

# The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)



We will be with you  
every step of the way

The NDIS is expanding opportunities to access services and supports such as therapy, technology, transport, mobility aids and learning opportunities



# THE NDIS *and YOU*

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a new national initiative set to transform the way people with disability are supported

*words* **Narelle Harris**

**T**he National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), announced in 2012, begins its three-year Australia-wide rollout on July 1 this year. The scheme will revolutionise the way people with disability receive the services and supports they need to actively contribute to Australian life.

It will bring life-changing benefits not just to their lives, but also their families, carers and communities.

Trial rollouts have been underway in selected Australian locations for three years, providing practical examples of how the NDIS works.

But what does the NDIS really mean for people with disability, their carers and their families?

Quite simply, says Debra Baldwin from Australian Unity's Home Care Service, it's "the biggest change to the community sector since Medicare".

Debra, regional manager of the metropolitan Hunter area in NSW, says the enormity of the change offered to participants of the NDIS cannot be underestimated.

"It will bring people with disability onto a level playing field with the rest of the community and change their lives for the better," she says.

"Our clients are pleasantly surprised to learn that the disability services they receive now will be moved to a system that will give them greater choice and control over their own lives."



“Our staff are excited about the scheme as they can see new opportunities for increasing the skills they need to assist their clients to thrive and live their best possible lives,” Debra says. “And families will be given certainty that the scheme will provide guaranteed lifetime support for their loved one.”

### WHY IS THERE A NEW SCHEME?

In simple terms, the Australian Government is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which calls for governments to provide all support “reasonable and necessary” to living an “ordinary life”. The existing system was identified as underfunded, unfair and inefficient, and was redesigned, from scratch. The result is the NDIS.

An ordinary life is, in part, about equitable access to services and amenities, such as having wheelchair access and accessible toilets in all buildings. Largely, it’s about the community’s idea of the milestones of each life stage: attending primary school and high school; having access to further education; holding a job; developing a career; seeing films and concerts; taking holidays. Not everyone with disability can do all of these things but with the right support, the NDIS aims to assist people in getting as close as they want to, or is possible.

### HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

Debra says that under the previous system, restricted funding hours meant that “many of our clients were only supported for their most basic needs and had very limited access to the community or social support services. Now they have greater opportunity for access to services and we can support them to achieve their goals and improve their lifestyles,” she says.

### SO WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Most significantly, the NDIS focuses on the person. If there’s a disparity between a person’s life and the milestones of an ordinary life, the NDIS aims to help that person bridge the gap. What constitutes an ordinary life might be something as simple as catching a bus to the shops, having someone to take you out for a meal or a coffee, studying, learning how to use an iPad, or going to a football game. In services terms, it could include personal assistance with getting ready for the day or being able to have regular, home-cooked meals or assistance with transport to community

## NDIS KEY FACTS



### WHAT?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a government-funded scheme that will provide lifetime funding support for people with disability.

### HOW?

By providing fairer, more efficient access to disability services funding.

### WHY?

To better support people with disability.

### WHO?

Anyone under the age of 65 years (when they first access the scheme) who has a permanent disability that significantly affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.

Are you already an NDIS participant and coming up to your 65th birthday?

If you turn 65 after you have entered the scheme, you can choose to stay in the NDIS or receive support through the aged care system.

## THE ROLL OUT



### ROLL OUT PHASES

- PHASE 1 from 1 July 2016
- PHASE 2 from 1 July 2017
- PHASE 3 from 1 July 2018

### QUEENSLAND

- PHASE 1 from 1 July 2016: Townsville, Mackay, Toowoomba
- PHASE 2 from 1 July 2017: Ipswich, Bundaberg, Rockhampton
- PHASE 3 from 1 July 2018: Beenleigh, Cairns, Brisbane, Maryborough, Caboolture/Strathpine, Maroochydore, Robina

### NEW SOUTH WALES

- PHASE 1 from 1 July 2016: Central Coast, Hunter, New England, Nepean Blue Mountains, Northern Sydney, South Western Sydney, Southern NSW, Western Sydney
- PHASE 2 from 1 July 2017: Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast, Murrumbidgee, Northern NSW, South Eastern Sydney, Sydney, Western NSW, Far West

### VICTORIA

- PHASE 1 from 1 July 2016: North East Melbourne, Central Highlands, Loddon
- PHASE 2 from 1 July 2017: Outer East Melbourne, Inner East Melbourne, Ovens Murray, Inner Gippsland, Western District, Bayside Peninsula, Hume Moreland
- PHASE 3 from 1 July 2018: Southern Melbourne, Brimbank, Melton, Western Melbourne, Goulburn, Mallee, Outer Gippsland



To see when the NDIS is rolled out near you, visit [ndis.gov.au](http://ndis.gov.au)

activities. In short, the NDIS is about much more than day-to-day living.

### HOW WILL THE NDIS DO THIS?

The NDIS is run by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), a government body that determines who is eligible to become a participant in the scheme. This includes anyone who has permanent disability that significantly affects their everyday activities and who is under the age of 65 years when they first access the scheme.

An NDIA representative will meet individuals to discuss their goals and create an individual plan, including supports related to the person's disability. Goals might focus on health, employment, social participation, education and independence. The plan is the basis for determining the person's funding for the year ahead and will be reviewed regularly. The scheme provides a lifelong commitment to meeting the needs of the person.

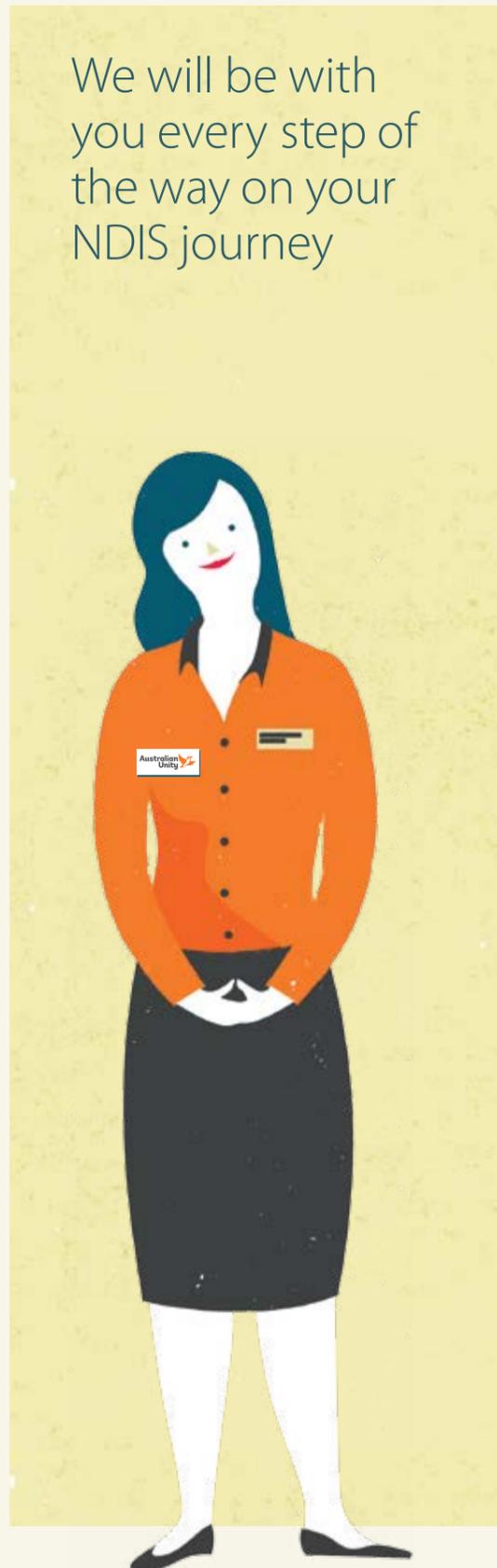
The funding model is the other significant change to how people obtain services, says Kaye McCulloch from Australian Unity. "When the client gets their plan, they can decide how the money will be managed," Kaye says. "The NDIA can manage those funds, or people can choose to manage it themselves or to do it in partnership with the NDIA." Whoever manages the funds, the decision on who provides services remains with the participant.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF A PARTICIPANT'S NEEDS CHANGE?

The NDIA meets annually with participants to reassess the plan, so it stays responsive. If someone's plan relates to education, for example, different support might be needed at the start of that transition, and again when transitioning from school to work. "The plan isn't carved in stone," Kaye says. "It's meant to be a living, breathing document that evolves with that person."

### HOW AUSTRALIAN UNITY CAN SUPPORT YOU TO NAVIGATE THE NDIS

Australian Unity is supporting existing clients with disability services for a smooth transition to the NDIS by providing free information sessions and offering one-on-one pre-planning meetings. The pre-planning meetings with Australian Unity are to discuss clients' current support arrangements and explore their goals for the future. This will assist clients to feel prepared for



## MAKING YOUR TRANSITION EASY



1

We're hosting free local information sessions on the NDIS



2

We've designed a special workbook to support you to identify your goals



3

We will meet with you one-on-one to talk about your personal needs and goals



4

We can join you at your meeting with the NDIA



5

When your plan is approved by the NDIA we will meet with you to discuss your preferences



6

We will stay in touch with you regularly and can support you when your plan is reviewed by the NDIA each year

Contact us at any time to talk about NDIS. Chat with your local Home Services representative, or phone us on 1300 160 170





Learn more about the NDIS  
ndis.gov.au



Image by Chris Elfas

Greg Ferguson with his mother Joyce. The NDIS has given him more choice and flexibility.

## CASE STUDY *Better than ordinary*

Greg Ferguson is excitedly planning his first holiday in more than a decade, thanks to the NDIS. He and some friends are going on a fishing trip to Iluka, near the mouth of the Clarence River in NSW. He'll stay in a cabin and join friends on the riverbank.

Greg, 62, lives in North Lambton, near Newcastle, in the Hunter Valley in NSW. He's an Australian Unity Home Care Service client and joined the NDIS trial in 2013. "I didn't really have any idea what to expect," says Greg, who is quadriplegic. "Only that the NDIS would offer more services – I was really only getting showers in the morning and assisted to bed at night."

Under NDIS and with Australian Unity's Home Care Service as his service provider, Greg now has support with meal preparation, social participation and equipment. Greg's very happy with the improvements. "I live with my mother, Joyce, who is 94. Now she doesn't have to worry about me as much, or do as much around the house and I can have a bit more flexibility in life. I can get out and mix with people," he says.

Greg's initial concerns about the NDIS were addressed early with his NDIA planner. He discussed his goals and they helped him develop a year-long plan. "If you need any additional equipment or anything like that, you just ring your coordinator at NDIA and they adjust the plan," he says. Greg says his expectations were definitely met: "I have more options and independence now." What is his advice to those who will transition to the scheme? "Talk to someone who's on the scheme. Talk to your service provider. Get onto it."

when the NDIA planner contacts them to develop their NDIS plan.

Australian Unity is training staff in every branch as NDIS coordinators. These coordinators will be able to provide expert advice and support to clients with disability, while visiting them in their homes as the scheme is rolled out.

"Through our understanding of their daily living activities and their current service plan, we will be able to provide clients with pre-planning support and help them articulate their needs and goals as they move to the NDIS," Debra says.

"The whole point of the plan is to centre on the person with disability and those closest to them. A good plan focuses on what a good life means to each individual, what's working and what they would like to change, and it addresses the support they need to thrive."

Services might include support with self-care, overnight care and community participation. A plan could include living in supported accommodation, improving daily living skills and assistive technology such as wheelchairs, ramps and mobility aids.

### TALK TO AUSTRALIAN UNITY

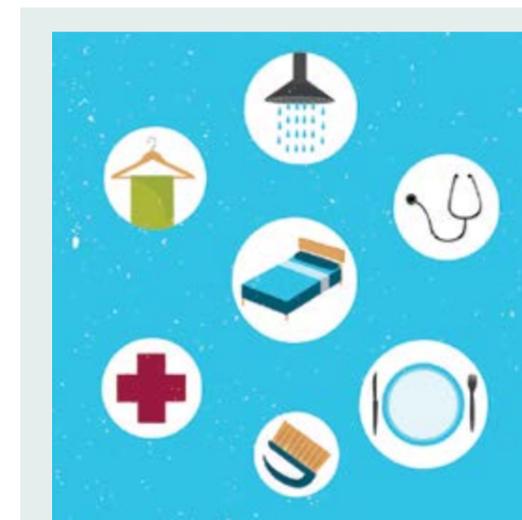
Australian Unity's proud history of supporting the wellbeing of Australians spans more than 175 years. As one of the nation's largest providers of home services and disability services, we stand ready to provide a diverse range of supports and services to Australians with disability.

"This is such a significant national social policy transformation," Kaye says. "Twenty per cent of Australians live with some sort of disability. That's a lot of people whose lives are going to be impacted by this. Add to that their carers, their families, the wider community – it's huge. It's going to make such a positive difference."

## POSITIVE CHANGES

### POTENTIAL SERVICES UNDER NDIS

- Transport to daily life activities
- Support to access your community: *going to the library, going out socially, joining a club, getting a job*
- Support for home modification
- Being able to study or learn a new skill
- New mobility aids such as wheelchairs
- Additional therapy: *speech therapy, aquatherapy, physiotherapy to gain strength, sign language for communication skills*
- New technology: *talking scales, audio books, text-to-speech computer software, iPads, computers*
- Personal care such as showers, dressing and being assisted to bed
- Medical check ups
- Meal services
- Basic medical equipment
- Basic housework



### PREVIOUS SERVICES

- Personal care such as showers, dressing and being assisted to bed
- Medical check ups
- Meal services
- Basic medical equipment
- Basic housework



**For more information  
contact a member of our  
friendly team today.**

1300 160 170

[australianunity.com.au/disability-services](https://australianunity.com.au/disability-services)



**Your local branch/office:**