



Messages or Noise.

One of the key issues in implementing a large social change such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme is to separate the key messages from the background noise.

The background noise may come from many sources. Namely, political parties in the middle of an election campaign, government bureaucrats who have their own agendas, ex-Board members who wish to retain their legacy, service providers concerned about their sustainability, various media sources and numerous other people who have their own personal barrow to push.

We have seen this situation recently with the release of the WA-NDIS Trials Evaluation Report. So how can people living with disabilities, their families and carers isolate the key messages? Here are Nulsen's perspectives of the merits of this report.

The strengths of the report include the utilisation of multiple data sources including workshops conducted with staff from both government agencies, surveys of nearly 70 disability service providers and reviews of over 600 participant plans (300 plans in each model). This level of detail has been absent in much of the criticism.

There were follow-up interviews with only 21 participants. This is a weakness of the report, though reading the tone of the comments provided may have embarrassed the commonwealth officials.

In essence the evaluation report states that while the WA-NDIS and national agency model have many positive features, both models have a number of areas in which they need to improve.

The Evaluation Report recommends that the WA-NDIS make a total of three policy changes and nine changes to the current processes. Furthermore, the report also recommends that the national NDIA makes seven key policy changes and changes to 23 current processes.

Therefore there are significantly more changes recommended for the national NDIA. It is not unusual under these circumstances that the representatives of the Commonwealth Government would seek to criticise the report. Perhaps they view attacking certain aspects of the report as the best form of defence. However, one can't keep ignoring all the evidence just because it doesn't suit one's personal or political view. The evidence base needs to be appraised on its own merit, independent of the current political situation.

Nulsen Disability Services welcomes the release of the evaluation report. On balance we consider that it clearly demonstrates that the locally based WA-NDIS model, with even with its need for further improvements, is the best current fit within the Western Australian context.

Nulsen considers that its past advocacy was well placed and is willing to continue its active participation in order to progress all the required and recommended changes in policy and process in order to develop the best system possible for the long-term future.

A series of events will take place soon with the view of further developing the WA-NDIS in partnership with people with disability, families and carers. And information sessions are already planned by WA NDIS which you can find details of and register for via the [WA Disability Services Commission website](#).

You can read the report and make up your own mind, please refer to the Executive Summary and Evaluation Report which are available on the [WA Disability Services Commission website](#). And best of luck separating the key messages from the background noise!