



# Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

## Answer to question on notice

---

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

Redirected to: Suzanne Orr MLA

Reference: NDIS changes/Community Services Directorate

Hearing: 20 February 2025

In relation to: NDIS changes

Question received: 25 February 2025

Answer Due: 5 March 2025

I note that there has been considerable uncertainty among the disability community, carers and support providers about the consequences of the changes to the NDIS, particularly foundational supports.

1. Can you tell me what the largest impacts will be for NDIS participants in the ACT following the changes to Foundational Supports on 1 July 2025?
2. What impacts will the changes have for the ACT Health budget and functions?
3. There are concerns among providers that they still don't know how changes will impact them, from 1 July this year. When will providers be told what your plans are for Foundational Supports?
4. What consultation has ACT Health had with the disability community and disability service providers about the changes?
5. Will ACT Health provide any support to ensure services continue through this period of uncertainty?

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The rollout of foundational supports in the ACT is expected to address key findings of the NDIS Review, including a harmful disparity between supports available to NDIS participants and people with disability who are not NDIS participants. Delivery of foundational supports outside the NDIS is intended to provide lower-intensity supports to those who do not require individual package supports through the NDIS, to enable people with disability greater access to the supports they need, at a time and place that meets their needs.

- a. Targeted Foundational Supports are initially expected to focus on providing supports to children with developmental delay and disability, noting the significant gaps in supports, and the strength of outcomes associated with early intervention, for this cohort.
  - b. In addition to Targeted Foundational Supports for certain cohorts (such as children with developmental delay), General Foundational Supports will deliver information, advice and capacity building services to all people with disability.
  - c. All Australian governments are working together to settle the parameters and other design considerations for Foundational Supports. The timeframes for commencement of a phased rollout will be agreed as part of national negotiations on health and disability funding agreements over 2025.
2. Changes related to Foundational Supports have not been finalised. The flow-on effect to the ACT Health budget and functions can not be estimated at this time.
3. The ACT Government is committed to transparent communication with the community to enable planning and reduce uncertainty throughout this process of disability reform. Recognising the impacts of reforms on providers and ensuring they are supported to deliver service continuity throughout this period of change and beyond are critical ACT Government priorities in the disability portfolio.
  - a. Through the Disability Reform Ministerial Council, all governments have published a roadmap for disability reforms for 2025, including foundational supports. This is available via the Commonwealth Department of Social Services website and is updated regularly.
  - b. The ACT Government will continue regular engagements with ACT disability community and disability service sector representatives to share updates.
  - c. The ACT Government is in the process of developing a holistic implementation plan for the disability reform agenda, including Foundational Supports, to be shared publicly when this is finalised. Early engagement on this work, including with disability sector representation to ensure this work reflects the sector's needs and priorities, commenced in late 2024.
4. National public consultation on Foundational Supports was undertaken in late 2024 with people with disability, their families and carers, and the disability sector and advocacy organisations. These consultations were led by the Australian Government and delivered by an external consultant, with input and support from the ACT Government. The findings of these consultations are being considered by all Australian governments in relation to progressing the design of Foundational Supports. A Webinar on the findings of these consultations is available on the DSS Engage website.
  - a. In October 2024 ACT Government Community Services Directorate undertook consultation with disability representative organisations and disability sector organisations. This consultation sought views around thematic mapping, prioritization and sequencing of the ACT's disability reform agenda, including

foundational supports. Outcomes of this consultation will inform development of ACT-specific disability reform implementation planning.

- b. A significant number of people in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in the ACT have a psychosocial disability (which is a disability because of a severe and enduring mental illness). ACTHD has consulted those providers on the proposed changes to the NDIS including Foundational Supports. ACT Health Directorate will continue to engage with the Mental Health Sector as these reforms are implemented.
  - c. The ACT Disability Health Reference Group (the Reference Group) was established in 2024 under the ACT Disability Health Strategy 2024-2033 to give advice to the ACT Government about the health and wellbeing of people with disability. This Reference Group will advise on changes to the NDIS and the ACT Health system, as this work progresses. Other consultation and engagement will occur as information becomes available about the changes over time.
5. Prior to commencement of phased rollout of Foundational Supports, there will be no change to existing service delivery. When design and funding parameters of Foundational Supports are settled, the ACT Government will engage with community partners to finalise ACT-specific rollout considerations.
- a. ACT Health officials are working closely with Community Service Directorate disability officials to consider sequencing of this reform work.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

Date:

04/03/25

Minister for Disability, Carers and Community Services , Suzanne Orr MLA