

17 JULY 2018

Project Management Group – optimal psychosocial support services in the NDIS

The Project Management Group met by teleconference on 17 July 2018.

Attendees:

Arthur Papakotsias, Neami National (Chair)
Kerry Hawkins, Carer representative
Debbie Hamilton, Consumer representative
Tony Stevenson, MiFA until 4.20pm
Sarah Pollock, Mind Australia
Andrew Young, Aftercare
Amanda Bresnan, Community Mental Health Australia
David McGrath, McGrath Consulting
Belinda Highmore, Mental Health Australia
Kath Sequoia, Mental Health Australia

Apologies

Judi Higgin, New Horizons
Liz Crowther, Wellways
Mark Orr, Flourish Australia
Damian Ferrie, Star Health

Outcomes and action items for 26 June meeting

- The meeting outcomes were accepted, and agreed for publication on the project webpage.
- The action items were noted.

Project progress report

- The Project Expert Group identified CANSAS as the most appropriate assessment tool for psychosocial disability. David McGrath and his team have analysed literature on available assessment tools to ensure the project has an evidence based background for the final decisions.
- The Lived Experience Group has provided advice on additional questions to complement the CANSAS assessment tool, drawing on the citizenship measure (Rowe) to capture important issues for people and which can't be judged by CANSAS alone.
- One project partner has provided item by item data on CANSAS which can be tied back to records and will inform alignment of CANSAS data to particular need. Other project partners provided CANSAS totals but without an explanation of the basis on



which they were calculated and what basis. This data may not be used until the relevant partners can provide clarity about what the total scores actually refer to.

- Mr McGrath reiterated the caveat around the project partner data – the hours of support in the data reflect the hours of support that organisations were funded to provide to the individuals under government programs, not the hours of support the individuals actually needed.
- The hours of support data has been broken down into particular types of support, and this will be allocated on the basis of percentage of hours.
- The Lived Experience Group feedback has been very positive. They have raised a concern about the investment driven approach reducing plans over time.

Capturing the Indigenous perspective

- The meeting reflected on the attempts that have been made, since the start of the project and more recently, to engage a suitable method for capturing the Indigenous perspective in the project, and reflected on the reasons for not being successful.
- The group agreed that the Indigenous experience requires a very specific approach that is culturally appropriate and speaks to the heart of the issues for Indigenous people. Recognising the limits of this project the group asked that the final project report include a recommendation that the NDIA conduct a specific project to ensure the NIDS is culturally appropriate and responds appropriately to the needs of Indigenous peoples with psychosocial disability.
- The meeting considered a request from a member of the Project Expert Group to include a dedicated line item in the NDIS Price Guide addendum for Indigenous people with specific qualifications for culturally appropriate counselling and support coordination.
- The group noted that the Price Guide addendum lists the activities that are charged by providers – informed by the literature review and the Project Expert Group about the interpretation of the literature and is therefore about the function of the services, as opposed to the qualification of the service provider.
- The group noted that the request was well intentioned and sought to fill a significant need for Indigenous people. It was also noted that the price of supports indicates the training qualifications and skills required to support the service, which is an issue that will naturally follow in separate activities once the project is completed.
- The Deputy Chair will write to the member to explain the group's consideration.

NDIS Price Guide addendum

- The draft Price Guide addendum (which has been provided to the Project Management Group for information) uses same format as the NDIS Price Guide so it can be easily referenced by NDIA staff, and as such is designed to be an addendum to the NDIS Price Guide.
- The Project Expert Group is still providing their final opinions. They have had robust discussions about several items, in particular the inclusion of assistance animals. David McGrath will check that interpreter services and clubhouse models are covered in the draft addendum.



- Mr McGrath invited members to call him directly if they wanted to discuss any aspects of the draft addendum.

Post project advocacy

- The post-project advocacy needs a coordinated approach. The Project Management Group asked Mental Health Australia to:
 1. Develop an advocacy strategy with specific roles for Mental Health Australia and the project partners
 2. Compile specific, nuanced messaging (from the project materials) for particular audiences that can be used for advocacy purposes
 3. Identify key stakeholders and nominate specific advocacy strategies for each of them
 4. Draft a communications plan that complements the advocacy strategy.
- The Project Management Group will endorse the advocacy strategy.
- The group was reminded that the purpose of contracting Mental Health Australia to manage the project and the post-project advocacy was a means of not exposing directly the organisations that have funded the project.
- A meeting between Liz Crowther, Arthur Papakotisas, Frank Quinlan and Belinda Highmore will be held as soon as possible to clarify the role of MHA and the project partners and developing a plan that reflects those functions.
- The group discussed the sensitivities and opportunities within the NDIA, and with individuals, for the project to provide a co-design opportunity to improve the NDIS experience for people with psychosocial disability.

Sector engagement update

- The webinar held on 14 June has been posted on the project webpage and has been viewed 44 times to date. The next webinar will be held on 9 August.
- A teleconference with State Peaks was held on 2 July to update them on the project. Participants responded favourably to the progress of the project. The next teleconference is scheduled for 2 August.

NDIS pricing discussion

- It was noted that Western Australia will go through the transition to the NDIS with a reduction in the dollar value for core supports.

The final meeting of the Project Management Group will be held in Canberra on Tuesday, 14 August 2018.

