

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Western Australian (WA) Community Advisory Council

Terms of Reference

11 September 2025

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1. Overview and Purpose

On 17 June 2025, the Commonwealth and WA Governments signed a WA Bilateral Agreement on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (the Bilateral Agreement). The Bilateral Agreement establishes the Western Australian NDIS Community Advisory Council (Community Advisory Council).

The Community Advisory Council's primary role is to ensure that the development, operations and delivery of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in Western Australia is well informed by people with disability, their families, carers, workers, service providers, and advocates, to support the people in Western Australia to realise outcomes from accessing and utilising the NDIS.

The Western Australian Government's support for a Community Advisory Council recognises that people with disability are at the centre of the NDIS, are experts in their own lives, and must have ongoing input into the policies and decisions that affect them.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Community Advisory Council is to improve outcomes for NDIS participants by playing an active role in the co-governance of the NDIS in WA. This includes:

- providing feedback and advice on the experienced operational and delivery effectiveness of the scheme in achieving participant outcomes irrespective of their location, disability impact or levels of support needs;
- identifying and raising issues occurring in the implementation of the NDIS in WA, including existing, emerging or potential mainstream interface risks and issues including barriers to transition and access to services;
- receiving and considering reports on scheme performance data from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and other sources;
- providing advice to the Executive Steering Committee on key issues on NDIS operations;
- providing advice to the WA Minister for Disability on operations and performance progress of the NDIS in WA;
- being a consultative body for reforms to improving administration of the NDIS contemplated by the NDIA, the Department of Health Disability, and Ageing and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission;
- considering the interface of the NDIS with the Western Australian State Disability Strategy 2020-2030 vision that people with disability, and those who share their lives, are engaged and feel empowered to live as they choose in a community where everyone belongs; and
- considering the operations of the NDIS in WA in relation to the specific needs of marginalised groups within the disability community, including but not limited to those in remote locations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from multicultural communities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer communities.

3. Decision-Making

The Community Advisory Council is not a decision-making body. It is tasked with advising on the development, operations and delivery of the NDIS in Western Australia including highlighting issues and collaborating across stakeholder boundaries to improve outcomes for eligible NDIS participants.

Community Advisory Council's advice will be shared through Community Advisory Council meetings and out of session. Community Advisory Council outcomes and advice will be provided to the WA Executive Steering Group Members.

4. Membership

All Community Advisory Council members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, will be formally appointed by the Minister for Disability Services. A majority of members must be people with disability from Western Australia, and the Community Advisory Council Chair must be an NDIS participant.

Community membership will include the following representatives:

- WA Ministerial Advisory Council Chair
- WA Lived Experience Advisory Panel Chair
- 4 x WA community members with disability
- 2 x WA carers of person with disability not able to represent themselves such as people with an intellectual or developmental disability, cognitive impairment, or person with Autism
- 2 x WA members of disability advocacy providers or representative bodies
- 2 x WA members of NDIS service providers or NDIS provider representative bodies

Government membership will include representatives from:

- WA Department of Communities Deputy Director General, Disability Division
- WA Department of Communities Executive Director, Disability Division
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- National Disability Insurance Agency
- WA National Disability Insurance Agency State Manager
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Community Advisory Council membership must also reflect:

- lived experience of disability
- a range of disability types representative of the NDIS cohort, including cognitive disability
- a gender balance
- regional and remote representation
- First Nations representation
- carers of people with disability
- people who have experience, knowledge of or expertise of utilising NDIS supports and services across diverse disability needs and complexities
- people who have knowledge of or expertise in the provision of NDIS supports and services in remote areas

4.1 Members' responsibilities

The responsibilities of members are to:

- maintain an understanding of, and comply with, the Community Advisory Council Terms of Reference including conduct and the expectations of members in meeting processes;
- actively contribute to collective actions and advice provided by the Community Advisory Council;
- follow Public Sector Code of Ethics and other relevant policies including confidentiality and conflicts of interest;
- follow trauma-informed principles and uphold a duty of care to keep themselves, other members, and Secretariat staff safe;
- demonstrate inclusive meeting practices, use active listening and provide each member with the opportunity to speak and ask questions;
- demonstrate awareness of the power dynamics inherent between government agencies, service providers and the individuals they serve, and take steps to ensure all members have an equal voice in Community Advisory Council meetings; and
- ensure that a diverse range of views and perspectives are considered, and that all members respectfully engage with other members who have differing viewpoints.

4.2 Chairs

The Community Advisory Council will be chaired by the Ministerial appointed community member.

The Chair must be an NDIS participant. They will be supported by a Ministerial appointed Deputy Chair who will perform the role and responsibilities of the Chair if they are unavailable.

The Chairs will primarily be responsible for leading the Community Advisory Council to achieve its objectives and execute its responsibilities in line with these Terms of Reference. They will be responsible for chairing meetings, including:

- calling for special meetings as required;
- supporting the Secretariat including in the scheduling of meetings and ensuring appropriate preparation and consultation has been undertaken to inform the Community Advisory Council agenda;
- facilitating meetings, including keeping discussion on track; ensuring members have an opportunity to express their views; seeking consensus on issues; confirming outcomes, actions, action owners, follow-up as required on timelines for responses; and closing meetings;
- reviewing minutes and action items (prepared by the Secretariat) before circulation to members; and
- determining confidential items and supporting members to uphold privacy principles.

The Chair will be responsible for building the capacity of the Community Advisory Council to carry out its role as a cohesive group through productive, respectful and inclusive conversations.

4.3 Term

Length of the Community Advisory Council's first term will be for three years and will commence from 1 November 2025 and conclude on 31 October 2028.

4.4 Remuneration

For the Community Advisory Council Chair, Deputy Chair and members who are not otherwise paid by their organisations to participate in Community Advisory Council, remuneration will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the Department of Communities Community Paid Participation Policy.

For all other participants and members, attendance at meetings will be on a voluntary basis and sitting fees will not be paid.

Community Advisory Council members will also be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred as a consequence of their attendance at in-person meetings, with the prior approval of the Secretariat. This includes supports reasonably required to participate in Community Advisory Council that are not already covered by their NDIS plan.

4.5 Proxies

Proxies are generally not preferred. If a proxy is required, the Chair is to be advised prior to the meeting and for agency members through the Secretariat.

4.6 Guest attendees

The Chairs may invite other persons or agencies or organisations to attend meetings as observers.

As appropriate, the Community Advisory Council will engage with other relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts. This may occur through the Chair.

4.7 Quorum

A quorum is met with 50% of community representatives and 50% of representatives of each of the WA and Commonwealth governments. If a quorum is not met, then the meeting shall not formally proceed, with consensus coordinated out of session where required.

4.8 Secretariat

Secretariat support will be provided by Communities. The secretariat will:

- assist with agenda setting, managing and circulating meeting papers, recording and disseminating meeting minutes and coordinating action items arising from the meetings;
- communicate with members to coordinate meetings and progress Community Advisory Council business;
- make any accessibility accommodations required for members to participate;
- develop papers to submit Community Advisory Council advice to the WA Executive Steering Committee;
- support the Chair to build the capacity and improve the operations of the group over time;
- coordinate induction and training for members as required;
- advise the Chair on management of conflicts of interest, disputes and other operational issues;
- process payments to members as required.

The Community Advisory Council Secretariat can be contacted by email at CommunityAdvisoryCouncil@communities.wa.gov.au.

4.9 Working with other governance bodies and advisory groups

Community Advisory Council will seek opportunities to work with other relevant groups where there is alignment between their priorities including:

- Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability
- Disability Services Commission Board
- Lived Experience Advisory Panel
- WA Executive Steering Committee
- NDIS Reform Advisory Committee
- Evidence Advisory Committee
- Independent Advisory Council

Further details of these groups are at **Attachment 1**.

5. Operating Procedures

5.1 Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled quarterly unless otherwise required or agreed. Members may also be invited to attend additional meetings or respond to requests for input out of session, depending on opportunities that are available.

Meetings will be held online via Microsoft Teams or a suitable online meeting platform with the option to attend in person at the Department of Communities, Level 1, North Campus, 5 Newman Street, Fremantle.

Annually one meeting will be proposed to be scheduled in the regions, subject to members availability. Regional meeting details will be provided to members with minimum one month notice, should some members wish to attend in-person. Where possible, online participation will also be offered for regional meetings.

Proposed agenda items should be forwarded, via the secretariat, for approval by the Chair.

5.2 Record Keeping

The secretariat shall keep records of meeting agenda papers and outcomes.

These files are the property of Communities and must be preserved in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)*.

5.3 Attendance

It is expected that members will make every effort to attend all meetings. If a member is unable to attend, this should be communicated to the Chair and Secretariat prior to the meeting.

Executive level representatives from Communities, the NDIA, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Department of Health, Disability and Ageing will attend all Community Advisory Council meetings, unless advised otherwise.

Representatives of other organisations will also be invited to attend meetings or meeting agenda items when required.

5.4 Accessibility

All members will be requested to provide any access and inclusion requirements relevant to the role. The secretariat will assist and support reasonable adjustments as required.

The Western Australian government is committed to ensuring that all in-person and online meetings are accessible, including providing captioning and Auslan interpreting support, where required. The Community Advisory Council Secretariat will assist with any additional requests from members and guests regarding meeting accessibility.

Meeting papers will be provided in accessible formats to meet the needs identified by members. For example, Easy Read or screen-reader friendly formats.

5.5 Conflict of Interest

Community Advisory Council members must state any conflicts of interest at the commencement of each meeting. Papers are to be provided by the Secretariat at least one (1) week in advance of the meetings.

5.6 Induction of new members

The Secretariat will provide newly appointed members with all necessary and relevant information regarding the Community Advisory Council responsibilities and any other background information to enable them to understand the scope of the operations and their duties and responsibilities. This includes a copy of the Terms of Reference and the minutes of the past three meetings (when available).

Induction information will be provided in alternative formats where this is an access requirement.

5.7 Employee Assistance Program

Community Advisory Council members who are remunerated through the Community Paid Participation Policy are also eligible for support through Communities' Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The EAP provides free and confidential counselling services to all Communities employees (including committee members) and their immediate family members.

These counselling sessions can be used to discuss issues related to your work on the Community Advisory Council or personal matters. To request an EAP appointment, phone PeopleSense on 1300 30 79 12.

5.8 Confidentiality

The deliberations of the Community Advisory Council are considered confidential. Members are not to communicate, or on-forward materials received to others outside of Community Advisory Council members, without pre-approval by the Chair. Members are expected to maintain the integrity and security of information received.

Confidentiality protocols apply to all Community Advisory Council meeting papers, unless otherwise stated. Meeting papers provided to support Community Advisory Council meetings are not to be circulated beyond the membership of the Community Advisory Council.

Members may have access to information that relates to confidential State and Commonwealth Government deliberations. Members must treat this material as strictly confidential and will be required to sign a declaration to this effect.

Additionally, all proceedings and records of the Community Advisory Council will be confidential, unless otherwise indicated by the Community Advisory Council Chair or Secretariat. WA Public Sector

employees will already be required to maintain the confidentiality of information obtained during their participation in the work of the Community Advisory Council.

Records of the Community Advisory Council, and other documents provided to, or prepared by or for the purposes of the Community Advisory Council will be maintained by the Secretariat and subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992 (WA)*.

Personal information will be treated in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (WA)* and *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA)*.

6. Review

These Community Advisory Council Terms of Reference will be reviewed by members at the beginning of each new term of the Community Advisory Council, or at any other time if requested by the ESC or Community Advisory Council Chairs.

To receive this document in another format please email the Community Advisory Council Secretariat at CommunityAdvisoryCouncil@communities.wa.gov.au

Attachment 1: Other governance bodies and advisory groups

Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability

The Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability (MACD) is established under the Disability Services Act 1993 (WA) to provide the WA Government with advice and perspectives on issues relating to disability in WA informed by lived experience

MACD provides advice on the development and implementation of policies, services, programs and activities that affect people with disability in WA. It engages and influences debate on fundamental issues such as access and inclusion and the employment of people with disability.

MACD also is a key driver and promoter of A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020 – 2030 and the action plan.

Disability Services Commission Board

The Disability Services Commission Board (DSC Board) is mandated under the Disability Services Act 1993 (WA) to oversee the governance of the Disability Services Commission.

The DSC Board monitors the high-level governance of all disability services provided by Department of Communities (Communities) for Western Australians who are either living with or whose lives are affected by disability.

The DSC Board continues to oversee, on behalf of the Disability Services Commission, finance, risk management, and service delivery as well as driving and promoting the State Disability Strategy and its action plans.

The DSC Board is also involved in the Western Australian Disability Advisory Council with members of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability.

Lived Experience Advisory Panel

The Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) provides lived experience advice to the WA Government's Disability Division that ensures the voices and perspectives of the disability community are at the forefront of policy and service development. It comprises up to eight people with disability, immediate family members and carers.

The LEAP was established to give advice from their personal lived experience that informs policy, strategy and program considerations within the Disability Division, including on WA's implementation of Disability Royal Commission recommendations.

NDIS Reform Advisory Committee

The National Disability Insurance Scheme Reform Advisory Committee (NDIS RAC) provides independent advice from people with disability on the implementation of reform to the NDIS, including in response to the Independent Review into the NDIS (NDIS Review) and NDIS-related reforms from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (DRC). The NDIS RAC will deliver advice related to the process, timing, community views, and policy substance of NDIS reforms to the:

- Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC), comprised of Ministers with responsibility for disability from the Commonwealth and each state and territory;
- The Commonwealth Minister for the NDIS, Chair of DRMC; and
- NDIS Reform Advisory Committee.

WA Executive Steering Committee

The WA Executive Steering Committee (ESC) has a critical role to monitor the NDIS and respond to emerging risks and support the day-to-day operation of the scheme in Western Australia. The membership includes government officials from the WA and Commonwealth governments to collectively work together to refine and improve the operation of the NDIS.

Community Advisory Council outcomes and advice will be shared with ESC.

The ESC will consider and respond to advice provided by the Community Advisory Council in a reasonable timeframe, including updating the Community Advisory Council on any relevant actions being undertaken.

Evidence Advisory Committee

The Australian Government is establishing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Evidence Advisory Committee (EAC) by July 2025. This committee will provide independent, expert advice on the suitability and effectiveness of disability supports for NDIS funding. The EAC will also evaluate evidence on disability supports, including assistive technology, and provide recommendations to the government.

Independent Advisory Council

The Independent Advisory Council (IAC) advises the Board of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) on the most important issues affecting participants, carers and families.

The NDIA must consider all advice provided by the IAC when performing its duties as a governing body of the NDIS. The IAC produces independent papers, reports and submissions, which culminate in formal advice to the Board of the NDIA.

The IAC comprises of a Principal Member and no more than 12 members, who represent a wide range of disability and advocacy sectors, bringing their own lived experience or expertise of disability. They are the voice of the participants at the highest level, bringing skills, expertise or knowledge that will help the IAC perform its function.