



# Great News?

## “Bi partisan support is fantastic”

### **MEDIA RELEASE: August 20th, 2013**

“Bi-partisan support is promised” the NDIS words we have all wanted to hear!

The announcement by the Liberal Party today , guaranteeing support for both the pilot program and the full NDIS launch agreements already signed with the states puts the forthcoming Federal election on September 7<sup>th</sup> in a vexing context for people whose primary vote will be decided around disability matters.

Bipartisan support is a rarity in most political spheres and we greatly appreciate the commitments from both parties with the Coalition announcement today.

We congratulate both parties on their united NDIS stand and look forward to circulating the ALP election material portfolio when we receive it. (along with any other parties who send us important stuff)

Given both major parties will go to the election with very similar positions on the big program “NDIS/ Disability Care Australia”, the question becomes largely rhetorical or political as we consider our votes.

#### **“Do you vote Abbott or Rudd, who do you trust?” (or vote someone else??)**

It would be inappropriate for Disability Speaks to pass judgement on the bona fides or integrity of Mr Rudd or Mr Abbott.

While we all have opinions we do not have a crystal ball. While we have not met with Mr Rudd around disability matters we did meet with Julia Gillard and have worked with Amanda Rishworth for a long time. We have had many discussions with Mr Abbott and Mr Fifield and Mr Pynne. Disability Speaks have never been party or personally driven, we always take a consumer view and demand the best possible outcomes!

We would welcome a phone call from either leader before September 7<sup>th</sup> and we guarantee to publicize widely any personal comments.

It is important however that people are aware that very important guarantees have now been given by both parties! (see attached)

At Disability Speaks we are not ones to sit on the fence and we will keep pushing for more information until election day which we will share with you. NDIS is a long way from implemented and an operating perfect program as we speak.

There are outstanding issues around NDIS that we are seeking clarification on that may yet decide our voting patterns. Some of these have been raised in previous Disability Speaks releases. These issues include

- Why are parents, families and carers poorly represented on the NDIS advisory committee legislation. With 12 positions available legislation demands only 2 carer representatives be included. With up to 60% of potential NDIS consumers having intellectual disability and needing essential support from parents, families and carers why are not 4-7 of the advisory positions legislated for more equitable sector representation? Parents, families and carers should not be bit players in NDIS. The long standing philosophical divide between PWD and parents is currently inappropriately legislated under NDIS.
- Why the current NDIS system as above seems more geared to returning people with disability to work than providing genuine choice, flexibility and innovation to deliver a quality of life to people who will never work like people with severe intellectual disability? Flexibility, choice and innovation are the future of disability services,
- Why does SA have only 2 positions on the 24 person NDIS Board and Advisory committee and why is one of those people unknown in the disability sector? We do have the only political representative in the country elected on a disability ticket and should have fair policy input.
- What happens with this non budgeted NDIS program if the pilot programs deliver significant potential cost blow outs. With some estimates that the predicted \$6.5billion original cost could double or triple what strategy will major parties adopt? Will they find additional funds?, reduce eligibility from the original proposed 460,000 clients? or reduce service levels?? What happens if a state government like in the CSTDA era does not fund its contractual commitments? We think it is inevitable the cost predictions will prove inadequate especially given the enhanced expectations that potential consumers have been advised will be available.
- What guarantee is there when typically the government changes that the incoming government does not announce " the financial situation is much worse than we expected and we will be delaying programs?" This tactic seems like page 1 of the politicians play book and becomes fait accompli after so many elections. NDIS cannot be delayed further than what is already proposed ..... community desperation is already extreme.

We now wait for the September election with great expectations, but still key information needs to be further clarified

The Liberal Press release is below

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Good afternoon

This morning the Hon. Tony Abbott, Leader of the Opposition and I announced the Coalition's policy for Australians with Disability and Carers.

Please find attached a copy of the policy and our joint press release.

You can watch the joint press conference online [here](#).

Regards

Mitch

SENATOR MITCH FIFIELD

SHADOW MINISTER FOR DISABILITIES, CARERS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR  
MANAGER OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS IN THE SENATE  
SENATOR FOR VICTORIA

Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Tel 02 6277 3666 Fax 02 6277 5758



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE**  
**THE HON. TONY ABBOTT MHR, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**  
**SENATOR MITCH FIFIELD, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DISABILITIES,**  
**CARERS AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR**

**THE COALITION'S POLICY FOR AUSTRALIANS WITH DISABILITY AND  
CARERS**

The Coalition's Policy for Disability and Carers will deliver the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Too many Australians, people with disability and carers alike, have been left behind. They deserve so much better.

That is why our support for the NDIS is unequivocal.

If elected, the Coalition will honour the Commonwealth agreements with New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory for launch sites. The Coalition will honour the Commonwealth agreements for the full state-wide rollout with all the states and territories.

We support and will keep the NDIS headquarters in Geelong.

The Coalition will also expand the responsibilities of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the NDIS to ensure that this project remains on track through three parliaments.

The rebranding of the NDIS as DisabilityCare Australia has not been well received by many with disability. The Coalition will revert to the use of 'NDIS'.

We will also improve the level of support for people with disability by reducing the complexity and red tape that accompanies disability support. Despite good intentions, the current system can be a maze that is too difficult for many to manage.

The Coalition will ensure greater accountability in the placement of people with disability in employment. We will put all policy and programmes for employment of people with disability under the responsibility of the Minister for Disabilities.

Every day, tens of thousands of Australians with a disability require the assistance of a carer. We will protect Australia's carers and maintain the Carers Payment, Carers Allowance and Carers Supplement.

We will also bring carers as well as people with disability closer to the decision making that impacts their lives by establishing an industry advisory council for the disability and carer sector.

Young carers in particular carry a difficult responsibility looking after family members. To assist young carers, the Coalition will establish a Young Carer Bursary Programme to assist hundreds of young carers and help with the cost of study while caring for a family member.

Australians with disability and carers can have confidence that the Coalition will deliver on our commitments because the Coalition will build the strong economy that will underpin the implementation of a better deal for Australians with disability.

The best guarantee for the NDIS in the long term as well as support for carers is proper management of the Budget and the economy by a government that can live within its means.

Supporting Australians with disability and carers is part of the Coalition's Real Solutions Plan to build a stronger Australia and a better future – for all Australians.

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**David Holst**

Chair - Disability Speaks Steering Committee & Intellectual Disability Association of S.A (IDASA)

Mob. 0418 555 683

Web. [www.disabilityspeaks.com.au](http://www.disabilityspeaks.com.au)

Email. [disabilityspeaks@internode.on.net](mailto:disabilityspeaks@internode.on.net)



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