

Bendigo Autistic Advocacy
and Support Service

Advocacy

Co-Convenors
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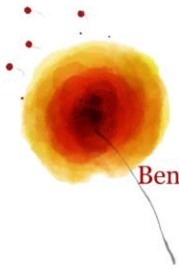
Friday, 9th March, 2018

Dear Minister and Maree Edwards;

We write to in capacity as Advocates with Bendigo Autistic Advocacy and Support Service (BAASS), to implore you to raise our concerns around significant and unacceptable issues many of our community have faced and continue to experience, in relation to the NDIA; ranging from accessing NDIS to having plans rectified to enable utilisation of supports.

One particular scenario is equally distressing and frustrating for a local family with numerous profound difficulties and multiple disabilities. In my role as advocate working with this family and children, I have supported navigating the NDIA application process, providing supportive documentation and attending the NDIA planning meeting. Despite clearly articulating the need of the participant, their NDIS plan arrived in which specific terminology has rendered the plan unusable. This young person is unable to access supports desperately needed because of several words within the plan that could simply be removed.

Despite Support Coordination and ourselves providing correspondence on numerous occasions and facilitating 3 internal reviews, this particular plan remains useless and is currently 10 months in. This plan is now due for its first 12mth review and has not been utilised because of this misguided and erroneous terminology. How it has been through 3 reviews and not resolved, is simply baffling. We have also submitted a formal complaint to the Victoria Ombudsman in relation to this case and others.



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This is but one of many similar scenarios, often pushing families to crisis point. To suffer further disadvantage and suffering additional implications on health and wellbeing as a direct result of experiences around accessing disability support is simply unacceptable and is a shameful reflection on a system that purports to support disability.

We urge you to please follow up and support those many within our community, experiencing extreme hardship, profoundly impacted by the often tedious and protracted battle that is navigating and seeking support through the NDIA.

It is out of sheer desperation for many families and children- that we contact you to request your support in approaching the NDIA and driving real and meaningful change, towards better support for the disabled community.

We thank you for your time and welcome your response at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards;

Susanna Flanagan

Co-Convenor
Advocate & Consultant
RND1/ PN

Tony Langdon

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Annie Kelly

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