

Three Year NDIS Support Plans

Alliance20ⁱ supports the option for NDIS participants to have support plans for up to three years and proposes that consideration be given for up to five year plans, with a phased implementation between these time frames. The implementation of longer plans should be developed in partnership with participants, providers and the NDIA.

Alliance20 members are well positioned to support and participate in a phased implementation process, providing capacity for the development of an evidence based improvement framework for the planning process.

Alliance20 supports the option for NDIS participants to have three year plans. Effective planning brings together the supports, goals and aspirations a participant wants. Central to longer plans is a planning process that strengthens, enables and supports participants to exercise optimum choice and control.

The NDIS plan review and implementation process, can be complicated for both participants and providers:

- Participants need to collate a vast array of documentation to support the reasonable and necessary supports they seek, even if they do not need to change those supports.
- Providers need to provide data and information to participants, while also managing the alignment of service bookings with expiring/new plans.

The Benefit of Longer Plans

The COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report (March 2019) states that:

“approximately 1,320 plans were developed or reviewed each business day during the quarter. This represents a significant increase in the daily volume of plans.”

As the NDIS enters full scheme there will be a substantial risk that the plan review process will be under more pressure, further compromising participants’ capacity to exercise optimum choice and control. For the current financial year, a total of 51,924 plans were reviewed up to March 2019.

Longer plans provide the opportunity to further streamline the planning process and reduce the administrative burden for everyone involved. For participants, in particular, this will provide a greater emphasis on goal achievements shifting focus on living their lives, rather than the level of funding.

Three year plans provide the opportunity to lay the framework for a more dynamic planning process which can be more flexible, greater recognition of individual difference (both in life choices and life stage of the participant) and responsive to change.

Proposal for Implementation of Three Year Plans

With any changes to the NDIS planning process, risks will need to be managed in order to safeguard NDIS participants' choice and control. Alliance20 proposes the development of guiding principles to assist the implementation such as:

- To be eligible for a three year plan, a participant's NDIS funding should only have varied by (say) 10% (excluding price increases) in each of the previous two years
- If a participant's reasonable and necessary supports change within the three years, a plan can be reviewed
- Participants could elect to review only some components of their plan
- Annual goals for a participant should be included in a three year plan
- Participants should achieve in the vicinity of 80% of their annual goals to maintain three year plans
- Annual mechanism tracking outcome

Key Elements / Considerations

- Different services have different planning cycle e.g. Supported Independent Living (SIL)/Community Access
- A baseline for measurement of change should to be established, in particular to potential efficiencies to be delivered in the administration of plan development and reviews
- Providers should be required to commit to having a quantitative process in place to measure progress towards participant goal achievement
- Providers should be required to commit to participate in a data collection processes to ensure a quantification of the cost reduction due to the change to three year plans
- Participants with SIL funding are the most appropriate target for the initial introduction of three year plans
- Participants who are 30 years of age or older tend to be in a fairly stable employment / community access / living situations, and therefore could a secondary initial target for three year plans
- An annual goal achievement/funding suitability review could be completed
- If overall plan value has varied less than 10% per annum (excluding price increases) for the previous two years, participants should be considered for three year plans
- A checklist template could be completed annually to track goal achievement

Measurement of change

Benefits of three year plans will not be felt by participants in the short term. To secure participant benefits providers will need to assess that participants' goals and achievements align with the plan funding in place. Other benefits, such as for the NDIA and providers from reducing the administrative burden of the NDIS, will become clear over time.

ⁱ **Alliance20** brings together Australia's most **influential** disability service providers to shape the NDIS for a future that enables choice; ensures value; minimises complexity and delivers better outcomes. Collectively Alliance20 **supports** around 75,000 people with disability in every state and territory, has over 30,000 staff working directly in disability services and represents around \$2 billion in funding for disability services. **Drawing** on the unparalleled collective experience of members, Alliance20 is focused on shaping and influencing the development of NDIS policy to support the long term objectives of the scheme for the benefit of people with disability in Australia.