



**Government of
South Australia**

Safeguarding Task Force

A report about our work so far

15 June 2020

Easy Read version



How to use this document



The South Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHS) wrote this document. When you see the word 'we', it means DHS.



We have written this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Not bold
Bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 32.



This Easy Read document is a summary of another document. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find the other document on our website at dhs.sa.gov.au/latest-news/safeguarding-taskforce



You can ask for help to read this document. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What's in this document?

What is the Safeguarding Task Force?	4
What does the Task Force do?	8
What is this report about?	9
The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	10
The NDIS Commission	15
The SA Government	19
What has the Task Force learned?	24
Our recommendations	27
What happens next?	29
Word list	32
Contact us	34

What is the Safeguarding Task Force?



We set up the Safeguarding Task Force in May 2020.

We call it the Task Force.



If you are **vulnerable**, you might be in danger of:

- being hurt
- getting sick
- someone taking advantage of you.

You can become vulnerable if you:



- need a lot of support



- have a disability that affects the way you think and learn and what you can understand



- don't have or earn very much money



- live in a home that isn't safe



- don't have a close connection to your family, friends or the services you need.

The Task Force includes:



- people with disability



- family members of people with disability



- service providers



- people who work for the SA Government



- advocates.



Advocates are people who speak up for:

- people with disability when they can't speak up for themselves
- the **rights** of people with disability.



Rights are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.



Advocates also help people with disability speak up for themselves.

What does the Task Force do?



The Task Force looks at what can make some people with disability vulnerable sometimes.



Safeguarding is what we do to keep people with disability safe when they use disability services.

The Task Force looks at what:



- safeguards we already have to protect people with disability



- what other safeguards we need to make people with disability safer.

What is this report about?



This report talks about some problems the Task Force has found.



We call these safeguarding gaps, or just gaps.



We talk about these gaps in more detail on the following pages.

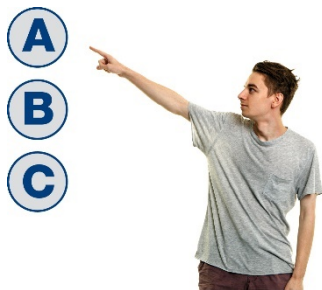
The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)



The Task Force has found gaps with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



The NDIS has changed the way people with disability in Australia get supports and services.



NDIS **participants** have choice and control over what supports and services they use.



Participants are people with disability who have an NDIS plan.



The NDIS works well for most participants.

But it can be very hard for some people with disability to:



- understand how to use the NDIS
- manage their NDIS Plan
- get the help they need.



It can also be hard to understand what people with different jobs at the NDIS do.



For example, Local Area Coordinators (LAC) should help NDIS participants find and use the supports and services they need.



Planners should make sure a participant's NDIS Plan has the supports and services they need.



Plan Managers should pay for the supports and services in the NDIS Plan.



Support Coordinators should help participants manage the supports and services in their NDIS plan.



But less than 40% of NDIS Plans include funding for NDIS participants to get help from a Support Coordinator.



There are also strict rules about which participants can get help from a Support Coordinator.



The Task Force has found other gaps with the NDIS.



NDIS Plans don't say if a participant might be vulnerable.

This means they might not get all the support they need.



NDIS Plans need to include all the supports and services a participant needs, such as:

- health care
- dental care
- mental health care
- sexual health
- aids and equipment they need.



A Support Coordinator might:

- work for a service provider that offers other disability supports
- only offer supports for participants from the service provider where they work.



Vulnerable participants need extra support to take part in their community.



They need to be looked after first.



Vulnerable participants need LACs to help them do this.

The NDIS Commission



The Task Force has found gaps with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission).

It's the NDIS Commission's job to:



- look at what service providers are doing and how well they are doing it

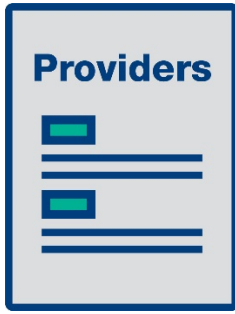


- handle **complaints** about service providers.



When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



The NDIS Commission keeps a list of which service providers can offer supports and services to participants.

We call these registered service providers.



It can take a lot of work and a long time for service providers to become registered.



Some service providers aren't registered.

They don't have to follow some of the same rules as registered service providers.



Participants who manage their own NDIS plans or have Plan Managers can choose whether or not to use service providers that are on the list.



If something goes wrong, the participant has to contact the NDIS Commission themselves.



The NDIS Commission keeps a record of things that have gone wrong.



This includes times when participants have been hurt or injured.



It isn't clear what the NDIS Commission should do when they are told something has gone wrong.



There is a gap in visits to service providers to see how well things are going.



The NDIS Commission needs to think about what risks there are when participants use service providers that aren't on the list.



Participants who need personal care in their home should have at least 2 support workers who can help them.



The 2 support workers don't have to be there at the same time.



But they do need someone to check the work they do from time to time.

The SA Government



The Task Force has found gaps with the SA Government.



The SA Government provides health care services.

Vulnerable people with disability need:



- a health check each year



- support to get to health care appointments.



- to see a doctor they know and trust



- a plan for how to manage their health care.



Vulnerable participants need support to coordinate the health care in their NDIS plan.



The SA Government has an Adult Safeguarding Unit who work at the Office for Ageing Well.

The Adult Safeguarding Unit:



- tries to find out more when they hear stories about older adults being hurt or treated badly



- supports adults who have been hurt or treated badly and protects their rights



- talks to the community about how to protect adults who might be hurt or treated badly.



From June 2022, the Adult Safeguarding Unit will be able to protect all vulnerable adults.

We want this to happen sooner.



The SA Government checks support workers to make sure they have not:

- hurt anyone
- broken the law.



Registered service providers must make sure all their workers are checked.



Service providers that aren't registered don't have to make sure all their workers are checked.



Even if workers are checked, vulnerable people with disability might still be at risk.



We need to know if a worker might put vulnerable people with disability at risk.

The Community Visitor Scheme



Community Visitors are trained **volunteers**.



Volunteers are people who work without getting paid. They often do work that helps others.

Community Visitors



- go into homes for people with disability run by the SA Government



- check to make sure people with disability are safe in homes run by the SA Government.



We call this the Community Visitor Scheme.



Community Visitors can't go into homes for people with disability not run by the SA Government.



But the NDIS Commission can.



We need the Community Visitor Scheme to protect vulnerable people with disability.



We need to work out how the Community Visitor Scheme and the NDIS Commission can work together.

What has the Task Force learned?



We know the best safeguard for vulnerable people is having:

- other people in their life
- the care and support they need.



Vulnerable people with disability need support workers who will:

- look after them
- help keep them safe.

NDIA

→ NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) runs the NDIS.

The NDIA needs to:



- know when participants are vulnerable



- make sure vulnerable participants have support coordination in their NDIS plans



- make sure participants get everything they need from their NDIS plans.



The NDIS Commission needs to listen when anyone tells them:

- someone is vulnerable
- something is wrong.



The NDIS Commission needs to listen to what safeguards people with disability want.



The SA Government needs to make sure vulnerable people can get the health care checks they need.



The Adult Safeguarding Unit should be able to protect all vulnerable adults.



The Community Visitor Scheme can be a safeguard for vulnerable people with disability.

Our recommendations



The Task Force has some **recommendations**.



Recommendations are ideas about what we think should happen to make things better.



We should talk to the Australian Government about the safeguarding gaps the Task Force has found.



We should make sure vulnerable participants get the health care checks they need.



We should let the Adult Safeguarding Unit protect any vulnerable adults, including people with disability.



We should look at the rules about sharing information about worker checks.



We should make sure the Community Visitor Scheme and the NDIS Commission can work together.

What happens next?



We know the Task Force still has more work to do.

The Task Force needs to find the gaps for:



- LGBTQIA+ people with disability



- Aboriginal people with disability



- children and young people with disability



- people with disability who come from other cultures and speak languages other than English.



The Task Force will write another report when they finish their work.

That report will be about teaching people with disability:



- how to know if they become vulnerable



- what to do if they become vulnerable



- how to speak up if they become vulnerable



- how to safeguard themselves.

That report will also be about:



- giving people with disability a chance to live a good life so they don't become vulnerable



- how the government can stop people with disability becoming vulnerable



- how the government can better support vulnerable people with disability.



The Task Force will give their next report to the government in July 2020.

Word list



Advocates

Advocates are people who speak up for:

- people with disability when they can't speak up for themselves
- the rights of people with disability.

Advocates also help people with disability speak up for themselves.



Complaint

When you make a complaint, you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.



Participants

Participants are people with disability who have an NDIS plan.



Recommendations

Recommendations are ideas about what we think should happen to make things better.



Rights

Rights are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is what we do to keep people with disability safe when they use disability services.



Volunteers

Volunteers are people who work without getting paid. They often do work that helps others.



Vulnerable

If you are vulnerable, you might be in danger of:

- being hurt
- getting sick
- someone taking advantage of you.

Contact us



(08) 8413 9050



disability.advocate@sa.gov.au



GPO Box 292

Adelaide SA 5001



dhs.sa.gov.au/latest-news/safeguarding-taskforce



The Information Access Group created this Easy Read document using stock photography and custom images. The images may not be reused without permission. For any enquiries about the images, please visit **www.informationaccessgroup.com**. Quote job number 3618.