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29 June 2020

Vice President Hatcher
Fair Work Commission
80 William Street
East Sydney NSW 2011

By email: chambers.hatcher.vp@fwc.gov.au

Dear Vice President,

Re. AM2020/18 Application to vary the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010

We refer to the above matter.

Various parties with an interest in the matter, including the Australian Industry Group (**Ai Group**), have filed written submissions about relevant funding arrangements under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (**NDIS**). We refer in particular to:

1. Ai Group's submissions of 20 May 2020 at paragraphs 12 – 17; and
2. An agreed statement of facts between the Australian Services Union, National Disability Services and Australian Business Industrial, filed on 20 May 2020.

The material filed refers to additional temporary funding equivalent to 10% of the price limits imposed by the NDIS in relation to certain forms of support, which had been made available in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. That additional funding was to continue to apply until the end of September 2020.

Since the aforementioned material was filed, the Minister for the NDIS has announced that the additional 10% of funding will not be available from 1 July 2020. A copy of a media release announcing this change is **attached** to this correspondence.

Ai Group intends to refer to the enclosed media release and speak to its relevance to these proceedings during the upcoming hearing before the Commission on 1 – 2 July 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Brent Ferguson in black ink.

Brent Ferguson
National Manager – Workplace Relations
Advocacy & Policy

Handwritten signature of Ruchi Bhatt in blue ink.

Ruchi Bhatt
Senior Adviser – Workplace Relations
Policy



Ministers for the Department of Social Services

MENU

The Hon Stuart Robert MP
Media Releases

Update on NDIS coronavirus response



12 June 2020

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Stuart Robert, today announced the first stages of a post-coronavirus NDIS, following a review of temporary measures to support participants and disability providers during the pandemic.

As community restrictions have eased and Australia moves to a COVIDSafe environment, the NDIS will move to a post-pandemic phase from 1 July that includes the conclusion of some of the temporary measures.

On recommendation from the review, the following will apply from 1 July 2020:

- removal of temporary 10 per cent price loading on certain core and capacity building supports;
- definition of cancellation period is reduced from 10 days to levels under the previous policy; and
- Medium Term Accommodation (MTA) period will be returned to the original policy of 90 days (rolled back from 180 days).

Recovery of the advance payment to providers will commence on 1 October 2020, via six equal monthly instalments, so providers can plan their return to usual services well ahead of its commencement.

Participant focused coronavirus response measures, including offering alternatives for face-to-face planning meetings to participants, plan extensions for up to 24 months following review and flexible use of funds to purchase low cost assistive technology, will remain in place until further reviews are completed.

It is important to note the government will continue to monitor conditions in the sector and make adjustments that may be required.

Minister Robert said NDIS providers had risen to the challenge and continued to provide support to participants in a safe and appropriate manner during the pandemic.

‘Since the announcement of these initiatives on 21 March, almost \$600 million in one-month advance payments was paid to almost 5,000 providers to offer immediate cash flow relief and keep participant services going,’ Mr Robert said.

‘At the height of the pandemic, close to \$300 million was claimed in average weekly provider payments, indicating the majority of services have been continuing with participants accessing the disability supports they need.

‘With NDIS provider claiming patterns showing most supports have returned to pre-coronavirus levels, we are moving to the next phase of the response.

‘We have worked to give participants and providers early notice on when things will gradually return, in light of our coronavirus response and recovery stages—and of course, we will continue to consult with participants and providers to ensure they have the support they need.’

Further detail on the coronavirus response and recovery stages will be sent to providers in coming days and will be available at www.ndis.gov.au.

The Government previously announced a range of financial support measures for eligible businesses and sole traders affected by the coronavirus pandemic, such as JobKeeper. More information on these initiatives is available at www.australia.gov.au.