

Important Decisions Prudently Delayed

There are many changes currently happening within the Disability sector. We at Nulsen Disability Services feel it is important to keep you periodically informed about the situation surrounding the WA NDIS and the nationwide National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). As such, for this month's Chairman's Chat, I thought I would update you on recent statements made by the state's minister for disability services, Hon Stephen Dawson, and to add some comments surrounding the process.

On 14 June 2017, the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC made a statement to state parliament about the NDIS. In his statement, the minister emphasised that a final decision on the future scheme has been delayed by the state Labor Government.

The minister went on to state that "feedback from the consultation has been varied with positive and negative reflections on the experience of both the State and Federal schemes. This engagement has also identified key policy challenges that require consideration".

These policy considerations include:

- the specific challenges for people with disabilities living in rural and remote parts of Western Australia (including pricing and funding arrangements);
- ensuring scheme design meets the needs of people with disabilities who require exceptionally high levels of support;
- the importance of localised decision making contact points;
- genuine choice and control for people living with disabilities; and
- the need to safeguard and develop the disability sector workforce.

Therefore, from 1 July 2017, the State Government will roll-out the State administered WA-NDIS in the new regions of Kimberley-Pilbara and the remaining parts of the South Metropolitan Region. The current national trial sites will be maintained by the Federal Government during the extended period of negotiations.

Current Schedule (Source: Bilateral Agreement 30 January 2017)

1 July 2017	Kimberley; Pilbara; South Metropolitan including Rockingham and Mandurah.
1 July 2018	Goldfields; Esperance; North Metropolitan; central South Metropolitan; Wheat-belt and South West.
1 July 2019	Midwest; Great Southern; central North Metropolitan and South-East Metropolitan.

Western Australians should expect that any decisions made by the Commonwealth Government will be fair and equitable. The current contribution made by the WA government and taxpayers needs to remain with people living with disabilities in this state. There is also a need to ensure that a reasonable return of monies raised via the Medicare Levy contributed by WA is returned here. At the present time, taxpayers in WA lose about \$300 million of the Medicare Levy each year due to the inequitable redistribution of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The WA Government will make a fully informed decision about the most effective way of bringing the NDIS to all eligible Western Australians. The key considerations for the state government in the near future will also include:

- the Productivity Commission review of the sustainability of the national scheme due in September 2017;
- the McKinsey & Company Independent Pricing Review commissioned by the NDIS due by the end of 2017; and
- the WA state budget due for release in mid-September.

At the present time no deal is better than a bad deal. Nulsen Disability Services expect some clearer directions will be contained in the formal announcement and in the state budget papers. We will inform you as and when this information becomes available.



Prof. David Gilchrist
BA BBus PhD FCA FAIC

Professor David Gilchrist is a chartered accountant and a historian. He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Notre Dame Australia and is currently a Director of Curtin University's School of Accounting Not-for-profit Initiative as well as the Public Sector Accounting and Disclosure Research Cluster. Over his 25-year career, David has held many senior roles in the Not-for-profit, commercial and public sectors. He has taught at several universities across the globe, sits as Chairman on multiple boards and has published several key national reports. A few of his achievements include; working as the Assistant Auditor General for Western Australia, and the Associate Dean of the School of Business, University of Notre Dame

Australia. As a Chairman to Nulsen Disability Services, and the Kimberley Individual and Family Support Association. Also producing the "Australian Charities 2013" and the "Australian National Costing and Pricing Framework" issued jointly with National Disability Services. He is widely published as an academic and a journalist. [See David's full profile here.](#)