

SUBMISSION



TO | NDIS Review

TOPIC | NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework
Issues Paper Review

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Submission to the Australian Government's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguarding Framework Review

About Uniting Communities

We are an inclusive not-for-profit organisation working alongside more than 80,000 South Australians each year and have been creating positive change for South Australian communities for more than 120 years. We have been providing disability services for more than 35 years and we are a registered provider of the NDIS.

We advocate for systems change across diverse social justice issues to shape public and social policy that delivers better outcomes for marginalised communities.

We help those in need find the courage to move forward through enriching their lives and uniting the communities in which they live. By tackling the deep-seated challenges that affect people's lives, we are working to create systemic change and brighter futures for all South Australians. We have a bold and unceasing commitment to social justice, advocating for change and improvement in the lives of those who need it most.

Key Recommendations

Uniting Communities applauds the Government's commitment to undertaking a review of the existing NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework (the Framework). We acknowledge that the Framework was originally released by the Disability Reform Council (DRC) in 2016, following the three-year trial of the NDIS and the transition to the full scheme in the July of that year.

Page 17 of the current Framework highlights that "...it will need to be reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose once capability has grown and the market has become more established", however this does not appear to have happened prior to this particular review. The Framework does not outline who is responsible for reviewing it, how often it is to be reviewed and how success of the Framework will be measured.

Uniting Communities encourages the NDIS Independent Review Panel to identify an appropriate governing body that will regularly review the Framework and ensure that it is achieving its desired outcomes.

The Framework was established to keep NDIS participants safe and to ensure that the services they received were good quality. The Framework aimed to create a nationally consistent approach to quality and safeguarding and recommended the establishment of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission and the NDIS Code of Conduct are now well established and play a significant role in achieving the desired outcomes of the Framework.

Uniting Communities agrees that the Framework has promoted a safe and competent workforce by establishing a nationally consistent NDIS worker screening process and that it has also encouraged safety by reducing/eliminating restrictive practices by introducing consistent quality

requirements for behaviour support practitioners and relevant providers. It is hoped that, in the future, additional training and support regarding restrictive practice will be made available to the NDIS workforce to ensure that the use of restrictive practices continues to decline.

Uniting Communities, therefore, recommends that the Framework is updated to ensure that:

1. It is regularly reviewed by an appropriate governing body
2. Success of the Framework is measured and publicly reported on
3. Service providers and workers are given the opportunity to provide input and feedback into the NDIS, through a designated channel
4. Additional training and support regarding restrictive practice is made available to the NDIS workforce

As stated above, Uniting Communities thanks the Australian Government for their commitment to reviewing the Framework and wishes the Independent Review Panel every success in their endeavor to update the Framework accordingly.