Dietitians Australia

NDIS Delays: No person with disability deserves to be denied essential nutrition care

Dietitians Australia is again calling on the Government and the NDIA to provide clarity and assurance that people with disability who require nutrition care for their functional needs will be guaranteed to receive it.

It comes following the announcement that there will be delays in the rollout of NDIS Foundational Supports program, while significant uncertainty in how supports across the system will be delivered moving forward.

Dietitians Australia members have reported that the participants they work with are experiencing a substantial number of knockbacks on previously funded supports because of the changes introduced in October last year.

“We are absolutely prepared to help the Government and the NDIA, with vital information and solutions to ensure that no person with a disability who needs essential nutrition care slips through the cracks,” Dietitians Australia Chief Executive Officer Magriet Raxworthy said.

“The way the rollout of the new therapy supports list has been delivered to date has been inconsistent, chaotic and in some cases has put participants’ lives at significant risk,” she said.

“Our members are reporting an increased number of people with disability who have had their nutrition therapy support requests denied.

“Many are turning up at a hospital for support as they have nowhere else to go in the community and are left without clarity or direction by the NDIA.

“The reasons include tube feeding-related complications, dehydration, malnutrition and in extreme cases, swallowing difficulties and choking.

“All of these cases could be avoided if essential nutrition care was embedded as it should be within the NDIS.

“Our hospital system is already under enormous strain, and we have a severe lack of access within the community to the nutrition support people need.

“We welcome the opportunity to work closely with Minister Butler, Assistant Minister McAllister, and State and Territory Ministers to ensure that the NDIS reforms and the new Foundational Supports program are designed and delivered in a way that clearly empowers participants to access the nutrition care they need, where it’s not available elsewhere.

“Nutrition support is vital to enable people with disability to live with dignity, autonomy, and good health.

“Dietitians are committed to bringing our expertise to the table to ensure these reforms are person-centred, responsive to the diversity of need, and easily accessible for people with disability – no matter which State or Territory they live in.”

For media enquiries and interviews, please contact Media Manager Amy Phillips on 0409 661 920.

Note to Editors: Dietitians Australia is the leading voice in nutrition and dietetics, representing dietitians nationally and advocating for healthier communities. Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) is the only national credential recognised by the Australian Government as the quality standard for nutrition and dietetics services in Australia.