



## SPEECH

**THE HON JENNY MACKLIN MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR FAMILIES & PAYMENTS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DISABILITY REFORM  
MEMBER FOR JAGAJAGA**

**NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE  
REPORT**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE, PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
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*\*\*\* CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY \*\*\**

I thank the member for Dunkley, and I congratulate him on his appointment as the new Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme. As I am sure he knows it is an important job. We look forward to his energy and enthusiasm, which he will no doubt bring to this new role.

I want to acknowledge the work of the former committee chair, the member for Fisher, and congratulate him on his promotion to the Ministry. I thank all of our other colleagues on the committee and the staff of the committee for their hard work in preparing this report.

As the Member for Dunkley has said, the findings of the report are very encouraging. It is a very exciting time for people with disability, their families and carers.

The trials, now in eight locations, are progressing well. Around 20,000 Australians have been found eligible for support, and 18,000 have had their individualised plans already approved. Satisfaction rates are high, and costs are generally below the target prices.

In short, the National Disability Insurance Scheme is doing exactly what it was designed to do. The NDIS is changing lives.

For this report, the committee visited the new trial sites here in the ACT; in Tennant Creek, in the Northern Territory; and the two trial sites in Western Australia.

We got to hear directly from people with disability who are now taking part in the scheme and to see what the NDIS is meaning for them. Of course, all of us were very moved by the stories that we heard—stories of new hope, of new opportunities.

I do acknowledge that these stories held a special pleasure for me. As the member for Dunkley has acknowledged, I was the Minister for Disability Reform when the NDIS was designed and implemented. Throughout my time as Minister I did hear many thousands of personal stories; all of them were inspiring but, I am sorry to say, few at that time were positive.

They were stories of people with disability, their families and carers who were very tired and, often, very fed up—fed up with trying to work with a system that would not work for them.

There were stories of adults who had wheelchairs that they had outgrown; of young children who were not getting the early intervention that is so vital to their development; of parents and carers who could not remember the last time they had a break; and of parents, of course, who have just been worried sick about what would happen to their adult sons and daughters when they were no longer around.

In the time since the NDIS started from a good idea, then to government policy and to a reality, we have seen all of this start to change.

Two years ago I was in Newcastle to celebrate the launch of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We returned to Newcastle in August this year, and I met two young women, Peta Lambert and Natalie Howland—two young women whose lives have been dramatically changed.

Before the NDIS came to Newcastle, Nat was living at home with her mum and Peta was living in a group home. Like all young women, they of course wanted to move out and live independently. Now, that is exactly what they are doing—living in their own home, that they own and share together, in Newcastle, and all because of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

It was a Labor Government that did this, that made the National Disability Insurance Scheme real. But I want to acknowledge that the great news in the last month or so is the signing of the bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth government and New South Wales and Victoria.

As the report indicates, we are concerned that other jurisdictions have now missed the deadlines that were set by both levels of government for the bilateral agreements

to be signed. This is a very serious concern for the Committee, but most of all a very serious concern for people with disability and for carers.

We must see the National Disability Insurance Scheme rolled out on time. There cannot be any delay, there cannot be any 'go slow' and we do not want to hear any excuses for failure by any level of government.

So I want to encourage this government here in Canberra to get on with the signing of the bilateral agreements in Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory as quickly as possible, and to work with the Western Australian government to determine the future of disability services in that state.

We must deliver the National Disability Insurance Scheme on time. Hundreds of thousands of Australians depend on each of us to make sure that happens.

***ENDS***