



“Prime Minister ignores key NDIS recommendations”

MEDIA RELEASE: August 23rd, 2011

The attached file from last Sundays Adelaide paper is a timely reminder that a COAG agreement means very little. In 2006 COAG agreed to move all young people with disability out of inappropriate aged care facilities. That COAG agreement has failed miserably on what was just a \$250 million dollar program.

All governments, State and Federal as expected have now agreed that National Disability Insurance is an excellent idea.

This outcome was predictable given that the Australian Productivity Commission Inquiry Report (APCIR) delivering a damning assessment on 410,000 Australians with disability living in misery and the states may have the once in a life time opportunity to walk away from supplying and funding future disability services.

Yet the final resolution at COAG has not guaranteed any additional or better services for even one Australian with Disability anytime in the foreseeable future

Key recommendations of the APCIR are being conveniently ignored by the Prime Minister including very importantly

RECOMMENDATION 19.3

In the period leading up to the full introduction of the NDIS, the Australian Government should supplement funding under the National Disability Agreement to reduce some of the worst rationing of support services, particularly for supported accommodation and respite.

Widespread concern that the Federal Government has no real intention of attacking the disability crisis in the short term is increasing. The government while positive in its rhetoric is being highly selective in which parts of the report it wants to highlight and action and of course all this is being done under an umbrella of secrecy of how the Prime Minister intends to pay for the \$6.5 billion dollar per annum bill.

Until the Prime Minister details a funding model the chances of NDIS ever happening remains effectively zero.

In a hostile phone call from Senator Jan McLucas last week Disability Speaks was told that almost every other organization in Australia thought the NDIS announcements were fantastic. Disability

Speaks developed a healthy scepticism of political announcements a long time ago. Senator McLucas's opinion has not been supported by the online blogs where following the initial announcement of NDIS the reality is that people with a disability are starting to understand that nothing has changed in disability services yet. Leading local disability advocate Sam Paior wrote

<http://www.thepunch.com.au/articles/Disability-insurance-scheme-ill-believe-it-when-I-see-it/>

When Piers Akermann wrote in The Sydney Daily Telegraph on Julia's wonderful rhetoric and promises some 300 bloggers disagreed with our Prime Minister. While we all know Piers is a conservative the readers are not

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/labors-history-of-empty-promises/story-e6frezz013308337>

There may be political consequences for the Prime Minister if she does not answer fully the three major outstanding question about NDIS. Julia must explain

- Why is she not fast tracking NDIS and treating it as a priority like recent government indicatives like the overnight implementation of The National Broadband Network(\$42bn) and the Carbon Tax(\$9.0bn).The productivity commission report reminds us The "Job Network" including sweeping changes in employment services took two years to implement. Medibank was implemented in one year after the passage of its enabling legislation. Why should NDIS take 8 years to be implemented?
- How is the government going to fund the \$6.5 Billion dollar cost per annum for NDIS. This remains the biggest issue? No money equals no NDIS.
- Why is the Prime Minister ignoring key recommendation 19.3 (page 91) There are some 35,000 high needs clients around Australia today on critical disability waiting lists. \$2.5 billion per annum over the next 3 years would enable the building of new residences, the hiring and training of staff and the recurrent funding to pay for ongoing services and clear major waiting lists. Every new supported accommodation house and respite centre built would remain a long term asset and they would never be empty. A major investment now would have both short and long term benefits.
- Let's be fair dinkum if the Prime Minister cannot find \$2.5 billion a year now for a confirmed crisis what hope has she got of finding \$6.5 billion per year in 2019.Is Julia fair dinkum?

Disability Speaks will be writing to Julia Gillard and inviting her to speak at a Public meeting in Adelaide. We hope she fronts the consumers and explain the answer to these and many other vexing questions. We would expect 500- 1000 people to attend. Julia needs to front the people and prove she is fair dinkum.

It's time to find out how serious Julia is about NDIS. The disability sector cannot wait another 8years subject to the vagaries of politics and the economy for a solution.

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