



Welcome to Chair Chat February 2017. This edition focuses on the recent signing and release of the Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and Western Australian Coalition Governments on the transition to a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Nulsen welcome the announcement which sees the Bilateral Agreement in operation until June 2020 providing people with disabilities and the disability sector with certainty over the next three years. The agreement provides the timeline and schedule for the roll out of WA-NDIS over this period. This will enable all disability sector organisations, including Nulsen Disability Services, to plan for expansion over the foreseeable future. The schedule is as follows:

1 July 2017	Kimberley, Pilbara, South-West metropolitan including Rockingham and Mandurah
1 July 2018	Goldfields; Esperance; North metropolitan; central South Metropolitan; Wheat-belt and South-West
1 July 2019	Midwest; Great Southern; central North Metropolitan and South-East Metropolitan

The agreement details the rollout of the scheme to a total of 39,100 participants. The overall financial contribution of the Commonwealth Government will increase from 17% in June 2016 to about 42% by June 2020. This is a significant benefit for West Australians with disabilities. The WA government will contribute their current allocation plus the costs to administer the scheme. As outlined previously in the January Chair Chat the Commonwealth Government has reduced their financial risk of increased recurrent costs due to higher than anticipated number of participants. Nulsen is confident the scheme will be implemented well over the next three years.

A key reform outlined in the agreement will be the amendment of the WA Disability Services Act, namely in the areas of:

- Eligibility and access;
- Compensation issues, particularly in relation to National Injury Insurance Scheme;
- The provision to appoint Nominees;
- Minor amendments to the legislation to enable the transition period are required by 30 June 2017 with the major amendments required by June 2018.

In addition, there are several other issues that need to be addresses by the Bilateral Agreement schedules. Ones of particular interest are:

- Sector and workforce development issues.
- Quality and safeguards will be managed by the State Government until June 2020 and by the Commonwealth thereafter.
*The above two points have a particularly high impact on the sector
- Access to mainstream services, where principles are provided to guide the development of working protocols between WA-NDIS and eleven other government agencies.
- Governance – the nature of the relationship of the Board in WA with NDIS national Board.

It is Nulsen’s view that an active consultation process with an assertive disability sector supported by well-informed customer, family and carers groups will be essential to guide the implementation in the future.

If interested, you can find the Bilateral Agreement and Schedules in full at disability.wa.gov.au. And we’re always keen to hear from you so please don’t hesitate to get in touch via ndisQandA@nulsen.com.au.