

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **NDIS IN THE TERRITORY - A SERVICE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE**

As part of the Developing Northern Australia Conference in Alice Springs yesterday, Anglicare NT Executive Manager Mr Terry Cleary offered a service providers perspective on the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in the NT. The NDIS is being rolled out across the Territory and will be available for all eligible participants in Darwin and Central Australia from 1 July 2018.

Mr Cleary said it was important the NDIS was included in the Developing Northern Australia Conference, not only because of the economic impact the scheme will have in the NT, but because the NDIS is about ensuring the full participation and potential of all Territorians with a disability.

“It is a great moment, just weeks out from the full implementation of the NDIS across the Territory, to pause and see how the scheme is doing,” said Mr Cleary.

“We have a thin, or undersupplied, market in the Territory. The NDIS is meant to be about choice and access, however in remote areas the number of service providers and range of services is limited.”

Mr Cleary said that it is not possible to say at this time if the service system is any better.

“It is debatable if people with disabilities living in the Territory now have greater choice and control over their care and support, especially if they live in a region where the market is either thin or non-existent. We are seeing equity access issues for Indigenous people and people living in remote communities. It is certainly now a more complex environment where many people require additional support to access the Scheme.”

In March, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) Board gave its support to all 25 recommendations of the McKinsey and Company NDIS Independent Pricing Review which included a number of specific recommendations concerning the supply challenges faced by thin or non-existent markets in very remote areas, including isolated Indigenous communities.

“We still have to see how the NDIA will respond to these recommendations. Until the NDIA develops a comprehensive response to these specific recommendations, the equity of access to the scheme is questionable. The extent to which an individual can fully access supports in relation to their disability will still be based on where they live. The closer to the “market”, the better their service. For some Territorians this might well mean no service at all!”

“It is imperative that the NT Government continues to work closely with the NDIA to ensure that all Territorians with a disability are able to access the support services they need, regardless of where they live.”

*Mr Terry Cleary has worked in the community services sector for over 35 years. He commenced his current role with Anglicare NT as Executive Manager Community Care and Access in March 2013. He has extensive experience working in the disability sector both in government and the not for profit sector in South Australia, New South Wales and in Canada. Terry has been a member of the NT National Disability Services (NDS) State Committee for over three years.*

### **FOR COMMENTS OR INTERVIEWS**

To arrange interviews with Mr Terry Cleary please contact Anglicare NT Communications.

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