



MEDIA RELEASE

11 December 2023

MIFA supports the NDIS Review Panel's vision for people with psychosocial disability and their families

The Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia (MIFA) today acknowledged the much-needed improvements to the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability, outlined in the NDIS Review Report.

Since the establishment of the NDIS, MIFA has been advocating for a national program of psychosocial support services for the 154,000 Australians with severe and complex mental health conditions, not eligible for the NDIS. The announcement that the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments will share the costs of establishing foundational supports is welcomed by MIFA. Since the closure of psychiatric institutions in the 1980's and 1990's, all Governments have failed to adequately support people with severe and complex mental health conditions to live well and safely in the community. Foundational supports, jointly funded by all Governments, will see the closure of this gap.

Under the National Plan for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, a national assessment of unmet needs for psychosocial support will be completed by March 2024. Governments will have accurate, up to date data about where and how to invest in psychosocial services. MIFA argues that Governments already have adequate data about unmet needs, and we urge all Governments to commence the funding of new services in the next budget cycle. Completion of comprehensive planning should not delay urgent investment but will assist Governments to refine this over time.

A national program of psychosocial supports should be based on specific local and regional needs, overlaid with national equity and targets. This is an opportunity for Governments to clearly define their respective roles and responsibilities for psychosocial support outside the NDIS, and to agree on their shared investment through Bilateral Agreements under the National Plan for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

People with lived expertise of mental health conditions, and their families and carers, should lead the development of national psychosocial foundational supports. The national network of community-based mental health organisations provides the platform to roll out these programs across the country.

MIFA also acknowledges the commitment to improve the NDIS for those people with psychosocial disability who will continue to access the scheme. A commitment to better pathways, early detection and intervention, and a recovery approach within the NDIS will ensure that the scheme delivers its objectives. MIFA supports the recommendations to ensure that complex support is properly regulated, and that pricing is adequate for specialist providers to remain sustainable in the marketplace. MIFA supports the recommended role of navigators to assist people to find the right services at the right time.

Ends

To get help 24/7, phone Lifeline on 13 11 14 or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. If you or someone you know are in immediate danger, phone 000 for emergency services.