

Responding to the Introduction of the NDIS: A Change Action Project

Doukakis, E., O'Brien, P., Mueller, A., Kelly, J. & Christie, C. (2016)

This research and report was commissioned by Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC) in the context of their closure which will be complete by mid-2018. ADHC employs a significant number of people with disabilities and the purpose of this study was to build on their understanding of the information and support needs of these staff members during this time of change. The ultimate aim of the project is to develop supportive strategies for these staff members and this report concludes with a series of recommendations to this end.

Seventeen participants with disabilities were interviewed across NSW, in regional and metropolitan areas. Research questions focused on their experiences to date of the change and information gained and their support needs going forward.

The research findings identified several key areas including the participant's experiences of accessing information about the NDIS, as well as both facilitators and barriers to understanding. The current experiences of participants focused on workload changes, the additional layers of disadvantage faced by retirement aged participants, and participants in regional NSW, concerns relating to negative perceptions of disability and bias during job selection processes, and the inaccessibility of employment agencies and other "red tape" issues. The emotional impact on participants was also emphasised in the findings, with both emotionally supportive as well as risk factors identified.

The recommendations in moving forward in the change process focused on the following themes: vocational guidance, resilience building, peer support, affirmative action and access to information.