



April 2014

Message from the Director General

Business guru Warren Buffett once said: 'Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.'

This quote keeps coming back to me as the Commission continues to fine tune the details for the WA NDIS My Way trial starting 1 July this year.

Western Australia planted the seed of disability services reform back in 1988 when strong, visionary leaders pioneered the WA Local Area Coordination (LAC) program and advocated for individualised services. Building on the success of this, My Way was launched in 2012.

With these decades of practical experience under our belts, we are now moving to the next exciting phase of our disability reform agenda.

I often get asked how life will change for people with disability in the Lower South West come 1 July and in Cockburn-Kwinana in 2015.

Current participants of My Way in these areas will notice some differences – more individualised planning and greater flexibility in managing their supports and services. We will also have access to additional funding from both the state and commonwealth governments. Importantly, some people who are currently missing out on needed assistance will start to access support via the NDIS My Way team.

Another change is that people with psychosocial disability will be eligible for supports and services from day one of the trial.

Apart from this, many aspects of our tried and tested My Way model will remain the same. Many changes are happening behind the scenes as we build new systems and upgrade others to manage eligibility criteria, quality control and reporting.

These technical changes are due to the agreements we signed with the Commonwealth Government and the new National Standards for Disability Services and are being developed in close consultation with service providers and the non-government sector.

Our main priority now is to ensure that the transition to WA NDIS My Way is a smooth one for those who matter most – people with disability, their families and carers.



For more information about the trial, as well as the latest news and updates, visit the [WA NDIS My Way](#) section of the Commission's website.

Regards
Dr Ron Chalmers
Director General
Disability Services Commission

National Partnership and Bilateral Agreement

Premier Barnett and Prime Minister Tony Abbott have now signed the agreements that provide the foundations for the trial of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in Western Australia.

The agreements were developed after extensive collaboration between the WA Disability Services and Mental Health Commissions, The Departments of Premier and Cabinet and Treasury, the Insurance Commission of Western Australia and the Commonwealth government.

Over 8,000 people with disability will benefit from this unique trial, including those with psychosocial disability.

The WA NDIS My Way trial in the Lower South West and the NDIA NDIS trial in the Perth Hills start on 1 July 2014. Cockburn-Kwinana will join the WA NDIS My Way trial in July 2015.

They will run concurrently for two years and will be independently evaluated during that period. The outcomes will help inform the future of disability reform in Western Australia and at the national level.

A Joint Steering Committee will convene at the end of this month, to oversee the progress and evaluation of the trials.

For more information about the agreements and the Joint Steering Committee, please visit the WA NDIS My Way [Governance](#) page.

Legislative changes

The Disability Services Amendment Bill 2014 was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 8 April 2014.

Drafting of Disability Services and Regulations has commenced and is scheduled for completion by May 2014. These regulations outline the practical ways in which the WA NDIS My Way trial will work.

We'll keep you updated on our [website](#) with any developments.



Meet the My Way Coordinators

This month we talk to **Richard Arnold**, My Way Coordinator in the Lower South West region.

Why did you become a My Way Coordinator?

I moved from the UK eight years ago. My first job in WA was in the health service as an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessor in regional aged care. Then I worked as a community health social worker for four years, including mental health.

While both roles were enjoyable, they primarily involved working with people on a very short-term basis and I wanted the opportunity to create long-term and meaningful relationships.

My position as a My Way Coordinator allows me to do that, and I'm looking forward to seeing how peoples' plans develop and continue to support them over a longer period of time.

What do you do on a daily basis?

I have only been in the position for four months, so I'm still concentrating a lot of my efforts on getting to know the people with disability, their families and carers that I work with. On a daily basis I undertake assessments and work with people and their families to identify goals and then find ways to achieve these goals. This joint planning is central to the My Way Coordinator role and it really works.

What are your favourite parts of the job?

- meeting people and having the privilege of being welcomed into their lives
- having the chance to build long term relationships
- working in a very individualised way
- supporting a wide range of people in a diversity of situations
- seeing people achieve positive outcomes
- working in a nice and supportive team environment.

What special skills do you bring to the role?

I have 30 years' experience in social care and a well-developed understanding of the complexities associated with individual disabilities and needs. My interpersonal skills are strong and I have the ability to work with people from a wide spectrum of society.

Social justice is also important to me and I pride myself on providing a well-balanced approach to assisting the people I work with to get the supports they need to live a good life.

What changes are you making in preparation for the WA NDIS My Way trial?

In preparation for the trial I am concentrating most of my efforts on ensuring that everyone has a current My Way plan. I also make sure everyone is up-to-date about any changes that might affect them and explain how the trial will offer more flexible and individualised ways of working.



Comms and engagement

The Commission hosted its first sector network forum at the end of March 2014.

The purpose of the forum was to meet people working in communications roles within the disability sector. We shared information about WA NDIS My Way and discussed ideas on how to strengthen communications about the trial.

The next forum will be held at the end of April/early May 2014. If you are already on the Sector Network list, we'll send you more details soon.

If you work in communications in the sector and would like to be invited to the next event, please email communications@dsc.wa.gov.au

Website changes

We have recently updated our website to provide more information about the WA NDIS My Way trial.

Changes include a section on **Governance** which details information about the key advisory groups that have been established to manage and oversee the trial of NDIS in WA.

There's also a new **My Way history** page, which gives a brief overview of disability services here in WA and explaining why WA fought so hard to incorporate the My Way model into the NDIS trial.

The news that matters to you

To let us know what sorts of stories, updates and information you'd like to read in our monthly newsletter, please send an email to MyWay@dsc.wa.gov.au. Your feedback will help us to ensure we keep you right up to date with the news that really matters to you.

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