

1 Context and background

1.1 Introduction

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has been established to support people with disability to achieve their goals, to help them to realise their full potential, to participate in and contribute to society, and to exercise choice and control over their lives and futures.

The NDIS is phasing in rapidly around Australia. On 31 March 2019, it was supporting 277,155 participants (including children in the Early Childhood Early Intervention [ECEI] gateway). It is now fully operational in all regions of New South Wales, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory and will have been fully rolled out geographically in all states of Australia (with the exception of Western Australia) by 30 June 2019. Full roll-out in Western Australia is expected by 30 June 2020. By 2020–21, the NDIS is expected to be assisting 460,000 people across Australia, at an annual cost of \$22.4 billion.

Therapy services are among the crucial supports available to NDIS participants, including services delivered by:

- Art therapists
- Audiologists
- Counsellors
- Developmental educators
- Dieticians
- Music therapists
- Nurses
- Occupational therapists
- Orthoptists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Psychologists
- Rehabilitation counsellors
- Social workers
- Speech and language pathologists
- Teachers

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) sets price caps for certain NDIS supports to ensure that NDIS participants obtain reasonable value from their support packages. In June 2017, the NDIA Board engaged McKinsey & Company to undertake an Independent Pricing Review (IPR). The final IPR report, which was delivered to the NDIA on 14 February 2018, contained 25 recommendations. Recommendations 17 to 21 directly related to therapy services: