

DISABILITYCARE AUSTRALIA

A few years ago a national disability insurance scheme was just an idea. Through robust community collaboration, of which MS Queensland has played its part, we have joined with the wider disability sector in taking action, raising awareness and championing politicians and stakeholders on this once in a generation opportunity to make a true difference in the lives of people living with disability. This action has delivered the ultimate result for all – the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), now known as DisabilityCare Australia (DCA).

A proud day to be remembered was 8 May 2013, when Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Queensland Premier Campbell Newman announced the historic agreement between Commonwealth and Queensland State Governments and committed to the full implementation of the NDIS in Queensland.

The NDIS will provide all eligible Australians with access to a scheme that guarantees lifetime coverage for the costs of reasonable and necessary disability care and support. The ultimate aim of the NDIS is to assist people with disability to achieve social and economic participation. The NDIS will deliver certainty, equity and sustainability through more choice and control in the lives of people with disability through self-directed options and individualised funding.

On 1 July 2013 the scheme was launched in four sites across Australia. Queensland is currently not one of the launch sites, yet great learnings and insight will be gained from the sites progressing in Barwon Region Victoria, Hunter Region NSW, the entire South Australia and the entire Tasmania. In July 2014 further launch sites will begin in the entire ACT, Barkly Region NT and WA – a combination of a launch site administered by DCA and another administered by WA Disability Services Commission. Currently there are no details for a launch site in Queensland however the scheme will commence here in 2016 with full scheme rollout by July 2019 for 97,000 participants.

As DisabilityCare Australia is a new system which will be built from the foundations up, the launch sites will enable us – the MS community and disability sector in Queensland – to make a contribution to how the system is built. Momentum needs to remain strong within the community in this important time of the development, shaping and creation of this vital scheme to truly achieve transformational change, now and into the future.

*Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012

** YPIRAC report: 30% neurological primary disability

SECTOR REFORM – AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NON PROFIT COMMISSION (ACNC)

The Australian Government has established a new independent statutory agency, the Australian Charities and Non Profit Commission (ACNC). Reporting directly to Parliament, the ACNC commenced operations in October 2012 and will initially be responsible for determining the legal status of groups seeking charitable, public benevolent institution, and other NFP benefits on behalf of all Commonwealth agencies. The ACNC will also implement a 'report-once use-often' reporting framework for charities, provide education and support to the sector on technical matters, and establish a public information portal.

MS PREVALENCE IN AUSTRALIA

MS is the most common chronic neurological condition in young adults in Australia.

More than 23,000 Australians live with MS.

Of these people, more than 3,700 reside in Queensland.

More than 2.5 million people live with MS globally.

MS affects almost three times more women than men.

MS is most commonly diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40 when people are in the prime of their lives.

The number of people living with MS in Australia is climbing by approximately 4% each year.

The total cost of MS to individuals and the Australian community is over \$1 billion annually.

Source: MS Research Australia, 2012.