

Update



From the Executive Officer

'Christmas break... what break?', is how most of us are feeling now that 2016 is already a couple of months old. I imagine the team at the NDIA had very little time off as 2016 is the year that the full rollout of the scheme really begins to ramp up. So ATSA is bringing you this bumper NDIS edition of our newsletter to get everyone up to date with how the scheme is progressing in terms of assistive technology (AT).

The NDIS AT Strategy was introduced during a forum at the New World Conference last October in Brisbane. Overall the Strategy has been well received and it was pleasing to see that the NDIA seriously considered the feedback they received to the discussion paper published on Christmas Eve 2014. Participant choice and control is given serious emphasis throughout the Strategy and this is a most welcome inclusion.

Also at the conference in October we were given the news that the NDIA's Director of AT, Matthew Massy-Westropp, was returning to his role with South Australia's Domiciliary Equipment Service. A couple of months later it was announced that Dr Lloyd Walker had been appointed to take over from Matthew at the NDIA and will be charged with the significant challenge of implementing the AT Strategy. Dr Walker is well known in AT circles and we congratulate him on taking on this important role.

It remains a frustration that the popular media really doesn't get the NDIS and continues to treat it as yet another form of welfare expenditure rather than an essential investment in fixing the existing, highly dysfunctional disability support systems. To date, the NDIS remains on track, on budget and is running to plan. Of course its implementation is not easy, mistakes will inevitably be made and they will need to be addressed but Turnbull Government Ministers would be well advised to consider their language and start promoting the NDIS for what it really is – a scheme that will deliver profound economic and social benefits for Australia. The National Campaign Manager for Every Australian Counts made this point strongly in a recent article that we have reproduced in this issue. It was pleasing to see the Sydney Morning Herald publish some facts about the Scheme in a [recent article](#).

Back in November, the ATSA Annual General Meeting attracted large numbers due to the forum that was conducted on the NDIS AT Strategy after the formalities had concluded. I would like to acknowledge Mark Wheeldon from GMS Rehab for his work on the committee over the past few years as he chose not to be nominated this time around. However we now welcome Chris Jones from Peak Care who has taken over the position left vacant by Mark.

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In January we were deeply saddened to hear of the tragic loss of Shane Walker, GM Sales and Marketing for Aidacare (Vic). Shane was a truly talented and committed individual with more than 16 years experience with AT. His premature passing sees our industry lose a highly respected professional who dedicated much of his life to helping people with disability and seniors through AT solutions.

Its now just a couple of months until the ATSA Independent Living Expo returns to Melbourne and this year we will welcome a record number of exhibitors to the event. Returning to the Melbourne Showground, the Expo already has more than 120 businesses and organisations registered who will be displaying a vast array of products and services for people with disability of all ages. The free Clinical Education Program has leading AT experts from Australia, USA, UK, New Zealand, Switzerland and Denmark. There are convenient public transport options including bus and tram and we are also offering an accessible shuttle bus. Parking is free but **please note that you can only get free parking if you pre-register**. To avoid queues it is always best to pre-register for the event through the Expo website www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au.

I hope to see you in May at our Independent Living Expo in Melbourne.



Chris Sparks
Executive Officer, ATSA

ATSA Code of Practice

Under the ATSA Code of Practice, all ATSA members commit to ensuring they act at all times with the best interests and welfare of the consumer in mind.

Clause 9.2 states that: "Code Members' staff are expected to act at all times in such a manner as to promote public trust and confidence, to uphold and enhance the good standing and reputation of the healthcare industry, to serve the best interests of society and, above all, to safeguard the interests of individual customers."

A PDF copy of the Code of Practice and can be downloaded at www.atsa.org.au

Patient Handling (NSW)

Patient Lifters 101 – *lifter safety, sling selection and application*

- Wednesday 27th April in Marrickville (Sydney)

Visit the [website](#) for information and registration

Push Mobility (VIC)

Wheelchairs - *what's best for my client? Seating Solutions; Power Assist Devices; and Enabling Independent Lifestyles*

- Thursday 31st March in Kew (Melbourne)

For more info or to register email sian@pushmobility.com.au

Keep Moving (NT)

Ottobock presents the Leckey range of paediatric products

- Thursday 28th April in Darwin (NT)

For more info or to register email clinical@keepmoving.net.au or call (08) 8947-5122

Permobil presents powered wheelchairs and seating support systems

- Tuesday 21st June in Darwin (NT)

For more info or to register email clinical@keepmoving.net.au or call (08) 8947-5122

Sunrise Medical presents Quickie wheelchairs and seating support systems

- Wednesday 20th July in Darwin (NT)

For more info or to register email clinical@keepmoving.net.au or call (08) 8947-5122

The 2016 ATSA Expo Sets a New Record

The ATSA Independent Living Expo returns to Melbourne on 18th and 19th May 2016 at the Melbourne Showground and will feature a record number of exhibitors. Already more than 120 AT suppliers, disability service providers and aged care specialists have registered to participate in Australia's largest Expo of assistive technology and services for people with disabilities and seniors.

The Expo is unique in the way it brings together local and international experts covering a wide range of specialities. There is something for everyone whether it is motor vehicle modifications, continence issues, accessible travel, sexuality, mobility, smart homes design, patient handling, pressure care, insurance, aging in place... the list of specialists continues to grow.

It comes as no surprise as the 2015 Expos held in Sydney and Melbourne attracted record attendances of allied health practitioners, seniors, people with disability, their families and carers, all keen to see what was on display.

Please note those arriving by car must **pre-register** via www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au to qualify for free, onsite parking. By pre-registering you also avoid the need to queue upon arrival. Tram and bus travel are also an option and this year we are offering a free, wheelchair accessible shuttle bus – check the [Expo website](#) for details.

Alongside the Expo, there will be a free Clinical Education Program featuring speakers from Australia, the USA, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, New Zealand and the UK. The Program is a must see for therapists who need to keep up to date and also receive Continuing Professional Development Points. There are also a number of sessions that would be of interest to people with disability, their families and seniors. You can review the full Program and register online through the [Expo website](#). It is best to book your sessions early as they do fill up quickly.

With the full roll out of the NDIS in Victoria just a few months away, the Expo is a great opportunity to help prepare. We hope to see you there in May.

When	8:30am to 4:00pm on Wednesday 18th May 8:30am to 3:00pm on Thursday 19th May
Where	Melbourne Showground Cars enter via Langs Road Taxi drop off via Langs Road or Epsom Road
Cost	Free admission Free Clinical Education Program (must pre-register via website) Free parking ONLY if you pre-register via website
Transport	Bus 472 (Williamstown to Moonee Ponds) stops Langs Road Bus 404 (Footscray to Moonee Ponds) stops cnr Epsom & Ascot Vale Roads Tram route 57 (West Maribyrnong to Elizabeth Street, City) stop 32 Accessible shuttle – see website for details
Exhibitors	More that 120 see the full exhibitor list on the website



NDIS AT Strategy Released

The NDIA's Assistive Technology (AT) Strategy for the NDIS was publicly launched last October in Brisbane at a forum that was part of the NDIS New World Conference.

The AT Strategy was informed by some 70 submissions to the original discussion paper and approximately half of these can be read on the ATSA website www.atsa.org.au. Of the 70 responses the NDIS received, 25% came from AT suppliers, whilst only 8% came from people with disability or their families/carers. The NDIA were definitely listening to what respondents had said and it is clear that this feedback significantly influenced the Strategy, particularly in terms of NDIS participants' right to choice and control.

Spending on AT is expected to reach \$1.06 billion per annum when the NDIS is fully rolled out in 2019-20 and given the size of this annual investment it is imperative the Strategy delivers quality solutions and real value for the expenditure. The NDIA clearly understands the importance of AT, how AT delivers for those who need it and AT's ability to lower costs in other areas such as personal and community supports (ref case study on page 8 of the Strategy).

At a high level, the overarching vision for the AT strategy 'is to build an empowering, sustainable and consistent approach to ensuring NDIS participants have choice in, and access to, individualised assistive technology solutions that enable and enhance economic and community participation'. It goes on to propose 3 strategic priorities, namely -

- i. To support and stimulate a vibrant, innovative supply-side market;
- ii. To support and stimulate informed, active, participant-led demand; and
- iii. To deliver a financially robust, sustainable scheme that generates economic and social value.

As you drill down through the Strategy, it is clear that the NDIA is keen to ensure participants are well informed about AT and in an ideal world would be experts on what AT options best suit their needs. This is an opportunity and a challenge for AT suppliers as they will need to readily provide more comprehensive information on their products, services and costs to help better inform participants. It is also clear that the NDIA has to ensure costs do not blow out and that AT meets the NDIS's core ideals of supports that are **reasonable and necessary** and providing **best value**.

Under the Strategy, the role of allied health practitioners (AHPs) is likely to be more one of advisor as opposed to prescriber. This will not be a big shift for the many OTs, physios, speech therapists, rehab engineers etc that work with AT but it is an important mindset to ensure the participant is at the centre of the process and their informed choices are respected.

Core to the Strategy is the NDIA's approach to procurement, where they will 'Employ a differentiated AT sourcing approach based on product bundling'. Put simply this means the NDIA understands that you cannot employ a one size fits all approach to sourcing AT given the diversity and varied complexity of what is required. They have identified parcels of products to be sourced using one of 4 approaches -

1. Free market (\$342M or ~37% of spend) – this parcel includes custom/bespoke wheelchairs, adapted recreation equipment, scooters, sleep systems, transfer equipment and environmental control products.
2. Panel or tender (\$245M or ~27% of spend) – this parcel includes continence and human enteral nutrition items and will work to deliver lower prices by leveraging scale.
3. Pool (\$240M or ~26% of spend) – this parcel includes bathroom products, prams/strollers, hoists/slides, air cushions, beds, standing frames, basic wheelchairs and walking equipment. The Strategy states that the objective of this is to 'increase utilisation and reduce wait times' and this will include recycled AT.
4. NDIA playing a regulatory role (\$97M or ~10% of spend) – this parcel comprises custom made orthosis/footwear, custom made postural supports, guide dogs and prosthesis.

No doubt the devil will lie in the detail as to how the NDIA defines free market and the methods employed to establish the panel, tender and pool approaches. People with disability should be buoyed by the opt out provision which essentially guarantees they have choice and control when it comes to what AT they receive and which suppliers they utilise. This will come at a cost though, as understandably the NDIA will only fund equivalent to prices available under panel, tender or pool arrangements.

By adopting this differentiated sourcing methodology, the NDIA suggests it will save \$161M per annum by FY2019-20 and more than \$1.2M over 10 years. However ATSA also hopes these approaches will help to drive out the significant inefficiencies inherent in many of the jurisdictional schemes that add cost and increase delays.

ATSA's primary concern with any procurement model is that the NDIA needs to clearly understand the myriad of additional supplier services essential to getting AT right including AT trials, delivery, setup, training of both users and care givers along with after sales support (repairs, periodic maintenance etc). Treating AT procurement as simply sourcing widgets in isolation from these services will inevitably cause the Strategy to fail.

The Strategy goes on to identify various risks and possible mitigations and it is certain that a great deal of work will be required to ensure its successful implementation. Challenges in addition to those highlighted in the Strategy will include –

- How the NDIA ensures a consistent approach to AT procurement and provision given its current reliance on the very varied jurisdictional schemes.
- Ensuring quality and timely AT outcomes for those in remote locations will also prove difficult.
- How panel/tender/pool procurement be managed to deal with fluctuating exchange rates and other costs, given that more than 90% of all AT is imported.

The Strategy concludes by saying that the 'NDIA has developed a three-year implementation roadmap for each element of the AT Strategy, including stakeholder consultation; governance, organisation, process and capability changes; and the work needed to finalise, build and operationalise the innovation hub and multichannel information model'. With the full roll out of the NDIS commencing in just a few short months, we need to see the roadmap so all stakeholders can join the journey.

In a recent presentation to the Assistive Technology Community Alliance NSW (ATCAN), Dr Walker explained that AT and home modifications are considered to be 'stated supports' and will be purchased by the NDIA on behalf of Participants, however the Participant makes the choice.



Dr Lloyd Walker presenting to ATCAN

ATSA conducted a number of industry briefings on the NDIA's AT Strategy late last year and the overall reaction to it was positive. The feedback from people with disability, their families and carers is also optimistic. There remains lots of work to do but the Strategy has got us off to a good start.

AT STRATEGY FAST FACTS

- AT is included in 40% of participants' plans, rising to more than 50% for children and those aged over 45.
- Expenditure on AT will reach \$1.06 billion per annum when the NDIS is fully rolled out.
- Continence & HET products will account for ~25% of AT expenditure.
- The Strategy proposes 'differentiated AT sourcing approach(es)' – free market (37%), panel/tender (27%), pool (26%) and regulatory (10%).
- By implementing the recommended sourcing initiatives, the NDIA projects savings of \$161M per annum by 2019/20 and more than \$1.2M over 10 years.
- NDIS participants can exercise choice and control by choosing to opt out of the NDIA's procurement activities.
- The Strategy is not fixed and will evolve, adapt and hopefully continue to improve based on experience and evidence.
- AT suppliers need to understand the NDIS is not about the AT product, it's all about getting the best outcomes for Participants.

Talking Cents About the NDIS

an article by John Della-Bosca from the Every Australian Counts

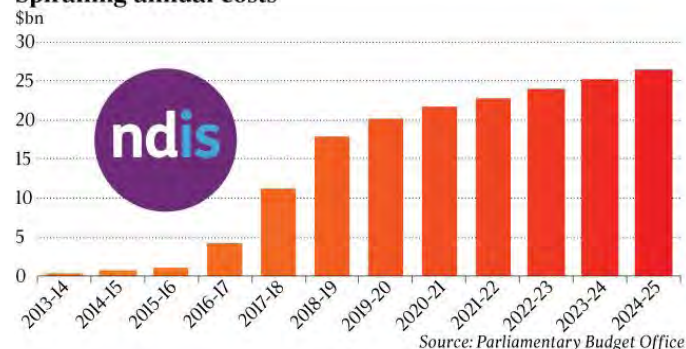
The inaccurate messages about the cost and affordability of NDIS that are common in the popular media and propagated by some politicians, is a matter of concern and frustration for those with a clear understanding of the profound economic and social benefits the scheme will deliver.

John Della-Bosca, National Campaign Manager of Every Australian Counts (EAC), sought to set the record straight in response to a recent headline in The Australian screaming '5bn budget hit as NDIS fund dwindles'.

With permission from John and EAC, we are pleased to reproduce John's response below. You can stay up to date with NDIS developments via the [EAC website](#).

It was with apparent naivety that I was shocked to see in last week's The Australian "5bn budget hit as NDIS fund dwindles". Could it be that the NDIS, the only policy in Australia that our last four Prime Ministers are in complete agreement on, is up for question again?

Spiralling annual costs



David Uren (The Australian p. 1 28/1/16) reporting on the NDIS implementation with his accompanying doomsday headline is chasing ghosts.

His thoughts echo the chatter of a minority of rigid minds uncomfortable not so much with the failures of the NDIS but with its potential success.

Mr Uren wants to solve a crisis in the NDIS that isn't happening, urging readers into believing in a non-existent crisis. An illusion that takes attention away from the real challenges of building a new and innovative social support system for Australians living with disability.

The NDIS is confronting for some because the insurance model of investing in people represents an innovative and humanistic challenge to the welfarist world view. The same critics are offended by how the scheme came to be, by the Every Australian Counts campaign investing in sharing the life experiences and aspirations of those that the scheme will benefit most. A horrifying thing for many in the Canberra policy elite is that people produced the scheme, it was not prescribed by bureaucrats.

The splash in Thursday's Australian completely misrepresented the fiscal policy status of the NDIS. More importantly, it did not

contain a single new piece of information about the budgetary position of the scheme. The overall revelation consisted of "news" that has been widely publicly available literally for years.

Funding the NDIS

Since the bipartisan undertakings of Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott, three key fiscal policy points have been clear and agreed by all parties represented in the Federal Parliament. The increase in the Medicare levy will pay for approximately half the ongoing costs of the scheme, the balance of the Federal funds required would come from new savings initiatives, and finally the global fiscal envelope of \$22.8billion is locked into the forward estimates reflecting the Productivity Commission's estimate of total yearly scheme costs.

According to work conducted last year by Professor Richard Madden from the Centre for Disability Research at Sydney University, yearly NDIS costs requiring new Commonwealth funding will be \$4billion. Of course, this is a significant taxpayer contribution, but it is a tiny fraction of the Federal Health costs or the Defence Budget.

Every Australian Counts contends that every cent spent on the NDIS will not only make a huge difference to lives of 460,000 Australians with permanent and significant disability but will **repay the taxpayer many times over.**

Reports on the high costs of the NDIS continually ignore the billions of dollars governments spend right now on disability supports and services. Which in many cases deliver appallingly inadequate results. Most Australians with disability don't get the support they need, and they do not have the dignity or the efficiency of choice and control in their lives.

The NDIS will provide personally targeted funding for individuals. This alone will save millions in misdirected revenue while improving the lives of people with disability and their families. That is what those with a limited view of government social schemes object to the most.

The NDIS will be bigger than the current state and territory schemes combined, because it needs to be.

Good for all Australians

Putting budget issues aside, the NDIS has the potential to increase GDP by \$22billion. It will allow between 24,000 and 38,000 people with disability who haven't had access to work that opportunity. Carers too will have employment opportunities, as they are relieved of the pressures of round-the-clock care. An estimated \$11billion will be added to the GDP just from the tens of thousands of carers back in the labour market and up to 70,000 new jobs in the disability workforce will be created.

Take that in for a moment. More revenue for the budget, less welfare dependency and an estimated additional \$22billion increase in GDP. And a better Australia allowing more for a group of citizens who have constantly missed out.

Swatting at false fiscal challenges that don't exist puts at risk the tremendous opportunity we have as Australians to build a new approach to social support based on ethical policy principles rather than charity or welfareism. Its time is now and a penny-pinching scare campaign won't bring it down.



John Della-Bosca from Every Australian Counts

Dr Lloyd Walker Appointed as NDIA Director of AT

At the NDIS New World Conference last October, Matthew Massey-Wesdropp informed us that he was leaving his role with the NDIA and would be returning to Domiciliary Equipment Services in South Australia. This left the NDIA without a Director of Assistive Technology (AT) at a pivotal time having just released their AT Strategy.

Just prior to Christmas we were delighted to hear that the respected rehab engineer Dr Lloyd Walker had been appointed to this important position and will be responsible for the implementation of the Strategy.

Dr Walker is well known throughout AT circles having originally established the Cootharinga Society of North Queensland's Rehabilitation Technology Service and then later took on the role as Director, Regency Park Rehabilitation Engineering in South Australia. Whilst at Regency Park, Dr Walker's responsibilities included running the product testing laboratory that many AT suppliers have utilised over the years.



Dr Lloyd Walker

In late 2009 Dr Walker left Regency Park to establish his business Tech4Life, providing services to clients including end-users, government, educators, professionals in the sector and the wider community.

A founding member of ARATA, Dr Walker continues to lead AT standards work in both Australia (Standards Australia) and internationally (ISO – Wheelchairs). He is a founding Board Member of Motivation Australia and has been Chair of the Board since 2014.

On behalf of our industry, ATSA would like to congratulate Dr Walker on his appointment and we look forward to working together to deliver the NDIA's AT Strategy.

Who's the Customer?

The process of sourcing the right AT is not that easy and certainly becomes more challenging as the complexity of the intended user and their goals increase. It is commonplace that multiple stakeholders are involved including the end user, their families/ carers, an advising therapist, a funder and the AT supplier. So the question for the AT supplier remains – **who is the customer?**

In conjunction with the NSW Council of Social Services, the Assistive Technology Community Alliance of NSW (ATCAN) has been working on a paper that discusses how choice and control can be maximised within the context of AT supply. The paper clearly states that *'The person using AT is the customer'*. It goes on to acknowledge that AT suppliers walk a very delicate line trying to satisfy all the other parties whilst keeping the needs of the end user paramount.

Often an end user or their families will start the process by engaging an allied health practitioner (AHP) such as an occupational therapist, speech therapist or physiotherapist. The AHP therefore can be the one who decides what products/ services are to be considered and from which suppliers. This fact alone means that the supplier can be very much at the behest of the AHP.

Then enter the AT funder... With more and more products and services being sourced through tenders or panel supply, the supplier has to ensure they have 'won the business' to get on the tender or panel otherwise they are out of the equation from the outset. The supplier becomes the one preferred by the funder, not the end user and therefore the funder can be seen as the customer.

The ATCAN paper however insists that *'If suppliers want to act with a person centred approach, they need to put the wishes of the end users first and foremost'*.

The challenge for businesses at every level of the AT supply chain is how can they engage positively with end users to help develop their knowledge and personal expertise? The ATCAN paper and the NDIA's AT Strategy acknowledges that whilst end users are experts in their own needs and aspirations, they are not always experts when it comes to the range of AT that is available and what would work best for them.

Traditionally, AT suppliers have invested a great deal of time and effort engaging with AHPs and funders as they try to educate stakeholders on the value and efficacy of their products and services. Annually our industry commits tens of thousands of hours training AHPs and submitting complex supply tenders, and they also commit significant time and money supporting conferences, Independent Living Centres and various product expos. The majority of conferences and training events benefit AHPs, however events such as the ATSA Independent Living Expo and the SCiA's Independence Expo have a strong end user focus which is why they play such an important role.

The NDIS AT Strategy will hopefully be a real game changer where the end user will clearly be viewed as the customer. AHPs will need to work as advisors not prescribers, families and carers as supporters, and funders, *'well how will you be paying sir/ madam – will that be cash, credit card or funding body?'*

Understanding the NDIS Rollout Plans



NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW)

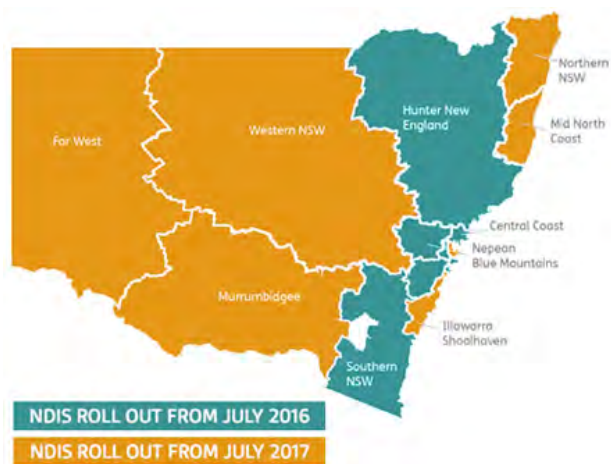
The full rollout of the NDIS in NSW will commence 1st July 2016 and is expected to be operating state-wide by July 2018 providing support to around 140,000 people.

In the first year 7 NSW regions will transition to the NDIS, namely Northern Sydney, Central Coast, South Western Sydney, Southern New South Wales, Western Sydney along with the remaining populations of the original trial sites Hunter New England and Nepean-Blue Mountains.

From 1st July 2017 the NDIS will be begin to be available in the districts of Mid North Coast, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Murrumbidgee, Northern New South Wales, South Eastern Sydney, Sydney, Western New South Wales, and Far West New South Wales.

Those people who are currently receiving supports through the NSW Government's disability services programs will be the first to transition to the NDIS. Anyone with with existing commonwealth and/or state based supports will continue to receive those supports until they are covered by the NDIS.

Full details on the NSW roll out are available on the NDIS [website](#).



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY (ACT)

The ACT was first to commence a full roll out of the NDIS having kicked off in July 2014 for all eligible people aged up to 65. They are employing an 'ages and stages' approach which means that eligible people will enter the NDIS according to either their date of birth, or for school-age children, their academic year.

People in group homes will transition into the scheme over a two-year period. When one person in a group home accesses the scheme, so will all the other residents in that home.

The transition plan is already well underway with many cohorts (selected by age, academic year or date of birth) already covered by the scheme including all eligible children. Throughout 2016 all remaining eligible adults will enter the scheme and the full detail is available on the NDIS [website](#).

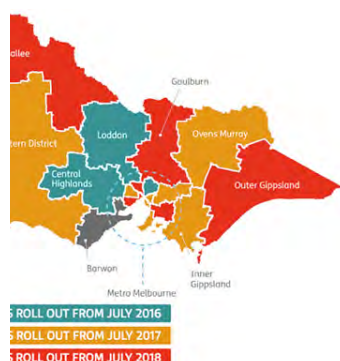
VICTORIA

Similar to NSW, the NDIS in Victoria will be gradually rolled out by region starting on 1st July 2016, however the Victorian rollout will be done over 3 years.

In the first year the regions of North East Melbourne, Central Highlands and Loddon will commence transitioning. Starting July 2017 people residing in Outer East Melbourne, Inner East Melbourne, Ovens Murray, Inner Gippsland, Western District, Bayside Peninsula and Hume Morland will be able to access the NDIS. Southern Melbourne, Brimbank Melton, Western Melbourne, Goulburn, Outer Gippsland and Mallee will be the final regions to transition in 2018/19.

People who are currently receiving supports through the Victorian Government will be transitioning to the NDIS at different times depending on the type of supports they are getting.

Full details on the Victorian rollout are available on the NDIS [website](#).



TASMANIA

The existing Tasmanian trial site has been operating since July 2013 catering for young people aged 15 to 24. Like Victoria, the Tasmanian rollout will commence on 1st July 2016 and will take 3 years, however it will be managed by age groups as opposed to regions and work in 6 monthly blocks.

Date	Ages
July 2016	12 to 14
January 2017	25 to 28
July 2017	4 to 11
January 2018	29 to 34
July 2018	0 to 3
January 2019	50 to 64

Those already accessing services and new participants will progressively enter the NDIS whilst eligible residents in shared supported accommodation will access the NDIS together on a house-by-house basis. It is estimated that once the NDIS is operating state-wide, a total of 10,500 Tasmanians will be covered by the scheme.

NORTHERN TERRITORY (NT)

The NDIS trial kicked off in July 2014 for people aged up to 65 residing in the Barkly area which includes the town of Tennant Creek along with major communities such as Elliott, Epenarra (Wutunugurra) and Canteen Creek.

Remote settings such as Barkly often face issues surrounding access and the quality and level of services that are readily available. Barkly has presented unique challenges to the implementation of the NDIS and will provide an opportunity to develop innovative practices which work with the remoteness of the area and compliment the cultural context.

From July 2016, the NDIS will progressively roll out across the NT and by July 2019 all eligible residents will be covered.

QUEENSLAND

Queensland came late to the NDIS with the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments announcing last September an early transition to the NDIS in Charters Towers, Townsville and Palm Island. The trial in Townsville and Charters Towers is restricted to people aged under 18 whereas in Palm Island all those up to age 65 are eligible.

Approximately 1,600 people are expected to be eligible for the NDIS in the early transition sites, with up to 600 of these people predicted to receive their funded packages by 1 July 2016. The remaining eligible people from these sites will receive their funded packages from July 2016 onwards.

The necessary bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments is still being negotiated and until finalised there is little clarity as to how and when the remaining population of eligible Queenslanders will enter the NDIS.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Children aged 13 years and under were the target group of the South Australian trial that began in July 2013. The full rollout is now underway having commenced in February and will progressively be made available over the next 2 years based on age –

Date	Ages
Feb 2016	0 to 14
January 2017	15 to 27
July 2017	18 to 64

People currently receiving supports through South Australian Government's disability services will be first to transition and existing Commonwealth and state-based supports will continue until eligible people start their plans with the NDIS.

For adults aged 18 to 64 years of age already receiving supports from the South Australian disability system, the start date for transition to the NDIS will be based on where they live.

Detailed information about specific regions is available from the South Australian Government's [website](#).

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA)

From July 2014 WA commenced a 2 year trial of the NDIS. The NDIS trial in WA is unique as it includes the implementation and evaluation of two different models in different locations over a two-year period. The Commonwealth's NDIS is underway in the Perth Hills area and the WA State Government's 'My Way' model is operating in the Lower South West region and Cockburn-Kwinana.

It is believed that the WA joint-trials will provide an opportunity to compare the two different models in terms of cost, participant outcomes, quality of services and sustainability. The intention is to independently evaluate both approaches throughout the trial period and utilise the findings to help decide how disability services are provided throughout WA and possibly nationally.

Full details on the WA trials are available on the WA Disability Services Commission [website](#).

The 2016 Australian Assistive Technology Conference

The 2016 Australian Assistive Technology Conference is a collaboration between ARATA and OT Australia and will be held at Jupiter's Casino on the Gold Coast 27-29 July 2016.

The conference will be an interactive and engaging 3 days for allied health professionals, rehabilitation engineers and technicians, AT suppliers and manufacturers, policy makers, as well as those who use assistive technology and researchers.

The conference offers delegates the opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues and friends, access to emerging assistive technologies and the chance to hear from leaders within the industry.

For details can be found on the conference [website](#).

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- ▶ research@carersnsw.org.au



News from EnableNSW

Important change for community use mobility equipment

From 1st February 2016 all new referrals for consumers in the current Equipment Allocation Program (EAP) area who require powered wheelchairs and scooters for community use only are required to access EAP stock first before approaching suppliers for quotes. This includes consumers living in a nursing home who are applying for powered wheelchairs. If no suitable EAP items are available then the prescriber can approach suppliers for a quote and apply in the usual manner for funding.

Stock equipment can be requested for EnableNSW consumers living in:

- Metropolitan Local Health Districts (LHD)
- Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD
- Central Coast LHD
- Nepean Blue Mountains LHD
- Specified Lower Hunter Local Government Areas (LGA): Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Maitland and Cessnock
- Southern sector of Hunter New England LHD.

A fact sheet will be available from early 2016 on the EnableNSW website at www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au

Power wheelchair base reallocation pilot success

The pilot phase of the power wheelchair (PWC) base reallocation has been completed with 46 powerbases successfully reallocated with new seating. The timeframe for completion of the PWC reallocation (final delivery to the person) is generally taking 1-2 months, which is much quicker than the initial projected timeframe of up to 4 months.

EnableNSW would like to thank the suppliers who worked with us to make the program successful.

Due to this achievement, it is recommended that the power wheelchair reallocation become 'business as usual' and be expanded to people living in regional and rural areas; people who are using power chairs for the first time, in particular residents of aged care facilities; and people with degenerative conditions who need rapid provision of a chair. These changes will be accompanied by education sessions in 2016 as well as a supplier feedback session for the participating suppliers.

Purchase order status reports implemented

EnableNSW continued to work with its supplier base in 2015. Throughout the year Enable staff visited a number of supplier offices around NSW to gain better understanding of their business and operations. Purchase order status reports were introduced in 2015, a process that confirms orders have been received and includes a status update for orders over 8 weeks old. This process allows EnableNSW to work with our suppliers in identifying any potential delays. Feedback on these reports has been extremely positive, with suppliers finding it very beneficial. This process will remain business as usual.

This information is provided by the team at EnableNSW www.enable.health.nsw.gov.au

NDIS New World Conference – October 2015

The NDIS New World Conference: Disability in the 21st Century brought together innovative thinkers from around the world to discuss future technology that will enable people with disability, their families and carers to live a life of inclusion.

NDIA Chairman, Bruce Bonyhady, opened the conference, setting the scene and spoke about how technology has to have a leading role in the NDIS. At full scheme, it is expected participants in the NDIS will spend \$1 billion a year on assistive technology (AT).

This is why the NDIA believed it was important to bring together people with disability, disability service providers, technology experts, entrepreneurs and policy makers at the conference in Brisbane which welcomed some 1,500 delegates.

A real highlight was Christopher Hills, an Apple 'Accessibility Ambassador', who wowed the audience with his story about how AT (or as he likes to call it 'inclusive' technology) has made his career possible. Christopher is a highly regarded editor and video producer who lives with cerebral palsy and quadriplegia.

The NDIS also collaborated with Social Traders to create the Pitch Competition at the conference to try to uncover Australia's top technology start-ups that are designed to improve the lives of people with disability. The eventual competition winner was [AbilityMate](#), a for-purpose movement designing and manufacturing affordable AT for people with disability.

ATSA Executive Officer, Chris Sparks, participated in one of the conference forums where the NDIS AT Strategy was formally announced. The forum included a Q&A at the end with many ATSA members attending.

Videos and podcasts from the conference are available on the [NDIS website](#).



NDIS Facts

Did you know...

- By 2050 the NDIS will be paying for itself and benefiting the Australian economy by \$32 billion every year
- As at December 2015, the scheme had 22,281 participants with an approved plan and the average package cost was \$39,583
- In 2014-15, 28% of funding allocated to NDIS participants went unspent
- 10% of NDIS participants account for close to 50% of the funding
- The NDIA estimate that assistive technology (AT) will account for \$1 billion annually
- Continence and human enteral nutrition will account for almost 25% of the AT spending within the NDIS

New Assistant Minister for Disability Services

The Prime Minister's recent cabinet reshuffle means there is now a new Assistant Minister for Disability Services, the Hon Jane Prentice MP. In 2010, Ms Prentice was elected to the House of Representatives for the Federal Seat of Ryan which lies in Brisbane's western suburbs.

Prior to being elected to Parliament, Ms Prentice served as a Councillor on Brisbane City Council for close to a decade. Married with two children, Ms Prentice has 25 years experience in the tourism industry and also owned and managed a successful convention business.

In her maiden speech to Parliament in 2010, Ms Prentice said '*I believe in a hand up not a handout*', a philosophy which many would argue is what the NDIS is all about.

Victorian Senator Mitch Fifield was previously in the role and engaged extensively with ATSA and remained open to input on the NDIS and aged care reforms. With the NDIS soon to move to a full roll-out Ms Prentice will have a substantial workload ahead of her.



Meet a Member – AC Mobility (WA)

In business	Since 1993
Employees	16
Top Products	Power wheelchairs, paediatric equipment, general rehab equipment for aged care
CEO/Owner	Cary Nathan



Cary Nathan in the AC Mobility Showroom

Why did you join the AT industry:

I have a background in engineering and management and was invited to work as a consultant in a rehabilitation equipment manufacturing business in Perth in 1990. In 1993, in partnership with a public company, I purchased part of the rehab manufacturing business; this became AC Mobility. Five years later, a close friend and I purchased the shares from the public company and we have managed the company ever since.

Why is your business an ATSA member?

It is important to be kept informed of what is happening in your industry. ATSA fulfils that requirement very well in a thoroughly professional manner through its newsletters, presentations and trade shows. ATSA also provides a wide range of contacts for information and advice.

What is your top priority for ATSA at the moment?

To be kept informed about the many changes happening in Australia that have an impact on our industry, such as the NDIS, government policies and practices in regard to purchases and regulation, changes in industry standards such as relevant ISO and Australian Standards, as well as general industry news.

Welcome to Our New ATSA Members



Everyday Mobility

3/114 Princes Hwy, Ulladulla NSW 2539

ph: (02) 4454-5454 web: www.everydaymobility.com.au email: info@everydaymobility.com.au

Everyday Mobility's owner, Josie and Andrew, came from a background in experiential education and in 2009 they stepped into the assistive technology industry working with mature adults who wish to maintain their mobility and independence as they age or recover from accident or illness.



Feel Good Massage Chairs

Shop 5 -7, 449 Port Road, Croydon SA 5008

ph: 1300 804682 web: www.feelgoodmassagechairs.com.au email: sales@feelgoodmassagechairs.com.au

Feelgood Massage Chairs started business in 1997 with the introduction of coin-operated massage chairs into Australia. More recently they have developed specialist chairs to suit the Australian aged care market.



Rehab & Mobility Wholesalers

Unit 1, 13-15 Brewers Street, Burpengary QLD 4505

ph: 1300 368085 web: www.rehabandmobility.com.au email: qld@www.rehabandmobility.com.au

Rehab and Mobility is an import, wholesale and distribution business supplying rehabilitation and mobility equipment to resellers, institutions and government agencies. Therapists and the public are welcome to view equipment at their showroom and take advantage of the knowledge available.



Daniels Surgical & Health Equipment

116 Alma Street, Rockhampton QLD 4700

ph: (02) 8788-7710 web: www.danielssurgical.com.au

Daniels Surgical & Health Equipment is a locally owned, diversified healthcare company based in Rockhampton with strong ties to the community. Daniels is quality assured and enjoys positive relationships with therapists, government departments and a wide variety of local businesses.



Autoslide

Unit 3, 413 Victoria Street, Wetherill Park NSW 2164

ph: 1300 288 675 web: www.autoslide.com email: info@autoslide.com

Autoslide® is designed, engineered and manufactured by the residential branch of Australian company, ADIS Automatic Doors. Having won an Australian Design Award for excellence in product design, the team of engineers at ADIS used their wealth of experience and knowledge to create the world's first affordable, Do-It-Yourself Sliding Door Automation System for homes.



Elite Mobility Scooters

Unit 1, 29 Bailey Crescent, Southport 4215

ph: (07) 5561-1427 web: www.elitemobilityscooters.com.au email: ian@elitemobilityscooters.com.au

Elite Mobility Scooters comprises four retail outlets, providing a wide range of quality, affordable mobility scooters and daily living products. They stock all major brands and sizes of mobility scooters, as well as an extensive range of walkers, lift chairs, beds, canes and ancillary equipment.

QLD REHAB EQUIPMENT

Queensland Rehab Equipment

Unit 16 – 140 Decker Road, Mansfield QLD 4122

ph: 1300 743 710 web: www.qldrehab.com.au email: info@qldrehab.com.au

Qld Rehab Equipment is established to principally service the needs of Department of Veterans Affairs Prescribers, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Nursing Homes, Hospitals and Aged Care Facilities in SE Qld. First established in 1999, they also hire and sell a range of equipment to the general public.

ASTA Committee

President:	Sam Garland (Aidacare)
Vice President:	Geoff Purtil (Invacare)
Treasurer:	Rob Hogan (Country Care)
Secretary:	Ian Rothall
Committee:	Chris Jones (Peak Care) David Fagan (Paragon Mobility) Owen Dawes (Permobil) Jill Barnett (Magic Mobility) Matthew Woosnam (Walk on Wheels)

Position: Assistive Technology Service Technician – Sydney Metro & greater metro

Position Description:

Servicing and Repairing a large variety of equipment for children with disability

Position Details:

Be part of a dynamic team whose mission is to improve the lives of children with disability and their carers! Our equipment plays an essential role in many lives and needs maintenance and repairs from time to time. This position carries challenges, calls for mechanical ingenuity, aptitude for working along with children and their carers, but above all, excellent job satisfaction, knowing that you make a positive difference to somebody's life every day. The position would also include minor equipment deliveries from time to time.

For a full position description and requirements please contact PME Group on 1300 131 884 or email admin@pmegroup.com.au

PME
GROUP



ATSA Members Registered

Ability in Motion

ph: 1800 994 408
www.abilityinmotion.com.au

AC Mobility

ph: (08) 9209-1777
www.acmobility.com.au

Age Prepcare

ph: (03) 9796-5156
www.ageprepcare.com.au

Aidacare Pty Ltd

ph: 1300 133 120
www.aidacare.com.au

Astec Equipment Services

ph: (03) 5336-3900
www.astecservices.net.au

Austech Medical

ph: (07) 5495-8663
www.austechmedical.com

Automobility

ph: 1800 662 454
www.automobility.com.au

Autoslide

ph: 1300 288 675
www.autoslide.com

Awsum Assistive Technology Group

ph: 1300 687 195
www.comfortandmobility.com.au

Better Living Care Pty Ltd

ph: (02) 8853-1100
www.betterlivingcare.com.au

Blue Badge Insurance

ph: 1300 304 802
www.BlueBadgeInsurance.com.au

BrightSky Australia

ph: 1300 799-243
www.brightsky.com.au

Canterbury Concepts

ph: (03) 9580-1744
www.canterburyconcepts.com.au

Capital Special Vehicles

ph: (03) 9794-8888
www.csv.com.au

Care & Mobility

ph: (02) 6581-0018
www.careandmobility.com.au

Central Queensland Mobility

ph: 1800 201 070 or (07) 4926-1071
www.cqmobility.com.au

Complete Mobility and Rehab

ph: (07) 4032-1140
www.completemobility.com.au

Country Care Group

ph: 1800 727382
www.countrycaregroup.com.au

Daniels Surgical & Health Equipment

ph: (07) 4922-7148
www.danielssurgical.com.au

Dejay Medical

ph: (02) 9838-8869
www.dejay.com.au

Deutscher Healthcare

ph: (03) 5339-5708
www.deutscherhealthcare.com.au

Disability Hire Vehicles

ph: (02) 4577-2225
www.disabilityhire.com.au

Drive Medical Pty Ltd

ph: (03) 9551-1548
www.drive-medical.com.au

DRP International Healthcare

ph: (03) 5975-4153
www.drpinternational.com.au

Durable Medical Equipment Ltd

ph: (02) 9674-8904
www.dmedirect.com.au

Eden Healthcare Solutions

ph: (02) 6041-9700
www.edenhcs.com.au

Elan Medical Supplies

ph: 1300 137 250
www.elanmedical.com.au

Elite Mobility Scooters

ph: (07) 5561-1427
www.elitemobilityscooters.com.au

Everyday Mobility

ph: (02) 4454-5454
www.everydaymobility.com.au

FAS Therapeutic Equipment

ph: (03) 9587-6766
www.fasequipment.com

Feel Good Massage Chairs

ph: 1300 804682
www.feelgoodmassagechairs.com.au

Fisher Lane Mobility

ph: 1800 702 026
www.fisherlane.com.au

Freedom Healthcare

ph: (07) 3801-3910
www.freedomhc.com.au

Freedom Motors Australia & Freedom Access Vehicles

ph: 1800 672 437
www.freedommotorsaustralia.com.au

Geelong Wheelchair Services Pty Ltd

ph: (03) 5244-0844
www.geelongwheelchairs.com.au

GMS Rehabilitation

ph: 1300 734 223
www.gmsrehab.com.au

GTK Rehab

ph: (02) 9620-9177
www.gtkrehab.com.au

Guardian Mobility Pty Ltd

ph: (02) 6288-3538
www.guardianmobility.com.au

Handi-Rehab

ph: (08) 8276-1300
www.equip4living.com.au

Healthcare Innovations Australia

ph: 1300 499 282
www.hiaus.net.au

Home Safety and Comfort

ph: (02) 6581-2400
www.homesafetyandcomfort.com.au

Hospital at Home

ph: (02) 9601-7757
www.hospitalathome.com.au

Independent Home Care Supplies

ph: (02) 4227-4315
www.ihcss.com.au

Integrated Technologies Australia

www.integratedtechnologiesaustralia.com.au

InterPoint Events

ph: (02) 9660-2113
www.intermedia.com.au

Invacare Australia Pty Ltd

ph: 1800 460 460
www.invacare.com.au

Juel Health Services

ph: (02) 4340-0883
www.livingstrength-ot.com.au

K Care Healthcare Equipment

ph: (08) 9248-4444

www.kcare.com.au**Keep Moving Pty Ltd**

ph: (08) 8947-5122

www.keeppmoving.net.au**Liberty Healthcare**

ph: 1300 885 853

www.libertyhealthcare.com.au**Life Mobility****(formerly Maroondah
Home Healthcare)**

ph: (03) 9726-2000

www.lifemobility.com.au**Local Mobility**

ph: (02) 4956 9993

www.localmobility.com.au**Lodgesons (UK)**

ph: +44 (0)29 2043-6980

www.lodgesons.co.uk**Magic Mobility Pty Ltd**

ph: (03) 8791-5600

www.magicmobility.com.au**Mandurah Mobility Products**

ph: (08) 9535-1411

www.mandurahmobility.com.au**Medi-Repair Services**

ph: (03) 6334-8844

www.medirepairservices.com.au**Medistore**

ph: 1300 882 194

www.medistore.com.au**Medix21 Australia**

ph: (03) 9041-7507

www.medix21australia.com.au**Megalong Positioning Service**

ph: (02) 4759-2800

www.megalongpositioning.com.au**Melrose Wheelchairs Pty Ltd**

ph: 0407 502 729

www.melrosewheelchairs.com.au**Mobility Aids Australia**

ph: (03) 9546-7700

www.mobilityaids.com.au**MobilityCare**

ph: (03) 9568-8383

www.mobilitycare.net.au**Mobility Engineering**

ph: (02) 9482-4572

www.mobilityengineering.com.au**Mobility Matters Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 6280-7244

www.mobilitymatters.com.au**Mobility Options**

ph: (02) 8834-1213

www.mobilityoptions.com.au**Mobility2You**

ph: (02) 4367-5751

www.mobility2you.com.au**Northcott Equipment Solutions**

ph: (02) 9890-0186

www.northcott.com.au**Northern Rivers Surgical**

ph: (02) 6686-6644

www.intermobility.com.au**Novis Healthcare**

ph: 1300 738 885

www.novis.com.au**Omni Healthcare**

ph: (03) 5333-4006

www.omnihealthcare.com.au**Otto Bock Australia Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 8818-2800

www.ottobock.com.au**Para Mobility**

ph: (02) 9651-4446

www.paramobility.com.au**Paragon Mobility**

ph: 1300 652 382

www.paragonmobility.com.au**Patient Care Products**

ph: (03) 9786-3092

www.patientcareproducts.com.au**Patient Handling**

ph: 1300 734 862

www.patienthandling.com.au**Peak Care Equipment Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 4272-2688

www.peak-care.com.au**Peninsula Home****Health Care**

ph: (03) 9786-7004

www.phhc.com.au**Permobil Australia Pty Ltd**

ph: 1300 845 483

www.permobil.com.au**PersonalIndependenceProviders**

ph: 1300 65 7016

www.haleberry.com.au**Power Mobility Pty Ltd**

ph: (07) 3265-4663

www.powermobility.com.au**Pride Mobility Products****Australia Pty Ltd**

ph: (03) 8770-9600

www.pridemobility.com.au**Problem Management
Engineering Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 9482-2808

www.pmeautoconversions.com.au**Professional Assistance for Living (PAL)**

ph: (08) 8449-5462 or 0434 339 910

pal_info@iprimus.com.au**Push Mobility**

ph: 1300 721 328

www.pushmobility.com.au**Qld Rehab Equipment**

ph: 1300 743 710

www.qldrehab.com.au**R82 Australia Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 8213-6666

www.r82.com.au**Rehab & Mobility Wholesalers**

ph: 1300 368085

www.rehabandmobility.com.au**Scooters & Mobility**

ph: 1800 726 000

www.scootersandmobility.com.au**Scooters Australia**

ph: (03) 9799-6622

www.scootersaus.com.au**Scooter World Australia**

ph: (08) 8340-8344

www.scooterworldaustralia.com.au**Sensory Calm**

ph: (02) 8355-2290

www.sensorycalm.com.au**Shoprider Pty Ltd**

ph: (08) 9248-4180

www.shoprider.com.au

Special Needs Solutions

ph: (07) 5597-4321

www.specialneedssolutions.com.au**Specialised Wheelchair Company**

ph: (02) 9905-5333

www.swco.com.au**Statewide Home Health Care**

ph: (03) 9591-6234

www.shhc.com.au**Sunrise Medical Pty Ltd**

ph: (02) 9678-6600

www.sunrisemedical.com.au**Think Mobility Pty Ltd**

ph: 1300 88 1968

www.thinkmobility.com.au**Total Ability**

ph: 1300 858 410

www.totalability.com.au**Total Mobility Solutions Pty Ltd**

ph: 1300 868 662

www.totalmobility.com.au**Tunstall Australasia Pty Ltd**

ph: (07) 3637-2200

www.tunstallhealthcare.com.au**Tyrex Solutions**

ph: (02) 4956-6860

www.tyrex.com.au**Uccello Designs**

ph: 1300 721 327

www.uccellodesigns.com**Victorian Home Health Equipment**

ph: (03) 9725-6577

www.vhhe.com.au**Walk on Wheels Australia**

ph: 1300 766 266

www.walkonwheels.com.au**Watercomfort Company**

ph: (02) 9531-1699

www.watercomfort.com.au**Wheelchairs & Stuff**

ph: (02) 4577-2225

www.wheelchairs.com.au**Wheelchair Sales Indesign**

ph: (02) 9607-3355

www.wheelchairsales.com.au**Wicked Wheelchairs**

ph: (07) 5500-0882

www.wickedwheelchairs.com.au**atsa**Assistive Technology
Suppliers Australasia Inc**Phone:** (02) 9893 1883**Fax:** (02) 8212 5840**Mail:** Level 7-91 Phillip St,
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150**Email:** info@atsa.org.au**Website:** www.atsa.org.au