation in the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability and estimated that a significant number of people with severe mental illness will have to rely on mental health services outside the NDIS.⁷⁰ The report identified gaps in two main areas: administration of the NDIS and continuity of support for people ineligible for support. The NDIA responded to the report on their 'On the record' page, describing it as unbalanced and based on 'factually incorrect data that does not recognise work that is already underway by the NDIA'.⁷¹ In the 2017–2018 Budget, the Government allocated \$80 million over four years to fund psychosocial support for people not eligible for the NDIS.⁷²

The final report of an independent evaluation of the NDIS trial was released in April 2018.⁷³ The evaluation found numerous positives about the NDIS, including it being 'designed and built on sound fundamentals' and that it was 'delivering the outcomes that it was designed to deliver'.⁷⁴ It found that many participants reported improved satisfaction with the quality of supports and high satisfaction that supports were reasonable and necessary. However, a large minority of people (about one third) reported that they were not better off under the NDIS, and a small minority (between 10 and 20 per cent) were worse off.

61. Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, [Progress report](#), Parliament of Australia, Canberra, 2017.

62. Australian Parliament, '[Completed inquiries](#)', Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS committee webpages, Parliament of Australia, accessed 17 May 2018.

63. Australian Parliament, '[Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)', Committee homepage, Parliament of Australia, accessed 17 May 2018.

64. NDIA, [Improving the NDIS participant and provider experience](#), NDIA, Canberra, 2018, p. 3.

65. NDIA, [New NDIS pathway released to improve participant and provider experience](#), media release, 17 October 2017.

66. NDIA, [NDIS pathway pilot released, media release](#), media release, 16 November 2017.

67. C Porter (Minister for Social Services), [Quality of NDIS services assured](#), media release, 30 November 2017.

68. Ibid.

69. Senate Community Affairs References Committee, [Violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender and age related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability](#), The Senate, Canberra, November 2017.

70. J Smith-Merry, N Hancock, J Gilroy, G Llewellyn and I Yen, [Mind the Gap: the National Disability Scheme and psychosocial disability](#), University of Sydney, Sydney, 2018, p. 4.

71. NDIA, 'Response by NDIA to the "mind the gap" report', [On the record](#), NDIS website, accessed 13 March 2018.

72. Australian Government, [Budget measures: budget paper no. 2: 2017–18](#), p. 120.

73. K Mavromaras, M Moskos, S Mahuteau and L Isherwood, [Evaluation of the NDIS: final report](#), National Institute of Labour Studies, Adelaide, 2018.

74. Ibid., p. xiii.

NDIS milestones

Table: NDIS milestones 2007–2018

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
8 February 2007	Senate inquiry into the funding and operation of the CSTDA recommends the development of a National Disability Strategy, and that a review of alternative funding arrangements be undertaken as part of the next CSTDA. Further recommends that matters examined include the likely costs and benefits of individualised funding.	Senate Committee on Community Affairs, Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement , The Senate, February 2007, p. x.
30 March 2007	Australia signs the UN Convention.	A Downer (Minister for Foreign Affairs), P Ruddock (Attorney-General), and M Brough (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Australia among first to sign UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities , media release, 30 March 2007.
7 November 2007	During the 2007 federal election campaign, the Labor Party commits to negotiate a National Disability Strategy with the states and territories, which would canvass, among other issues, 'how to fund, finance and deliver disability services in the future'.	J McLucas (Shadow Minister for Ageing, Disabilities and Carers), Disability and carers , Australian Labor Party policy document, Election 2007.
3 May 2008	UN Convention entered into force in Australia.	S Smith (Minister for Foreign Affairs), R McClelland (Attorney-General) and B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services), Government welcomes convention on disabilities , media release, 3 May 2008.
April 2008	Bruce Bonyhady and Helen Sykes submit proposal for an NDIS to the Australia 2020 Summit.	B Bonyhady and H Sykes, Disability reform: from crisis welfare to a planned insurance model , April 2008.
23 April 2008	The Government announces the establishment of the Disability Investment Group to explore innovative funding ideas for disability support.	B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services), Government announces Disability Investment Group , media release, 23 April 2008.
May 2008	Final report of the Australia 2020 Summit recommends establishment of an NDIS.	Australia 2020 Summit final report , Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, May 2008, p. 175. See also: Every Australian Counts website. [Key organisation in campaigning for the NDIS].
18 July 2008	Australia ratifies the UN Convention.	R McClelland (Attorney-General), S Smith (Minister for Foreign Affairs), and B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities), Australia ratifies UN disabilities convention ,

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
		media release, 18 July 2008.
1 January 2009	The National Disability Agreement replaces the Commonwealth State and Territory Disability Agreement.	The Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations , which covers the National Disability Agreement, came into operation on 1 January 2009.
February 2009	<i>The Pension Review Report</i> is released. The report, which reviews measures to strengthen the financial security of seniors, carers and people with disability, supports the idea of an NDIS.	J Harmer, The Pension Review Report , FaHCSIA, Canberra, 2009.
22 April 2009	Australian Government formally responds to the Australia 2020 Summit. It commits to considering development of an NDIS in conjunction with the development of the National Disability Strategy.	K Rudd (Prime Minister), Government response to the Australia 2020 Summit , media release, 22 April 2009. Australian Government, Responding to the 2020 Summit , Canberra, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2009, p. 158.
1 May 2009	The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth releases its inquiry report into support for carers. The report supports further investigation of an NDIS.	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth Report, Who cares...? Report on the inquiry into better support for carers , House of Representatives, Canberra, 2009.
5 August 2009	Australian Government releases National Disability Strategy consultation report into the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia. The report highlights systemic discrimination and exclusion experienced by people with disability and the barriers encountered which prevent full participation in the community socially and economically.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Shut out: the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia, National People with Disabilities and Carer Council Report launch: speech, Melbourne , media release, 5 August 2009. Australian Government, Shut out: the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia , National Disability Strategy consultation report prepared by the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, FaHCSIA, Canberra, 2009.
October 2009	PricewaterhouseCoopers releases its report for the Disability Investment Group examining the feasibility, costing, funding options, and governance of an NDIS.	PricewaterhouseCoopers, Disability Investment Group: National Disability Insurance Scheme—final report , FaHCSIA, 2009.
23 November 2009	Australian Government asks Productivity Commission to ‘investigate the feasibility of new approaches for funding and delivering long-term disability care and support’.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), K Rudd (Prime Minister) and B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services), Australian Government to consider new approaches to disability , media release, 23 November 2009. See also: L Buckmaster and M Klapdor, Funding support for people with disability—key issues for the 43rd Parliament , Parliamentary Library Briefing Book,

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
		Parliamentary Library, 12 October 2010.
3 December 2009	Release of Disability Investment Group report into funding long term care for people with a disability. Recommends a comprehensive feasibility study into establishment of an NDIS.	B Shorten (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services) and J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Disability Investment Group report released , media release, 3 December 2009. Disability Investment Group, The way forward: a new disability policy framework for Australia , FaCHSIA, 2009.
13 February 2011	COAG endorses the National Disability Strategy .	COAG, National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 , Department of Social Services (DSS), Canberra, 2011.
31 July 2011	The Productivity Commission submits its report to the Government on its inquiry into a national scheme for long-term care and support for people with disability. The report recommends replacing the current disability system with a new disability care and support scheme, the NDIS. The wide-ranging two-volume report discusses the populations the NDIS would serve, the supports it would fund, needs assessment, the delivery of services, governance of the NDIS, workforce issues, costs and financing of the NDIS.	Productivity Commission, Disability care and support , report no. 54, Productivity Commission, Canberra, 2011.
10 August 2011	Australian Government commits to introduction of NDIS.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), Bill Shorten (Assistant Treasurer) and J McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers), Productivity Commission's final report into disability care and support , media release, 10 August 2011.
19 August 2011	COAG agrees to form a Select Council of Ministers from all jurisdictions 'to start work immediately to lay the foundations for a National Disability Insurance Scheme'.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), COAG delivers key step for National Disability Insurance Scheme , media release, 19 August 2011.
30 April 2012	Australian Government announces that NDIS 'will start in Australia from July 2013 in up to four locations across the country'.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform) and J McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary for Disability and Carers) and, National Disability Insurance Scheme to launch in 2013 , media release, 30 April 2012.
8 May 2012	Australian Government announces '\$1 billion over 4 years to start rolling out the first stage of a National Disability	J Gillard (Prime Minister) and J Macklin (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister for Disability

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	Insurance Scheme’.	Reform), Budget 2012: funding the first stage of the National Disability Insurance Scheme , media release, 8 May 2012. See also: L Buckmaster, National Disability Insurance Scheme: Budget Review 2012–13 , Research paper, no. 9, 2011–12, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, May 2012.
6 July 2012	Government announces Mr David Bowen as the CEO of the NDIS Launch Transition Agency.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister for Disability Reform) and J McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers), CEO appointed to lead NDIS agency , media release, 6 July 2012.
25 July 2012	Australian Government announces first bilateral agreements for launch sites with South Australian (SA), Tasmanian and Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Governments.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), Transcript of Council of Australian Governments Press Conference: Canberra: 25 July 2012: COAG; NDIS; GST; Opal fuel; national security; South Australian health system , media release, 25 July 2012.
1 August 2012	Australian Government enters into bilateral agreement with New South Wales Government (NSW) to establish an NDIS launch site in the Hunter region from mid-2013.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister for Disability Reform) and Andrew Constance (NSW Minister for Disability Services) Launching a National Disability Insurance Scheme in the Hunter , media release, 1 August 2012.
12 August 2012	Australian Government enters into bilateral agreement with Victorian Government to launch trial in the Barwon region from mid-2013.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Minister for Disability Reform), Transcript of joint press conferences: 12 August 2012: National Disability Insurance Scheme launch in the Barwon region , media release, 12 August 2012.
29 November 2012	Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, introduces National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012 (NDIS Bill) into parliament. The bill has two purposes: ‘to establish the framework of the National Disability Insurance Scheme’ and ‘to establish the National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency, to operate the first stage of the scheme in five locations around the nation starting from July 2013’.	Parliament of Australia, National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2013 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches, the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest and amendments to the Bill].
6 December 2012	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with the NSW Government to extend NDIS to the whole state starting from July 2016 with full rollout by July 2018.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), B O’Farrell (NSW Premier), J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform), A Constance (NSW Minister for Disability Services), Agreement for full roll out of National Disability Insurance Scheme in NSW by July 2018 , media release,

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
		6 December 2012.
7 December 2012	COAG signs Intergovernmental Agreement paving the way for 'all governments to work together to develop and implement the initial phase of the NDIS'.	COAG, Council of Australian Governments Meeting – Communiqué, 7 December 2012 , media release, 7 December 2012.
18 March 2013	Australian Government announces change of name of the NDIS to DisabilityCare Australia.	J Macklin quoted in ' Disability scheme renamed ', <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 18 March 2013.
21 March 2013	NDIS Bill passes federal parliament.	J Macklin (Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) and J McLucas (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Carers), Gillard Government passes NDIS Bill through Parliament , media release, 21 March 2013.
18 April 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with the SA Government to extend the scheme to the whole state starting from July 2014, with full rollout by 2018.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), J Weatherall (SA Premier) and J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform), DisabilityCare to be rolled out in SA , media release, 18 April 2013.
April 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with the ACT Government to extend the scheme to the whole state starting from July 2016 with full rollout by 2019.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), K Gallagher (ACT Chief Minister), DisabilityCare Australia to be rolled out in ACT , joint media release, 19 April 2013.
April 2013	Australian Government enters into in-principle bilateral agreement with Northern Territory Government to launch from 1 July 2014 in the Barkly region.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), A Giles (NT Chief Minister), Launch of DisabilityCare Australian in Barkly region of the Northern Territory , joint media release, 19 April 2013.
May 2013	Australian Government announces that the Medicare levy will be increased in order to partially fund the NDIS/DisabilityCare Australia.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), W Swan (Deputy Prime Minister), J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform), Locking in a fairer future for Australians with disability , media release, 1 May 2013.
May 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with Tasmanian Government to extend the scheme to the whole state starting from July 2016 with full rollout by 2019.	J Gillard, DisabilityCare Australia to be rolled out in Tasmania , media release, 2 May 2013.
May 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with Victorian Government to extend the scheme to the whole state starting in July 2016 with full rollout by July 2019.	D Napthine (Victorian Premier), DisabilityCare to be rolled out in Victoria , media release, 4 May 2013.
May 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with Queensland Government to commence scheme in July	J Gillard (Prime Minister), DisabilityCare to be rolled out in Queensland , media release, 8 May 2013.

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	2016 with full rollout by 2019.	
May 2013	Australian Government enters into heads of agreement with Northern Territory Government to extend scheme to the whole territory starting from July 2016, with full rollout by July 2019.	J Gillard (Prime Minister), DisabilityCare Australia to be rolled out in the Northern Territory , media release, 11 May 2013.
May 2013	Australian Government announces an additional \$14.3 billion over seven years for the transition towards full implementation of NDIS/DisabilityCare Australia.	Australian Government, Budget measures: budget paper no. 2: 2013–14 , p. 140. See also: L Buckmaster, DisabilityCare Australia: Budget Review 2013-14 , Research paper No. 3, 2012–13, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, May 2013.
May 2013	Introduction and passage of 13 bills to provide funding for the NDIS/DisabilityCare Australia. Bill passed both Houses on 16 May 2013 and received Royal Assent on 28 May 2013. The Bill amends the <i>Medicare Levy Act 1986</i> to increase the Medicare levy to two per cent of a person’s taxable income.	Parliament of Australia, Medicare Levy Amendment (DisabilityCare Australia) Bill 2013 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].
June 2013	Announcement of inaugural appointments to the NDIS/DisabilityCare Board and Independent Advisory Council, each to commence 3-year terms from July 2013.	J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform), Board and Independent Advisory Council of DisabilityCare Australia , media release, 19 June 2013. See also: NDIS, ‘Our board’ , NDIS website, accessed 18 February 2016.
1 July 2013	<i>National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013</i> comes into effect, establishing the National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency (known as the National Disability Insurance Agency or NDIA) to implement the scheme.	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth) , ch 6
July 2013	Launch of scheme at trial sites in regional NSW and Victoria, in South Australia and Tasmania.	NDIS, ‘Our sites’ , NDIS website, accessed 24 February 2016.
August 2013	Australian Government enters into bilateral agreement with Western Australian Government on two-year launch from July 2014. Under the agreement, one launch site will operate under the DisabilityCare/NDIS model and two will operate under the Western Australian Government’s My Way model.	K Rudd (Prime Minister), J Macklin (Minister for Disability Reform), Launch of DisabilityCare Australia in Western Australia , media release, 4 August 2013.
October 2013	The NDIA commences quarterly reporting to COAG.	NDIS, ‘Quarterly reports’ , NDIS website, accessed 18 February 2016.
December 2013	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS is established to review implementation, administration and expenditure of the	Parliament of Australia, Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme homepage , Australian

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	scheme.	Parliament website.
January 2014	<p>Review of the capabilities of the NDIA is provided to the Australian Government (released publicly in March 2014).</p> <p>It finds that the bringing forward of the start date for the NDIS by a year to 1 July 2013 resulted in a number of problems for the NDIA in terms of ICT systems, staffing, data quality, and processes.</p>	<p>J Whalan, P Acton and J Harmer, A review of the capabilities of the National Disability Insurance Agency, NDIA, Canberra, 2014.</p> <p>M Fifield (Assistant Minister for Social Services), NDIA capability review, media release, 20 March 2014.</p>
February 2014	Australian Government announces that DisabilityCare Australia will revert to its original name, the NDIS.	M Fifield (Assistant Minister for Social Services), NDIS name change , media release, 5 February 2014.
February 2014	<p>National Commission of Audit (NCOA) recommends the NDIS be phased in more slowly, as well as a simplification of governance and reporting arrangements.</p> <p>In response to the NCOA's recommendation, the Government states that it 'remains committed to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The independent board of the National Disability Insurance Agency has commissioned work on the optimal rollout which will be available following the 2014-15 Budget'.</p>	<p>NCOA, Towards Responsible Government, Report of the NCOA Phase One, February 2014, recommendation 16, p. 94.</p> <p>See also: NDIS, 'Governance', NDIS website, accessed 18 February 2016.</p> <p>J Hockey (Treasurer) and M Cormann (Minister for Finance), Our response to the National Commission of Audit report, media release, 13 May 2014.</p>
May 2014	Australian Government commits \$20 million in 2015–16 Budget to introduce the NDIS in the Penrith-Blue Mountains area (New South Wales), one year ahead of schedule (1 July 2015).	<p>DSS, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), 2015 Budget fact sheet, DSS, 12 May 2015.</p> <p>See also: M Fifield (Assistant Minister for Social Services), Budget 2015: 2015 Budget to support NDIS roll-out, disability employment and carers, media release, 12 May 2015.</p>
July 2014	New trial sites commence 1 July 2014 in WA, ACT and NT.	NDIS, 'Our sites' , NDIS website, accessed 24 February 2016.
July 2014	<p>First annual progress report of the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS is released.</p> <p>The report outlines the committee's activities over the year, including the evidence heard at public hearings and the NDIA's progress at implementing the NDIS. The committee makes 17 recommendations, on areas including planning processes, advocacy services, performance and transparency, phasing approaches, and workforce issues.</p>	Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Progress report on the implementation and administration of the National Disability Insurance Scheme , The Senate, Canberra, July 2014.
July 2014	The NDIA releases first annual strategic	NDIA, Building the National Disability

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	<p>progress report on the rollout of the NDIS.</p> <p>The report presents achievements and areas for improvement in relation to strategic goals. By the end of March 2014, 5,414 participants had an approved plan.</p>	<p>Insurance Scheme—Progress report: year one, NDIA, Canberra, 2014.</p>
July 2014	<p>An interim report by KPMG is released reviewing the NDIA and states and territories' progress in working together to determine an operational blueprint for the implementation of the full NDIS.</p> <p>The report finds that while there is a 'commonality of vision' in terms of desired outcomes, there is a lack of clarity, detail and agreement about how to achieve them.</p>	<p>KPMG, Interim report: review of the optimal approach to transition to the full NDIS, NDIA, Canberra, 2014.</p>
October 2014	<p>The NDIA's annual report for 2013–14 is tabled in parliament.</p> <p>The report presents data as at 30 June 2014. At this stage, the NDIS had been delivered in four trial sites, with 7,316 plans approved.</p>	<p>NDIA, Annual report 2013–14, NDIA, Canberra, 2014.</p>
July 2015	<p>NDIS commences in Nepean, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury region.</p>	<p>M Fifield (Assistant Minister for Social Services), NDIS early roll out kicks off, media release, 1 July 2015.</p>
July 2015	<p>The NDIA releases second annual strategic progress report on the rollout of the NDIS.</p> <p>The report presents achievements and areas for improvement in relation to strategic goals. Key changes include a new Service Charter, refining of the Operational Guidelines, appointment of advisor on mental health and local area coordination, establishment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and rural and remote working groups, and development of a high level strategy to begin addressing employment barriers.</p>	<p>NDIA, Building the National Disability Insurance Scheme—Progress report: year two, NDIA, Canberra, 2015.</p>
September 2015	<p>Australian and Queensland Governments announce that NDIS will commence in Townsville, Charters Towers and Palm Island (Queensland) from January 2016, six months ahead of schedule.</p>	<p>M Turnbull (Prime Minister), A Palaszczuk (Queensland Premier) and C O'Rourke (Queensland Minister for Disability Services), NDIS set to improve lives of Northern Queenslanders, joint media release, 25 September 2015.</p>
September 2015	<p>Australian Government reaches agreements with New South Wales and Victorian Governments on transition to full rollout of the NDIS progressively from</p>	<p>M Turnbull (Prime Minister), M Baird (NSW Premier) and D Andrews (Victorian Premier), Delivering the NDIS to more than half of eligible Australians, joint media release,</p>

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	July 2016.	16 September 2015.
October 2015	<p>The NDIA's annual report for 2014–15 tabled in parliament.</p> <p>During the reporting year, three new trial sites commenced. As at 30 June 2015, 17,303 participants had an approved plan.</p>	NDIA, Annual report 2014–15 , NDIA, Canberra, 2015.
November 2015	<p>Second annual progress report of the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS is released.</p> <p>The report discusses the progress of the original four trial sites and three new trial sites; challenges facing participants and providers; and governance and systemic issues faced by the NDIS, the NDIA and governments. The report makes 12 recommendations.</p>	Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Progress report on the implementation and administration of the National Disability Insurance Scheme , The Senate, Canberra, November 2015.
December 2015	Australian Government reaches agreement with South Australian Government on transition to full rollout of the NDIS progressively from January 2016.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and T Piccolo (SA Minister for Disabilities), NDIS roll-out to change the lives of thousands of South Australians , joint media release, 11 December 2015.
March 2016	Announcement of extension of terms of NDIS Board members and expanded membership from 1 January 2017.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services), Expanded board to drive NDIS rollout , media release, 4 March 2016. See also: NDIS, 'Meet the Board' , NDIS website, accessed 6 March 2017.
March 2016	Introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account Bill 2016, which lapsed at dissolution in May 2016.	Parliament of Australia, National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account Bill 2016 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].
March 2016	<p>Introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment Bill 2016. Second reading debate resumed after prorogation on 2 May 2016. Bill passed both Houses on 4 May 2016 and received Royal Assent on 5 May 2016 [Act no: 51].</p> <p>The Bill amends the <i>NDIS Act</i> to increase the number of board members of the NDIS Launch Transition Agency from eight to up to 11 (other than the Chair). It also changes quorum arrangements.</p>	Parliament of Australia, National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment Bill 2016 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].
April 2016	WA trial sites extended to July 2017 and expanded to additional locations.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and D Faragher (WA Minister for Disability Services), NDIS trial set for expansion in WA , joint media release, 28 April 2016.

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
May 2016	<p>Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases its report on accommodation for people with disabilities and the NDIS.</p> <p>The report makes six recommendations regarding building accessibility, affordability, assessing and supporting proposals for disability accommodation, and funding availability and models.</p>	<p>Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Accommodation for people with disabilities and the NDIS, The Senate, Canberra, May 2016.</p>
1 July 2016	<p>NDIS begins to roll out nationally.</p>	<p>C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Disability Services), Historic Day for Disability Care, media release, 1 July 2016.</p>
August 2016	<p>Announcement of an independent review of MyPlace Portal following disruptions to ICT system. Report due by the end of August 2016.</p>	<p>C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Review of the Implementation of the NDIS MyPlace Portal, media release, 5 August 2016.</p>
August 2016	<p>National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account Bill introduced following lapse of earlier version of bill in 44th Parliament.</p> <p>The Bill is to establish the National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account for the purposes of assisting the Commonwealth meet its funding obligations.</p> <p>The Bill is currently before the Senate.</p>	<p>Parliament of Australia, National Disability Insurance Scheme Savings Fund Special Account Bill 2016 homepage, Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].</p>
September 2016	<p>Final report of PricewaterhouseCoopers' MyPlace Portal Implementation Review released.</p> <p>The review found that MyPlace Portal payment failures were due to a series of compounding issues. The report made six recommendations relating to planning, resourcing, governance, and monitoring.</p>	<p>PricewaterhouseCoopers, National Disability Insurance Scheme MyPlace Portal Implementation Review—final report, DSS, Canberra, 2016.</p>
September 2016	<p>COAG Disability Reform Council agrees to a new national framework for quality and safety for the NDIS.</p>	<p>C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Disability Reform Council achieves significant agreement to support the rollout of the NDIS, joint media release, 2 September 2016.</p>
October 2016	<p>Australian Government announces Innovative Workforce Fund to support development of NDIS workforce.</p>	<p>C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Disability Services), Investment to unlock workforce innovation for NDIS participants and providers, media release, 6 October 2016.</p>
November 2016	<p>NDIA's annual report for 2015–16 tabled in parliament.</p>	<p>NDIA, Towards an ordinary life – Annual report 2015–16, NDIA, Canberra, 2016.</p>

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	The report summarises the final year of the NDIS trial. As at 30 June 2016, 30,281 participants had an approved plan.	
January 2017	Announcement of Productivity Commission inquiry into NDIS costs as agreed in Heads of Agreement for the introduction of the scheme between the Australian Government and states and territories.	S Morrison (Treasurer) and C Porter (Minister for Social Services), Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme costs , media release, 20 January 2017.
February 2017	Australian Government reaches agreement with Western Australian Government on state-run NDIS in WA.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services), C Barnett (WA Premier) and D Faragher (WA Minister for Planning, Disability Services), Governments sign bilateral agreement on local delivery of NDIS in WA , joint media release, 1 February 2017.
February 2017	Australian Government announces \$3 billion funding for the NDIS 'through measures outlined in the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Omnibus Savings and Child Care Reform) Bill '. [Bill did not proceed].	S Morrison (Treasurer) and C Porter (Minister for Social Services), Turnbull Government delivering \$3 billion boost to responsibly fund the NDIS , media release, 13 February 2017.
February 2017	Productivity Commission releases issues paper into NDIS costs. Paper aims to assist the preparation of submissions. It outlines the scope of the study and matters of interest, and the commission's procedures.	Productivity Commission, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) costs: issues paper , February 2017.
May 2017	In the 2017–18 Budget the Australian Government announces its intention to increase the Medicare Levy by an additional 0.5 percentage point to fund the NDIS. It also commits: \$33.0 million to help service providers in the disability and aged care sectors grow their workforce \$209.0 million to establish an independent NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The Government also announced \$80.0 million funding for psychosocial support services for people not eligible for the NDIS.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services), Z Seselja (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Guaranteeing the NDIS and providing stronger support for people with disability , joint media release, 9 May 2017. G Hunt (Minister for Health), Guaranteeing vital services for Australia's world class health system , media release, 9 May 2017.
June 2017	NDIA announces independent pricing review, to be undertaken by McKinsey & Company.	NDIA, ' Letter to Registered NDIS Providers from CEO David Bowen ', NDIS website, 12 June 2017, accessed 23 October 2017.
June 2017	Productivity Commission releases a position paper into NDIS costs. The position paper presents draft findings	Productivity Commission, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) costs: position paper , June 2017.

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	and recommendations as well as identifying areas on which it would like more information. The report finds that the NDIS's costs are broadly on track with modelling and that the NDIS is improving the lives of many participants. The speed of rollout is identified as a risk for the implementation of the NDIS and the financial sustainability of the scheme. Workforce shortages and thin markets in specific areas are also challenges for the NDIS.	
July 2017	The Independent Advisory Council expands from 10 to 13 members, including representatives with intellectual disability and deaf-blindness for the first time. Five Expert Advisers will also advise the NDIA Board.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services), and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Expert knowledge and skills to support NDIS transition , joint media release, 27 June 2017.
July 2017	Queensland signs a National Partnership on DisabilityCare Australia Fund (DCAF) access with the Commonwealth, initiating a payment of \$52.8 million in 2017.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services), J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services) and C O'Rourke (Queensland Minister for Disability Services), Queensland becomes first state to unlock NDIS funding , joint media release, 11 July 2017.
July 2017	Board of NDIA announces Mr Rob De Luca as Chief Executive Officer of the NDIA, succeeding Mr David Bowen.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Government welcomes new NDIA Chief , joint media release, 19 July 2017.
August 2017	<p>Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases report on the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition.</p> <p>The committee makes 24 recommendations relating to eligibility criteria for people with mental illness, planning processes, engaging with hard-to-reach populations, continuity of support, service gaps, and disability supports for people in the criminal justice system.</p>	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition , The Senate, Canberra, August 2017.
August 2017	Medicare Levy Amendment (National Disability Insurance Scheme Funding) Bill 2017 introduced (part of a package of 11 bills to fund the Commonwealth's contribution to the NDIS).	Parliament of Australia, Medicare Levy Amendment (National Disability Insurance Scheme Funding) Bill 2017 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
August 2017	100,000 people receiving support through the NDIS.	J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), NDIS supporting 100,000 Australians , media release, 18 August 2017.
September 2017	The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases an interim report on the provision of hearing services under the NDIS. The committee notes concerns with access criteria and disruptions to early intervention services and makes six recommendations.	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Provision of hearing services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme , The Senate, Canberra, 14 September 2017.
September 2017	The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases the first progress report of the committee during the 45 th Parliament. The progress report examines general issues around the implementation and performance of the NDIS covering 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. The report provides an overview of the main issues raised in evidence to the committee and makes five recommendations about participant planning processes, the NDIA's reporting and performance reporting, and the criteria to be used in the assessment of appropriate supports.	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Progress report , The Senate, Canberra, September 2017.
October 2017	Productivity Commission releases final report into NDIS costs. The report presents findings and recommendations in relation to how the NDIS is tracking, participant experiences, provider, participant, and workforce readiness, pricing, governance, funding arrangements, and the NDIA's data collection approach.	Productivity Commission, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) costs: study report , October 2017.
October 2017	NDIA's annual report for 2016–17 tabled in parliament. The report covers the commencement of the full rollout of the NDIS from 1 July 2016. As at 30 June 2016 when the trial ended, there were 30,281 participants with an approved plan; as at 30 June 2017, 90,638 participants had an approved plan.	NDIA, Annual report 2016–17 , NDIA, Canberra, 2017.
October 2017	Medicare Levy Amendment (National Disability Insurance Scheme Funding) Bill 2017 passed the House of Representatives.	Parliament of Australia, Medicare Levy Amendment (National Disability Insurance Scheme Funding) Bill 2017 homepage , Australian Parliament website. [Includes links

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
		to the Explanatory Memorandum, second reading speeches and the Parliamentary Library Bills Digest].
October 2017	NDIA announces new participant pathway to improve experience of participants and providers with the NDIS.	NDIA, New NDIS pathway released to improve participant and provider experience, media release , 17 October 2017.
November 2017	120,000 people receiving support through NDIS.	NDIA, Almost 120,000 Australians now benefitting from the NDIS , media release, 16 November 2017.
November 2017	NDIA announces new pathway will be piloted in Victoria North and Victoria East.	NDIA, NDIS pathway pilot released , media release, 16 November 2017.
November 2017	The Senate Community Affairs References Committee releases its inquiry report on the delivery of outcomes under the Strategy—building inclusive and accessible communities. The committee makes seven recommendations, including consideration of a proposal to establish an Office of Disability Strategy under the Disability Reform Council and the need for more consultation with people with disability.	Senate Community Affairs References Committee, Delivery of outcomes under the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 to build inclusive and accessible communities , the Senate, Canberra, 2017.
December 2017	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases an inquiry report on the provision of services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach. The committee makes 20 recommendations including about access to the NDIS, the adequacy of plans, the scope and funding of plans, and the provision of information that is accessible and culturally appropriate.	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Provision of services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach , The Senate, Canberra, December 2017.
December 2017	Announcement that Western Australia will join the nationally operated NDIS.	M Turnbull (Prime Minister), C Porter (Minister for Social Services), J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Disability Services), Western Australia to join the nationally-delivered National Disability Insurance Scheme , media release, 12 December 2017.
December 2017	Mr Graeme Head appointed as the inaugural Commissioner of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.	C Porter (Minister for Social Services) and J Prentice (Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services), Inaugural NDIS Quality and Safeguards commissioner , joint media release, 16 September 2017.
December 2017	The NDIA receives the final report of the Independent Pricing Review, undertaken by McKinsey and Company. The review was commissioned in June 2017. (Report	NDIA, Media Statement: NDIA Board receives NDIS Independent Pricing Review report , media release, 30 December 2017.

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	released publicly in March 2018).	
January 2018	<p>The University of Sydney releases a report on the NDIS and psychosocial disability.</p> <p>The report finds that there are gaps in the implementation of the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability.</p>	<p>Smith-Merry, J, Hancock, N, Gilroy, J, Llewellyn, G, and Yen, I, Mind the Gap: The National Disability Scheme and psychosocial disability, University of Sydney, Sydney, 2018.</p> <p>NDIA, 'Response by NDIA to the "mind the gap" report', On the record, NDIS website, accessed 13 March 2018.</p>
February 2018	<p>The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases its report on transitional arrangements for the NDIS.</p> <p>The committee notes challenges in the transition process, including delays in participants accessing the NDIS, having plans approved and activated, and reviewed; unclear boundaries between mainstream and NDIS services; administrative burden; market and workforce issues; and challenges engaging people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The committee makes 26 recommendations.</p>	<p>Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, Transitional arrangements for the NDIS, The Senate, Canberra, 2018.</p>
February 2018	<p>140,000 people receiving support through NDIS.</p>	<p>NDIA, 140,000 Australians now benefiting from the NDIS: latest data released, media release, 22 February 2018.</p>
February 2018	<p>The NDIA releases a report on NDIS pathway review.</p> <p>The review responds to concerns that telephone planning did not enable adequate understanding of a person's needs and requirements in relation to their desired outcomes. A pilot of a new participant pathway was underway at the time of reporting.</p>	<p>NDIA, NDIS Pathway review report released, media release, 26 February 2018.</p> <p>NDIA, Improving the NDIS Participant and Provider Experience, NDIA, Canberra, 2018.</p>
March 2018	<p>The NDIA releases the Independent Pricing Review report.</p> <p>Key issues raised by providers and stakeholders include the significant change in providers' operating models that transitioning to the NDIS requires, the additional costs of providing services to complex-needs participants not being fully reflected in current loadings, and inadequacy of travel allowances in regional areas.</p> <p>The NDIA gives in-principle support to all</p>	<p>McKinsey and Company, Independent Pricing Review—final report, NDIA, Canberra, 2018.</p> <p>NDIA, NDIA accepts Independent Pricing Review's recommendations, media release, 2 March 2018.</p>

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	25 recommendations.	
March 2018	<p>Government responds to Joint Standing Committee’s report on the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability.</p> <p>Of the committee’s 25 recommendations, the Government supports 18, partially supports one and supports one in-principle. The Government does not support reviewing the <i>NDIS Act</i> or NDIS (Becoming a Participant) Rules 2016 in relation to permanency provisions around psychosocial disability, noting that a permanent condition may be episodic in nature.</p>	<p>Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee interim report: Provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition, March 2018.</p>
March 2018	<p>Government responds to Joint Standing Committee’s interim report on the provision of hearing services under the NDIS.</p> <p>The Government supports or partially supports the interim report’s six recommendations.</p>	<p>Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme interim report: Provision of hearing services under the NDIS, March 2018.</p>
March 2018	<p>The Government responds to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee’s inquiry report into the delivery of Strategy outcomes—build inclusive and accessible communities.</p> <p>Of the seven recommendations, the Government supports three, and two in principle, noted one, and did not support the recommendation to establish an Office of Disability Strategy.</p>	<p>Australian Government response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee report: Delivery of outcomes under the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 to build inclusive and accessible communities, March 2018.</p>
March 2018	<p>The Government responds to the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS’s progress report on general issues around the implementation and performance of the NDIS.</p> <p>Of the committee’s five recommendations, the Government agrees to four and one in-principle.</p>	<p>Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme report: Progress Report—September 2017, March 2018.</p>
April 2018	<p>Government announces that the NDIS will be ‘fully funded’ without increasing the Medicare Levy.</p>	<p>D Tehan (Minister for Social Services), A fully funded NDIS, media release, 26 April 2018.</p>
April 2018	<p>The final report of an independent evaluation of the NDIS trial is released.</p> <p>The evaluation finds that, overall, for the majority of people and in terms of objectives and design, the NDIS was</p>	<p>K Mavromaras, M Moskos, S Mahuteau, and L Isherwood, Evaluation of the NDIS—final report, National Institute of Labour Studies, Adelaide, 2018.</p>

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	working well; however, some people reported being worse off under the NDIS.	
May 2018	<p>Government responds to the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS's report on the provision of services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach.</p> <p>The Government agrees with all 20 recommendations, six in principle or noted and one in part.</p>	Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme report: Provision of services under the NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach , May 2018.
May 2018	<p>The Commonwealth Ombudsman releases a report on the NDIA's handling of reviews.</p> <p>The report expresses concern at delays in completing reviews and makes 20 recommendations, all of which the NDIA accepts.</p>	M Manthorpe, Administration of reviews under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 , report no. 3, Commonwealth Ombudsman, Canberra, 2018.
May 2018	<p>An agreement between the Australian and NSW Governments is announced with NSW the first state to officially sign up to the full NDIS.</p> <p>The NSW Government's annual funding contribution of more than \$3 billion in 2018–19 will be escalated by 4 per cent per year. The Australian Government will pay the balance of NDIS costs in NSW.</p> <p>The full scheme agreement takes effect from 1 July 2018.</p>	M Turnbull (Prime Minister) and G Berejiklian (NSW Premier), NDIS full scheme agreement with NSW , media release, 25 May 2018.
May 2018	<p>Government announces that the Productivity Commission will undertake a review of the National Disability Agreement.</p> <p>The final report is due to be delivered in January 2019.</p>	<p>S Morrison (Treasurer) and D Tehan (Minister for Social Services), National Disability Agreement Review, media release, 25 May 2018.</p> <p>Productivity Commission, National Disability Agreement Review, Productivity Commission website, accessed 19 June 2018.</p>
June 2018	<p>Government responds to the Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS's report into transitional arrangements for the NDIS.</p> <p>The Government supports, partially supports, or supports in-principle all 26 recommendations.</p>	Australian Government response to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme report: Transitional arrangements for the NDIS , June 2018.
June 2018	An Autism Advisory Group established to provide advice and feedback to the NDIA.	D Tehan (Minister for Social Services), Establishment of Autism Advisory Group , media release, 19 June 2018.
June 2018	The Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS releases its report into the provision	Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS, The provision of hearing services under the

Milestone	Details	Source Documents
	<p>of hearing services.</p> <p>The committee makes three recommendations to improve hearing services, particularly for children.</p>	<p>National Disability Insurance Scheme, The Senate, Canberra, 2018.</p>
June 2018	<p>Western Australia becomes final state to join the NDIS. The NDIA assumes responsibility for the delivery of NDIS in WA from 1 July 2018.</p>	<p>D Tehan (Minister for Social Services) and S Dawson (WA Minister for Disability Services), Western Australia joins the NDIS, media release, 30 June 2018.</p>

© Commonwealth of Australia



Creative Commons

With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and to the extent that copyright subsists in a third party, this publication, its logo and front page design are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Australia](#) licence.

In essence, you are free to copy and communicate this work in its current form for all non-commercial purposes, as long as you attribute the work to the author and abide by the other licence terms. The work cannot be adapted or modified in any way. Content from this publication should be attributed in the following way: Author(s), Title of publication, Series Name and No, Publisher, Date.

To the extent that copyright subsists in third party quotes it remains with the original owner and permission may be required to reuse the material.

Inquiries regarding the licence and any use of the publication are welcome to webmanager@aph.gov.au.

This work has been prepared to support the work of the Australian Parliament using information available at the time of production. The views expressed do not reflect an official position of the Parliamentary Library, nor do they constitute professional legal opinion.

Any concerns or complaints should be directed to the Parliamentary Librarian. Parliamentary Library staff are available to discuss the contents of publications with Senators and Members and their staff. To access this service, clients may contact the author or the Library's Central Enquiry Point for referral.