

8 July 2021

Emma Davidson MLA
Minister for Disability
ACT Legislative Assembly
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: davidson@act.gov.au

Dear Minister Davidson

Dietitians Australia supports reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) that will enable people with disability to participate fully in their own life and community. This includes supporting people with nutrition impairments to eat and drink, as well as plan, shop and prepare food to meet their nutrition needs.

The planned reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will fundamentally change how the NDIS works and have caused widespread concern for people with disability, their family, supporters and the wider disability sector. We acknowledge that the NDIS can be inconsistent, complex and difficult to use. The proposed changes will not fix any of those problems. In fact, we are worried they will make them much worse.

Inadequate support and poor nutrition can increase the risk of potentially avoidable death, while limiting a person's ability to make physical, social and mental gains. For decades we have known that insufficient nutrition care leads to avoidable deaths of people with disability. Dietitians Australia is concerned that the proposed changes to the NDIS will exacerbate this problem.

The independent assessment toolkit does not ask the right questions to identify nutrition impairment and the associated support needs. It is also unclear if the Personalised Budget Models the '400 personas' include estimates of nutrition and dietetic support needs.

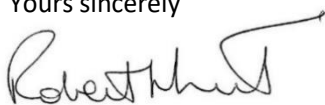
Any cuts to disability support will have flow on effects for state and territory budgets. Mainstream health services are not adequately funded to support people with a disability to access the nutrition supports and care from a dietitian they need.

The proposed changes will remove the say that the states and territories currently have about how the NDIS is run - even though they will continue to contribute financially to the NDIS.

Dietitians Australia are asking you to raise our concerns at the next Disability Reform Ministers' Meeting, and to ask NDIS Minister Linda Reynolds to stop the proposed changes to the NDIS. Both myself and members of our Advocacy and Policy team would be very happy to meet with you, discuss these vital matters for people with disability, their families and community and answer any questions you have.

We look forward to a meeting at your convenience.

Yours sincerely



Robert Hunt
Chief Executive Officer