

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Information for Victorian Mental Health Community Support
Services

July 2016

Contents

About this document	3
Overview	4
About the NDIS.....	4
Eligibility.....	4
Defined programs of Mental Health Community Support Services.....	4
Roll-out of NDIS.....	5
Access pathway for clients of MHCSS defined programs.....	5
Access pathway for new participants.....	5
Out-of-scope MHCSS.....	5
Funding Arrangements.....	6
More information.....	6
Table 1 NDIS phasing schedule.....	7
Additional information for Mental Health Community Support Service providers	8
Transition for eligible clients of MHCSS defined programs.....	8
MHCSS Intake Assessment Service and Needs Register.....	9
Out-of-scope MHCSS programs.....	11
Eligibility.....	12
Continuity of support for existing clients who do not meet eligibility requirements.....	13
Role of MHCSS providers during transition.....	13
Funding arrangements and Service Agreements.....	15
Quality and Safeguard arrangements during transition.....	16
Support for providers during transition.....	17
More information.....	17

About this document

This document is intended to support Victorian Mental Health Community Support Services prepare for transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

This document will be regularly updated to incorporate feedback and reflect refinements in the roll-out of the NDIS.

If you have a question or suggestion for this document please email Julie Skilbeck (<mailto:julie.skilbeck@dhhs.vic.gov.au>)

Overview

In this section:

- [About the NDIS](#)
- [Roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)
- [Eligibility](#)
- [Defined programs of Mental Health Community Support Services](#)
- [Funding arrangements](#)
- [Access pathway for clients of MHCSS defined programs](#)
- [Access pathway for new participants](#)
- [Out-of-scope Mental Health Community Support Services](#)

About the NDIS

On 16 September 2015, the Victorian Government signed a Bilateral Agreement with the Commonwealth Government for the full scheme roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in Victoria.

The Bilateral Agreement describes how and when the NDIS will be rolled out across Victoria from July 2016. Under the bilateral agreement, the National Disability Insurance Authority (NDIA) is responsible for implementing the NDIS. Information on the Bilateral Agreement and the NDIS more broadly is available here: www.ndis.gov.au

The NDIS is the new approach to providing individualised support for people with a disability (including people with a psychosocial disability). The NDIS will provide participants with more choice and control over how, when and where their supports are provided. It will also provide certainty that they will receive the support they need when they need it over their lifetime.

Eligibility

The NDIS will be available to Victorians who have an impairment or condition that substantially reduces their capacity to do everyday things, participate in the social and economic life of their community, and are likely to require support under the NDIS over their lifetime.

While a persons' impairment may vary in intensity, for example, due to the episodic nature of their mental illness, their impairment will be assessed as permanent if it is likely they will need support at varying levels over their lifetime.

In addition to meeting NDIS disability requirements, participants of the NDIS must also be an Australian resident and under 65 years of age. [Additional information on eligibility](#)

Defined programs of Mental Health Community Support Services

The Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) programs and corresponding funding in-scope for transition to the NDIS include:

- All Individualised Client Support Packages (ICSP)
- All Adult Residential Rehabilitation services
- Supported Accommodation Services (excluding three services with a homelessness focus).

The NDIA has agreed that the eligibility criteria for these programs align with the eligibility criteria for the NDIS and has therefore designated them as 'defined programs'.

Roll-out of NDIS

The NDIS is being introduced in stages across Victoria because it is a big change to the current system.

Full scheme NDIS will commence in Barwon on 1 July 2016. Transition commenced in the North Eastern Melbourne Area from 1 July 2016. Full scheme rollout in Victoria will be completed by 30 June 2019. The schedule for the roll-out of the NDIS is detailed in [Table 1](#).

In order to ensure a smooth transition, participants will transition according to an agreed participant sub-phasing plan unique to each geographical area.

In the North Eastern Melbourne Area clients of MHCSS defined programs are scheduled to transition to the NDIS in May and June 2017. More information about the participant phasing plan for North Eastern Melbourne Area is available [online](#).

Access pathway for clients of MHCSS defined programs

Existing clients of a MHCSS defined program, or their nominated primary contact, will be contacted by the NDIA by telephone to complete the NDIS access process. Upon commencing the access process existing clients of MHCSS defined programs are recognised by the NDIA as satisfying the *National Disability Insurance Act* disability requirements and will not have to provide additional evidence of their disability and the level of functional impairment associated with their disability. They will become NDIS participants provided they also meet age and residency requirements.

Access pathway for new participants

People will be able to apply to become a participant in the NDIS when the area in which they reside commences transition.

When a person makes an access request to the NDIA, they will be asked to provide evidence of their psychiatric condition and related psychosocial disability, including their level of functional impairment and whether their condition or impairment is permanent or likely to be permanent. This evidence is to be provided by an appropriately qualified health professional (such as a general practitioner or psychiatrist).

The NDIA will use this information to assess whether the person meets the disability requirements of the NDIS.

People on the MHCSS Needs Register are considered to be 'new' clients for the purpose of transition to the NDIS. This reflects commitments made within the Bilateral Agreement between Victoria and the Commonwealth Governments. [Additional information on the MHCSS Intake Assessment and Needs Register](#)

Out-of-scope MHCSS

A number of MHCSS programs are out-of-scope (for funding commitment purposes) for transition to the NDIS. These include: three homelessness focussed Supported Accommodation Services; Youth Residential Rehabilitation; Aboriginal mental health; Carer Support; Intake Assessment function; catchment based planning; and state-wide services.

Two MHCSS programs, Mutual Support and Self-Help and Planned Respite, remain under active consideration for transition, in full or part, to the NDIS. These programs will be excluded from transition to

the NDIS at this stage and funding stability maintained until there is greater clarity on the extent to which supports provided by these programs will be delivered by the NDIS.

While these MHCSS programs are out-of-scope for funding commitment purposes, it does not mean that individual recipients of these services are ineligible for the NDIS. [Additional information on out-of-scope MHCSS](#)

Funding Arrangements

The department will continue to fund providers to deliver services for clients of MHCSS defined programs until they transition into the NDIS.

As clients of MHCSS defined programs become NDIS participants, the department will progressively withdraw funding to the funded organisation, corresponding to the services that the NDIA has assumed funding responsibility for. The amount of funding that will be reduced for each client as they transition to the NDIS will be based on the average cost of support provided. [Additional information on funding arrangements](#)

More information

For more information on the NDIS: www.ndis.gov.au

For more information on the Victorian rollout: www.ndis.vic.gov.au

Table 1 NDIS phasing schedule

Roll-out commences	Roll-out completed	When unique clients of a MHCSS defined program will transition	NDIS Area	Local Government Authority
1 July 2016	30 June 2017	May - Jun 2017	North Eastern Melbourne	Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra
1 January 2017	30 June 2017	May - Jun 2017	Central Highlands	Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees
1 May 2017	31 October 2017	Sep - Oct 2017	Loddon	Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander
1 October 2017	31 March 2018	Feb - Mar 2018	Ovens Murray, Inner Gippsland and Western District	<u>Ovens Murray</u> : Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga <u>Inner Gippsland</u> : Baw Baw, Latrobe, Bass Coast, South Gippsland <u>Western District</u> : Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack, Corangamite, Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Moyne, Warnambool
1 November 2017	<u>Inner Eastern Melbourne</u> : 31 October 2018 <u>Outer Eastern Melbourne</u> : 31 July 2018	Sep - Oct 2018 Jun - Jul 2018	Inner Eastern Melbourne and Outer Eastern Melbourne	<u>Inner Eastern Melbourne</u> : Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse <u>Outer Eastern Melbourne</u> : Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges
1 March 2018	30 November 2018	Oct - Nov 2018	Hume Moreland	Hume, Moreland
1 April 2018	31 March 2019	Feb - Mar 2019	Bayside Peninsula	Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula
1 September 2018	30 June 2019	May - Jun 2019	Southern Melbourne	Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong
1 October 2018	30 June 2019	May - Jun 2019	Brimbank Melton and Western Melbourne	<u>Brimbank Melton</u> : Brimbank, Melton <u>Western Melbourne</u> : Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Hobsons Bay, Wyndham
1 January 2019	30 June 2019	May - Jun 2019	Goulburn, Mallee and Outer Gippsland	<u>Goulburn</u> : Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie <u>Mallee</u> : Buloke, Gannawarra, Swan Hill, Rural City of Mildura <u>Outer Gippsland</u> : East Gippsland, Wellington

**Dates of defined programs transition are subject to change.*

Additional information for Mental Health Community Support Service providers

In this section:

- [Transition for eligible clients of MHCSS defined programs](#)
- [MHCSS Intake Assessment Service and Needs Register](#)
- [Out-of-scope MHCSS programs](#)
- [Eligibility](#)
- [Continuity of support for people who do not meet the NDIS eligibility requirements](#)
- [Role of MHCSS providers during transition](#)
- [Funding arrangements and Service Agreements](#)
- [Support for providers during transition](#)
- [More information](#)

Transition for eligible clients of MHCSS defined programs

Timing

Eligible clients that only access support from MHCSS defined programs (ie. do not access disability services) in the North Eastern Melbourne Area are scheduled to transition from 1 May 2017.

For other areas, a sub-phasing schedule that outlines when clients of MHCSS defined programs will transition will be finalised approximately six months prior to the commencement of the transition of that area.

It is anticipated the sub-phasing schedule for eligible clients of MHCSS defined programs will be applied consistently in each area (the latter part of the transition period in each area).

Refer to the [NDIS phasing schedule](#) for the full roll-out schedule

Arranging transition for eligible clients of MHCSS defined programs

The NDIA will contact eligible clients of a MHCSS defined program up to three months before they are due to transition to start the access and planning process (e.g. February/March 2017 in North Eastern Melbourne Area). The NDIA will use client information provided to the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) by service providers to make contact with each client, or a person nominated by the individual. The client may nominate their service provider as a contact person.

The NDIA will make five attempts to contact clients or their nominated contact person by phone. In the event that they cannot be contacted, the NDIA will then formally advise the department and also issue a written letter (including a paper based access request form) to the client's residential address.

Additionally, the NDIA will inform Victoria of individuals that have not completed the access process. Victoria will advise providers of this situation and seek their assistance to help these clients engage in the NDIS access process.

NDIA planners will work with eligible MHCSS clients to develop a personal, goal-based plan (the NDIS Participant Plan). When the client has an approved NDIS Plan, they will be a NDIS participant and will no longer be a client where their services are funded by the state.

Clients living in Adult Residential Rehabilitation Services and Supported Accommodation Services will transition to the NDIS on a 'whole house' basis, consistent with the sub-area client phasing schedule for MHCSS defined programs.

MHCSS clients who are also disability services clients and/or are on the Victorian Disability Support Register

Clients of state funded disability services including those on the Victorian Disability Support Register (DSR) will be the first client group in each area to transition to the NDIS. In North Eastern Melbourne Area, this will occur from 1 July 2016.

People on the DSR who have the most urgent needs will enter the NDIS within the first two years of the transition period, ahead of their geographical area.

The first clients of MHCSS defined programs to enter the scheme in accordance with the phasing schedule will therefore be clients who are also receiving support through a state funded Disability Service program and/or are registered on the DSR. When this client cohort transitions to the NDIS, their psychosocial supports will form part of their NDIS Plan.

When this client group have an approved NDIS plan they will be a NDIS participant and will no longer be a client where their services are funded by the state.

MHCSS Intake Assessment Service and Needs Register

MHCSS Intake Assessment service during transition

The MHCSS Intake Assessment service will remain in place in the North Eastern Melbourne Area up until clients of MHCSS defined programs in this Area transition to the NDIS (i.e. it will be open from 1 July 2016 to 30 April 2017) and continue to take referrals for residents living in this Area during this period.

During this period, people assessed as eligible for MHCSS in this Area will continue to be referred to MHCSS support providers in this Area, with those that have the greatest need continuing to have priority of access. People who need to wait to be allocated to a service will also continue to be placed on the MHCSS Needs Register in this Area, consistent with current practice.

When transition begins for clients of MHCSS defined programs in North Eastern Melbourne Area, the MHCSS Intake Assessment service will no longer undertake intake screening for MHCSS defined programs or register new people on the MHCSS Needs Register who are residents of this Area.

In most other Areas it is anticipated that the MHCSS Intake Assessment service will cease undertaking intake screens for MHCSS defined programs and allocating people to the Needs Register when transition commences in the Area.

MHCSS Intake Assessment service will however continue to screen for eligibility and priority of access for Youth Residential Rehabilitation Services in all catchment across the state – this function is not impacted by the roll out of the NDIS.

Management of the MHCSS Needs Register during transition

People on the MHCSS Needs Register are considered to be 'new' clients for the purpose of transition to the NDIS. This reflects commitments made within the Bilateral Agreement between Victoria and the Commonwealth Governments.

The MHCSS Needs Register is not a defined program on the basis that people on the Register are yet to become a registered client of a MHCSS defined program. This means that people on the MHCSS Needs Register do not automatically meet the disability requirements for the NDIS. However, because people on the Register have been assessed as eligible for a MHCSS defined program they will receive streamlined access to the NDIS.

The NDIA and Victoria have developed an agreed process to streamline access for people on the Needs Register. This agreement outlines the information required by people on the MHCSS Needs register to undertake the NDIS access process. The NDIA will use this information to determine whether the individual meets the disability requirements of the NDIS when the access process commences.

MHCSS Intake Assessment Service providers will actively prepare people on the Needs Register for the NDIS access process, including explaining how NDIS access will take place and supporting the person to collect the required information they need to undergo NDIS access in a streamlined manner. Victoria has provided MHCSS Intake Assessment service providers with information to implement this process and support people on the Register through this process.

People who are recorded on the MHCSS Needs Register can elect to remain on the Register until the NDIA access process commences for MHCSS defined programs in the Area they reside in. A person on the MHCSS Needs Register can also choose to contact the NDIA directly to make an access request at any time when transition commence in an Area. The NDIA's capacity to process planning for 'new participants' however may be constrained prior to MHCSS defined programs transitioning, so this will not necessarily expedite NDIS access for people.

Transition for people who choose to remain on the MHCSS Needs Register

If a person on the MHCSS Register would like to become a NDIS participant, with their consent Victoria will provide their contact details to the NDIA in order to commence the NDIS access process. They will then be contacted by the NDIA. This process will include the need for the person to consent to becoming a NDIS participant, if deemed eligible by the NDIA.

This approach will be applied consistently as the NDIS is rolled-out in each area.

People on the MHCSS Needs Register who have co-existing Disability

If a person on the MHCSS Needs Register is receiving state-funded Disability Services and/or are on the DSR they will transition to the NDIS as per the sub-area client phasing schedule (e.g. from 1 July 2016 in North Eastern Melbourne Area).

If a person on the MHCSS Needs Register is also on the Victorian Disability Support Register (DSR) with urgent needs they will enter the NDIS as the first groups as each geographical area transitions. Individuals on the DSR who have the most urgent need for supports will enter the NDIS within the first two years of the transition period ahead of their geographic area.

Access to bed based services

During transition in a given area, access to Adult Residential Rehabilitation and Supported Accommodation Services will continue via the Regional Panels managed by MHCSS Intake Assessment services, as per current arrangements. This action is required to manage vacancies and ensure bed occupancy targets.

MHCSS Intake Assessment services will stop managing access to defined MHCSS bed based services from the date clients of these services begin to transition to the NDIS, as per the sub-phasing schedule for specific cohorts.

The MHCSS Intake Assessment providers will continue to screen for eligibility for Youth Residential Rehabilitation services and coordinate access to this program, as per current arrangements.

Out-of-scope MHCSS programs

The following MHCSS programs are out-of-scope (for funding commitment purposes) for transition to the NDIS: three homelessness focussed Supported Accommodation Services; Youth Residential Rehabilitation; Aboriginal mental health; Carer Support; Intake Assessment function; catchment based planning; and state-wide services.

Planned Respite and Mutual Support and Self Help will not transition to the NDIS at this stage but remain under active consideration.

Planned respite

Funding stability for Planned Respite will be maintained until there is greater clarity on whether this type of support will be delivered by the NDIS.

It is anticipated that many of the activities delivered by Planned Respite program will be delivered as part of the NDIS. Victoria will continue to work with the NDIA to map elements of this program to relevant NDIS activity. The department will actively monitor NDIA decision making, participant access to the scheme and support items within participant plans during the transition period to determine Victoria's future delivery of Planned Respite.

Current funding arrangements for the Planned Respite program will continue in North Eastern Melbourne Area and Barwon for the 2016-17 year. Future arrangements will be confirmed subject to the outcomes of the mapping process.

Mutual Support and Self Help

Funding stability for Mutual Support and Self program will be maintained until there is greater clarity on whether this type of support will be delivered by the NDIS.

The department will actively monitor NDIA decision making, participant access to the scheme and support items within participant plans during the transition period to determine Victoria's future delivery of the Mutual Support and Self Help program. This will include analysis of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) component of the scheme.

The NDIA is currently developing a commissioning framework for ILC and is not likely to have a full commissioning model or arrangements in place until full scheme in 2019-20. At this stage the extent to which the ILC will support both participants and non-participants, including their families and carers, is unclear.

Victoria will work with the NDIA to map the elements of this program to funded ILC-related activity. This work will occur over the transition period. On this basis, current funding arrangements for Mutual Support and Self-Help program will continue in North Eastern Melbourne Area and Barwon for the 2016-17 year. Future arrangements will be confirmed subject to the outcomes of the mapping process.

Supported Accommodation Services

Based on analysis of the current client cohort targeted by Supported Accommodation Services three services will not transition (for funding commitment purposes). These Supported Accommodation

Services are out-of-scope on the basis they are predominantly focus on adults who are homeless or have a history of homelessness and have complex health and social support needs.

They include:

- McAuley Community Services for Women, targeted to people with a history of homelessness and/or family violence who have enduring mental health and substance misuse issues.
- Rooming House Plus, a community-managed rooming house targeted to people who are homeless or have a history of homelessness with complex health and social support needs.
- Bethlehem Community, a service for women over 35 years of age experiencing multiple issues related to homelessness, or at risk of homelessness including mental health, substance misuse, brain injury and physical illness.

Notwithstanding this analysis, it is likely that some clients of these services may be NDIS eligible. The department will work with providers of these services to ensure eligible clients are identified and supported to access the NDIS.

Eligibility

Determining disability requirements for new NDIS participants

To meet the NDIS disability requirements, people with a psychiatric disability seeking to become a participant in the NDIS will need to provide the NDIA with evidence:

- they have a psychiatric condition; and
- the extent to which their psychiatric condition reduces their psychosocial functional capacity (in respect to communication, social interaction, learning, mobility, self-care and/or self-management) and their capacity for social and economic participation; and
- whether they will require some support under the NDIS for their lifetime (i.e. the impairment is permanent or likely to be permanent).

This evidence must be provided by an appropriate mental health practitioner (e.g. the person's general practitioner or psychiatrist).

Determining permanent disability

An impairment is, or is likely to be, permanent only if there are no known, available and appropriate evidence-based clinical, medical or other treatments that would be likely to remedy the impairment.

An impairment that varies in intensity (for example because the impairment is of a chronic episodic nature) may be deemed to be permanent. If this is the case, the person will be able to access support through the NDIS for their lifetime, despite the variation.

Early intervention requirements

A person may either satisfy the disability requirements or early intervention requirements to be eligible for the NDIS (provided they also meet the age and residency requirements).

A person does not meet the early intervention requirements if the NDIA determines that early intervention support for the person is more appropriately funded or provided through another service system.

However, a person with one or more identified impairments that are attributable to a psychiatric condition and are, or are likely to be, permanent will meet the early intervention requirements if the NDIA is satisfied that provision of early intervention supports for the person is likely to benefit the person by reducing their future needs for supports in relation to disability.

People who turn 65 during transition

The NDIS rules state that a person must be under 65 years of age when they make an NDIS access request.

All existing clients that are older than 65 years of age before the NDIS commences in the area they live in will be ineligible for the NDIS, for example if they turn 65 before 1 July 2016 in the North Eastern Melbourne Area.

If a person on the MHCSS Needs Register turns 65 years of age before they make an NDIS access request in the area they live in they will be ineligible for the NDIS.

If a NDIS participant turns 65 after they have entered the NDIS, they can continue to receive support under the NDIS or choose to access supports through the mainstream aged care system.

MHCSS clients receiving out-of-area services

Clients will transition to the NDIS based on the area they live in. Existing clients of a MHCSS defined program who are receiving an out-of-area service (i.e. they do not reside in the area in which they receive support) will not be able to transition to the NDIS when that area transitions. Clients receiving out-of-area services will need to be identified at least three months before transition commences in the area and supported by their provider to engage with a MHCSS Individualised Client Support Package provider in the catchment in which they live.

MHCSS providers will be required to take an active role in facilitating a smooth client transfer will be the responsibility of the client's ICSP provider. The receiving MHCSS provider must provide this client cohort with priority access to ensure continuity of care.

Adult Residential Service (ARR) and Supported Accommodation Services (SAS) will transition on a 'whole of house' basis, consistent with the sub-phasing schedule for MHCSS defined programs. As client's stay in ARR and SAS for extended period of time, the location of the service will be regarded as client's place of residence.

Continuity of support for existing clients who do not meet eligibility requirements

People who currently receive support from a MHCSS defined program who do not meet the NDIS age and residency eligibility requirements will be supported to ensure they achieve similar outcomes and are not disadvantaged from the roll out of the NDIS. This is known as 'continuity of support'.

Advice on how support will be provided to these individuals will be provided shortly.

Role of MHCSS providers during transition

Data Collection

The department will collect and provide a consolidated view of identifiable client information from all funded service providers to the NDIA.

The NDIA will use the collated information provided by the department to make direct contact with people in receipt of existing services, and those on a waitlist to receive supports, in advance of the scheduled roll out in each area, in order to support them to enter the NDIS.

The department will request this information from providers of MHCSS defined programs more than six months before transition commences in each area. The department may require this data to be validated/updated closer to the time transition occurs for a specific cohort in an area.

During transition, it is critical providers keep an accurate and up to date record of client details, including:

- client first name and last name
- date of birth (or estimated age)
- gender
- address including street number and name, suburb, postcode and LGA, phone number/s and e-mail
- primary disability (required) and secondary disabilities if relevant (e.g. intellectual disability)
- country of birth
- preferred language
- if the person is a citizen or permanent resident of Australia
- Indigenous status.

If the client cannot be, or does not want to be, contacted directly to gain consent to access the NDIS, details of the client's primary contact will be required, including:

- primary contact first name and last name
- gender
- address including street number and name, suburb, postcode and LGA, phone number/s (and e-mail)
- relationship to the potential participant
- preferred language (if available).

The department is required to securely store and submit all data obtained to the NDIA.

MHCSS providers role in supporting clients

Funded providers of MHCSS defined programs will play an important role in helping their clients prepare for and transition to the NDIS. This includes:

- Keeping contact details of clients up-to-date in the lead up to and during the transition.
- Working with each client and their carer/advocate/nominated person to ensure they have an up to date, documented support plan.
- Explaining to the client the purpose of the NDIS, how it might potentially benefit them and why they are eligible for support under the Scheme.
- Supporting client's to engage with the NDIA if the NDIA experiences difficulty contacting a client, particularly clients who have complex needs or risks and may need extra help to transition to the NDIS.
- Prioritising access to an Individualised Client Support Package for MHCSS clients who are receiving support in an area that is transitioning, but do not live in that area (to ensure continuity of care).

MHCSS providers of defined programs will also play a key role in identifying clients who are not eligible for the NDIS (on the basis they do not meet the age and residency requirements of the NDIS) and working with the person, their carers and the department to develop a management plan. This process will commence three months before clients of MHCSS defined programs are scheduled to transition in an Area.

Support during planning conversations

Participants with psychosocial disability can invite people who are important in their life to help or support them during their NDIS planning conversation. This could include family, friends, carer(s) or other people who are important to the person. Alternatively, the NDIA can arrange an independent advocate to attend. These planning discussions can take place at a location that suits the participant and their support network.

A MHCSS provider can assist their clients to make initial contact with the NDIA Planner or NDIA Local Area Coordinator. They may also attend the initial planning meeting, with the consent of the individual.

The NDIA will also offer pre-planning workshops for participants, their families and carers to prepare for their planning meeting. These planning meetings are focused on the future and help participants imagine how they want to live their lives. NDIA planners encourage discussion around personal goals and aspirations, no matter how big or small. Pre-planning workshops explore potential goals and life changes a participant may wish to make.

The workshops also provide vital practical information about the process of Scheme access and planning. For those who need a higher level of support during this process, the NDIA will provide one to one support to participants, their families and carers.

Carer involvement in planning conversations

The NDIS will ensure that people with psychosocial disability are given every opportunity to make their own decisions and exercise choice and control. The NDIA recognises that the role of families and carers is often essential in supporting people with psychosocial disability to realise these goals and will include them as appropriate in discussions about planning and supports.

Funding arrangements and Service Agreements

MHCSS funding during transition

The department will continue to fund providers to deliver services for clients of MHCSS defined programs until eligible clients become participants of the NDIS with an approved plan.

Funding to providers of MHCSS defined programs will be impacted as each area transitions to the NDIS.

Funding allocated to providers of MHCSS defined programs will cease as clients become participants of the NDIS (including people on the DSR and those receiving Disability Services who also receive support from a MHCSS defined program), in line with the phasing schedule.

The NDIA will advise Victoria of the date existing clients have an Approved Plan (the 'approved plan date'). The department will advise relevant MHCSS providers of this plan approval date accordingly.

As clients of MHCSS defined programs become NDIS participants, the department will retrospectively reduce funding to the provider in the next scheduled payment, corresponding to the state-funded services to those clients where the provider had received state funding. The funding reduced per client will be calculated as a provider catchment average per client. At this stage it is the department's intention to vary Service Agreements on a monthly basis.

MHCSS providers that have registered with the NDIA to be an NDIS provider in Victoria will lodge claims for payment with the NDIA (in arrears) for services provided to NDIS participants.

Funding per client

For providers funded to deliver Individualised Clients Support Packages (ICSP) the amount to be reduced will be based on the average cost of providing an ICSP to a client by the funded provider in that geographical area. Data on client numbers provided to the department will be used to calculate this average.

For Adult Residential Rehabilitation Services and Supported Residential Services, the average cost of a bed per client will be calculated based on 100 per cent occupancy. All funding provided for each facility will become the responsibility of the NDIA as all residents in a house transition to the NDIS.

Service Agreements

In situations where an organisation continues to provide any department-funded service/s, including those out-of-scope of the NDIS, the department will vary the organisation's Service Agreement in accordance with the reduced level of services and funding. The organisation will be required to comply with the terms of the Service Agreement in relation to services which it continues to provide. If the organisation is no longer funded to deliver any services by the department, the organisation's Service Agreement will be terminated.

Quality and Safeguard arrangements during transition

MHCSS providers have a streamlined process to register with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to deliver NDIS funded services in Victoria, should they wish to do so.

Under the *Bilateral Agreement for Transition to the NDIS between the Commonwealth and Victorian Government, Schedule F* (the Bilateral Agreement), the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments have agreed that existing quality and safeguards will continue to operate during transition.

This commitment will be given effect through the Victorian Quality and Safeguards Working Arrangements for Transition (the Working Arrangements). The Working Arrangements have been appended to the Bilateral Agreement. An updated Working Arrangements document will be available on the [NDIS website](#) from 1 July 2016.

These Working Arrangements will operate throughout transition or until a nationally consistent framework for quality and safeguards for the NDIS is agreed and implemented.

All NDIS providers must agree to comply with the National Disability Insurance Agency's (NDIA) Terms of Business in order to deliver NDIS funded supports. Under the NDIA's Terms of Business, providers wishing to deliver NDIS funded supports that are in scope of Victoria's quality and safeguarding requirements, must achieve and maintain status as a **Victorian approved NDIS provider** as a pre-requisite for NDIS registration.

The NDIS funded supports that are in scope of Victoria's quality and safeguarding requirements have been determined by mapping existing funded activities against the NDIA's registration groups. The NDIS Registration Groups that apply to providers specialising in psychosocial supports that are in-scope of Victoria's quality and safeguarding requirements are detailed in the Victorian section in the [NDIS Guide to Suitability](#). Providers of in-scope registration groups are required to comply with the legislation, standards and policies as listed in the Victorian content in the NDIS Guide to Suitability.

Achieving and maintaining status as a Victorian approved NDIS provider is a pre-requisite for NDIS registration and the subsequent delivery of supports from in-scope registration groups. Existing service providers will automatically have status as Victorian approved NDIS providers.

An '**existing provider**' means a provider that is already registered under the Disability Act and/or has a current Funding and Service Agreement with a Victorian Government Department (for services now transitioning to the NDIS) as at 30 June 2016.

Existing providers will be deemed to have already achieved Victorian approved NDIS provider status and will not have to undergo an additional review process in order to become an NDIS Registered Provider.

Existing providers have a 'streamlined' NDIS registration process, as follows:

- when an existing service provider applies to the NDIA to become a registered NDIS provider, the NDIA will notify the Victorian Government of that application;
- at the NDIA's request, the Victorian Government will confirm the provider's status as a Victorian approved NDIS provider and which NDIS registration groups the provider has pre-approval for (based on its existing Service Agreement with a Victorian Government Department and/or registration under the Disability Act); and

- the NDIA will notify the provider directly of the outcome of its application to become a registered NDIS provider.

Please note organisations that intend to deliver NDIS supports covered by the *Disability Act 2006*, must obtain registration under that Act. For more information on when this applies refer to the [Guide to Suitability](#).

During transition the Victorian Government will continue to monitor NDIS providers for compliance with Victoria's quality and safeguarding arrangements. The Victorian Government reserves the right to refuse or revoke an existing provider's status as a Victorian approved NDIS provider where it has concerns about the capacity of the provider to comply with Victoria's quality and safeguarding requirements. A failure to comply with Victorian quality and safeguarding requirements will result in loss of NDIS registration and ability to deliver NDIS funded supports.

Support for providers during transition

This is a big change for everyone particularly for service providers, many of whom are used to receiving funding up-front to deliver an agreed range of services.

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting the service sector and people with disability, their families and carers to get ready for the NDIS and have invested \$10 million towards the development of information, resources and capacity building opportunities to help the service sector transition to an NDIS operating model.

This includes funding to National Disability Services Victoria and VICSERV to grow business capability, and developing marketing approaches to attract new clients to their services. Tandem has also received funding to support carers prepare and navigate the NDIS transition.

More information

For more information on the NDIS: www.ndis.gov.au

For more information on the Victorian rollout: www.ndis.vic.gov.au

Email: <mailto:julie.skilbeck@dhhs.vic.gov.au>