

The Secretary
Health, Ageing and Community Services
Standing Committees
ACT Legislative Assembly

Submitted to: LACommitteeHACS@parliament.act.gov.au

Submission to
**Inquiry into the implementation, performance and governance of the National
Disability Insurance Scheme in the ACT**

In the capacity of a private citizen & a NDIS Participant

Specifically reference to Term of Reference:

- c) Whether there are unique factors relating to the provision of disability services affected by the implementation of the NDIS in the ACT.

Dear Committee Chair

Profoundly disabled by cerebral palsy, my wife, Jenni, and I have been strong supporters of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from even before we were made participants in 2015. I am also honoured to have served on the Minister's Disability Advisory Committee, which advised on the ACT's role out of the NDIS.

The NDIS has seen: a substantial increase in government funding; a blossoming of new and exciting services and products. It has changed from a system focused on funds rationing to a participant-focused paradigm. It has also seen, however, a focusing on price lists; approved services and products (and, by implication, disallowable services and products); and inflexibility in procurement procedures (such as: not being able to quickly solve problems by committing to reasonable and necessary procurements of products and/or engagement of services without prior funding approval).

The move to the national scheme has placed disability support largely beyond the influence of the ACT's human rights and anti-discrimination legislation. This has restricted the ACT Ministers of Disability's opportunities to work with individuals, service providers and departmental officials, to find innovative solutions to local challenges. Rather, proposed solutions require risk assessment for possible precedent-setting and potential political consequences.

The nationalisation of disability supports, I respectfully suggest, has disempowered people with disabilities by further bureaucratisation of the approval and delivery of support. It has replaced local ACT decision-makers with remote public servants who may have little accountability to local communities.

I would be available to elaborate on these points if so invited.

Your sincerely

David Heckendorf
10 March 2018