



## Disability services – Expression of Interest (EOI) Stage

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a once-in-a-generation reform. It is transforming the way disability services are funded and accessed to ensure all people with disability get the support and services they need and deserve.

The next stage for the NDIS in Victoria is to measure the interest and ability of non-government disability service providers to deliver services across the state. This will be done through an EOI process.

### Why is the Government going to EOI?

The NDIS will mean better outcomes for people with disability who will have greater choice and control over services and decisions affecting their lives.

To achieve this goal, the disability sector needs to expand, with more organisations providing a diverse range of disability services.

The EOI has been designed to test whether the strict conditions the Government has set for the future of disability services can be met, and to measure the interest and ability of the non-government sector to deliver services.

### Conditions of transfer and evaluation criteria

There will be no transition of services if the strict conditions the Government has set are not met.

The Government must be satisfied that:

- Providers have established that they have the capacity and expertise to deliver quality services.
- Strong and enduring safeguards are in place to protect people with disability.
- The right services are in place for people with disability.
- Staff will be supported, including to transfer on fair terms of employment.

These conditions are in addition to the requirements under the national Quality and Safeguarding Framework which has been designed to ensure high quality supports and safe environments for all NDIS participants.

Most importantly, Government must be satisfied that any transfer of services to non-government providers is the best option for all affected people – Victorians with disability and their families, and the disability workforce.

The Government has said it expects to remain a service provider in some form. The EOI process will help the Government understand the extent to which services are able to be delivered by non-government providers and where the Government may need to continue to provide services.



In addition to conditions of transfer, providers seeking to demonstrate their interest and ability to deliver services will only be considered if they pass a strict threshold assessment.

Expressions of interest will be assessed against evaluation criteria which will measure and test the quality of potential service providers.

Potential providers must be able to demonstrate to the Government's satisfaction that they would be able to deliver services under the NDIS, be currently financially viable, have a strong safety record and employ disability workers on fair terms.

Potential providers who cannot meet these threshold conditions would not be considered further. If the threshold criteria are met, potential providers will then be assessed against qualitative evaluation criteria which measures their ability to deliver quality services, operational capability, workforce development and innovation.

Interviews and small workshops have been conducted to understand participants' lived experiences and their hopes for the NDIS, with a focus on quality of care, safety and choice.

The information gathered during these discussions has shaped the strict conditions the Government has placed on the potential transfer of services and the EOI evaluation criteria.

#### What services will be involved?

Interested parties are being invited to submit an expression of interest on their capacity to meet the Government's strict standards and deliver the following services:

- **Supported Independent Living (SIL):** Involves the provision of support in a group home or residential unit for people with disability.
- **Short Term Accommodation and Assistance (STAA):** Currently known in Victoria as Facility Based Respite (FBR), this involves the short-term placement of a person in a supported respite service.

- **Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS):** These are delivered as allied health and specialist early childhood education services to young children with a permanent disability or developmental delay.
- **Behavioural Intervention Services (BIS):** Highly specialised, episodic services delivered to individuals with disability displaying behaviours of concern.

#### What will happen during the EOI stage?

The EOI was released on 27 April and will be open for nine weeks. It will close on 29 June. There will not be any changes to services before the end of the year as a result of this process.

The Government is encouraging a diverse range of providers focused on delivering quality outcomes for people with disability to participate in the process.

The Government will provide an update on next steps as soon as possible after the EOI closes.

The Government's conditions of transfer reflect its commitment that as the NDIS rolls out no one should be worse off – not people with disability and not workers.

#### Maintaining quality and safety

The Government understands that quality of services and safety for both people with disability and staff are paramount, and the EOI evaluation criteria reflects this.

Under the NDIS in Victoria, particular focus will be given to building a safe environment that will continue to attract dedicated staff who want to improve the lives of people with disability.

Through the EOI process, the Government wants to hear from organisations that value quality, safety and collaboration, and that will actively work with other providers to improve the outcomes for people with disability, their families, and staff.

#### Further information

For further information on the EOI stage, or the NDIS rollout in Victoria more generally, visit [www.vic.gov.au/ndis](http://www.vic.gov.au/ndis).