

# the **GrowingSpace**

## **Easy Read Summary**

### **Sam Paior's letter to the Senate**

About the new NDIS law



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# About this paper



This is an Easy Read paper.  
It uses easy words and pictures.  
It is about a new law in Australia.  
The law will change the NDIS.



The NDIS helps people with disability.  
It pays for support so people can live a good life.  
More than half a million people are on the NDIS.



The full name of the law is long.  
It is the NDIS Future Generations Bill 2026 .  
The Senate is looking at the law.  
The Senate wants to hear what people think.



Sam Paior wrote a long letter to the Senate.  
Her letter has 35 ideas to make the law better.  
This Easy Read paper lists each of her ideas.  
Each idea has 2 parts.



Part 1 says: What is the problem?

Part 2 says: What we think could fix it.

Hard words have a list at the back.

The list is called a Hard Words Glossary.

# About Sam Paior



Hi. My name is Sam Paior.

I run a small business called The Growing Space.

We help people on the NDIS and their families.

I am also a mum to 2 young adults.



Both of my kids are on the NDIS.

One has Down syndrome and autism.

One has a brain injury.

I work with many other people on the NDIS too.



I talk to lots of people in our community.

More than 9,600 people have shared worries with me.

I read the new law and many other papers.

This Easy Read shares what I learned.



I want the NDIS to last for many years.

But this new law has problems.

The Senate should fix the problems first.

My ideas to fix the law are below.

# Part 1. People already on the NDIS



Some parts of the new law worry me.  
I will share 9 problems in this part.  
Each one has my idea to fix it.

## Idea 1. Stop cuts to plans without talking to us



### What is the problem?

The Minister can cut part of your plan.  
First they will cut social and community  
funding.  
This funding helps you leave the house.  
It helps you visit family or go to the shop.  
You will not be allowed to ask for a review.



### What we think could fix it

Talk to disabled people before any cuts.  
Show how the cuts will hurt people.  
Let people ask for a review if cuts hurt them.

## Idea 2. Protect people with high support needs



### What is the problem?

Some people need help every minute of the day.

Their support keeps them safe.

Some need help with breathing or eating.

A cut could leave them with no help at all.

People could get hurt or even die.



### What we think could fix it

Do not cut funding for people with very high needs.

Give them a safe rule that stops the cut.

Make sure they always have safe support.

## Idea 3. Put cap numbers in the law



### What is the problem?

The Minister can set a cap on supports.

A cap is the most you can get.

The cap number can be hidden in another paper.

The Parliament will not see when it changes.



### What we think could fix it

Write the cap number into the main law.

Then everyone can see it.

The Parliament can vote to stop a bad change.

## Idea 4. Keep the whole-of-person rule



### What is the problem?

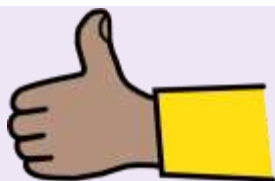
Many people have more than one disability.

These disabilities mix together.

The new law adds the word 'directly'.

This word is a big wall.

It will stop some support from being funded.

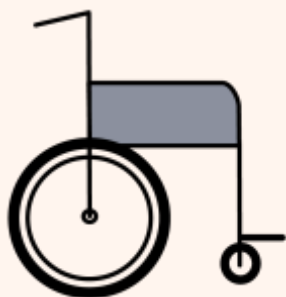


### What we think could fix it

Take out the word 'directly' from the law.

Look at the whole person, not just one part.

## Idea 5. Do not lose funds for things on order



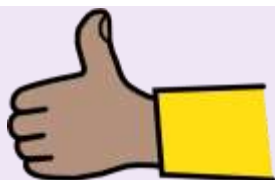
### What is the problem?

Sometimes you order something big like a wheelchair.

It can take many months to arrive.

Your plan ends and a new one starts.

Under the new law, the money for it will be lost.

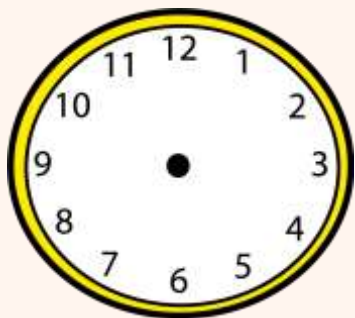


### What we think could fix it

Let the money carry over to the new plan.

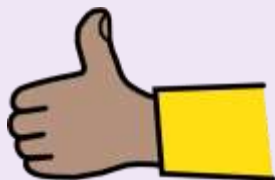
Keep it until the item arrives and is paid for.

## Idea 6. Keep fast review times when life changes



### What is the problem?

Sometimes you need to change your plan early.  
Now the NDIA can take 90 days to decide.  
That is too long when life has changed.  
There is no safety net if they miss the time.



### What we think could fix it

Keep the old time of 21 days.  
If they miss the time, your change is accepted.  
Count changes in family help, even if not planned.

## Idea 7. Make an emergency plan review



### What is the problem?

Sometimes things go very wrong fast.  
You might lose your home.  
Your support team might fall apart.  
Waiting 90 days could mean real harm.



### What we think could fix it

Make a fast pathway just for emergencies.  
Decide within 14 days.  
If they miss the time, you get a yes.

## Idea 8. Stop plans being cut off by surprise



### What is the problem?

The NDIA can try to ring you a few times.

If they cannot reach you, they can stop your plan.

You might be sick in hospital.

You might be on holiday for 2 weeks.

You might be grieving a loved one.



### What we think could fix it

They must try every way you have given.

Phone, email, post and emergency contact.

Try for at least 60 days.

Pause the clock if you are in hospital or grieving.

## Idea 9. Limit the Minister's special rule power



### What is the problem?

The new law gives the Minister a big power.

They can change parts of the NDIS for 12 months.

But rules made this way can last much longer.

The disability community may not be asked.



### **What we think could fix it**

Only allow this power for set topics.

Make the time shorter.

Talk to disabled people first.

Show how the rule will affect people.

## Part 2. People trying to join the NDIS



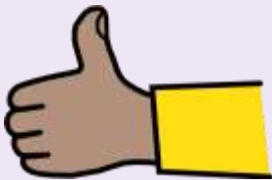
This part is about getting onto the NDIS.  
I will share 6 problems.  
Each one has my idea to fix it.

### Idea 10. Slow down the new test



#### What is the problem?

The new law has a new test for joining the NDIS.  
The test looks at you with no help at all.  
It ignores your home and your life.  
The test tool has not been made yet.  
But the rules want to start it very soon.



#### What we think could fix it

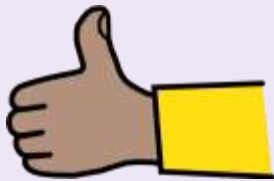
Wait to start the test.  
Show the test tool to the public first.  
Ask disabled people for their thoughts.  
Try it out with many groups before using it.

## Idea 11. Be fair about treatment you can get



### What is the problem?

The new law says you must try treatment first.  
But it ignores if the treatment is far away.  
It ignores if you cannot pay for it.  
It ignores long waiting lists.  
This hurts people in country towns the most.



### What we think could fix it

Look at what each person can really do.  
Think about where they live.  
Think about cost and wait lists.  
Think about other things that block access.

## Idea 12. Make 'materially improve' clear



### What is the problem?

The law uses the words 'materially improve'.  
But it does not say what these words mean.  
A small change could lock you out of the NDIS.  
Even if you still really need help.



### What we think could fix it

Write a clear meaning in the law.  
A small change must not be enough to lock you out.  
You should keep your NDIS plan.

## Idea 13. Keep help for people who will get worse



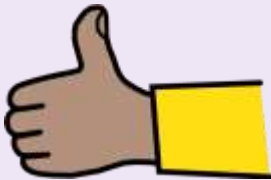
### What is the problem?

Some people have a condition that gets worse over time.

Examples are MND, MS and Parkinson's.

The new law makes it harder for them to get help.

The new word 'reducing' is too strong.



### What we think could fix it

Keep the old words 'mitigating or alleviating'.

These words help people get the support they need.

## Idea 14. Be fair about old car or work payouts



### What is the problem?

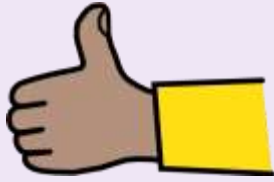
Some people got hurt in a car or at work long ago.

They got a payout.

Maybe they used the money to buy a home.

The new law could lock them out of the NDIS.

They may have no money left.

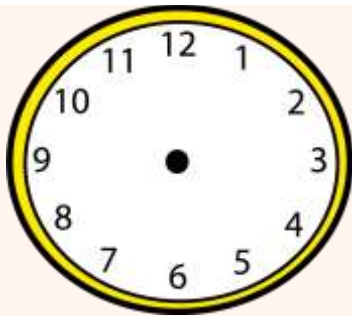


### **What we think could fix it**

Only block them if the payout pays for their needs.

Ask disabled people before making this rule.  
Ask First Nations people too.

## **Idea 15. Keep the 21 day wait to join**

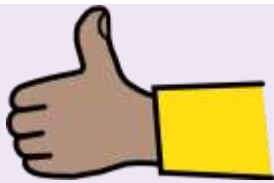


### **What is the problem?**

Now the NDIA takes 21 days to decide if you can join.

The new law makes it 90 days.

That is 10 extra weeks with no support.



### **What we think could fix it**

Keep the old time of 21 days.

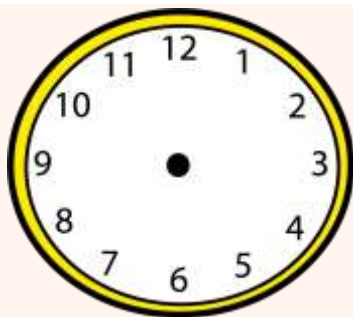
People need help fast.

## Part 3. People who self-manage



Some people manage their own NDIS money.  
Some hire their own support workers.  
I will share 3 problems for these people.

### Idea 16. Keep more time to send claims



#### What is the problem?

Now you have 2 years to claim back money.  
The new law makes it only 90 days.  
What if you are in hospital?  
What if your family has an emergency?



#### What we think could fix it

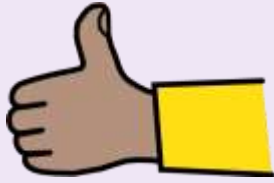
Keep at least 6 months to claim.  
Allow more time for emergencies.  
Be kind to people doing self-management.

### Idea 17. Be fair about missing paperwork



#### What is the problem?

You must keep records for 3 years.  
Nominees must keep them for 5 years.  
If a paper is missing, you owe back the money.  
You cannot ask for a review.



### **What we think could fix it**

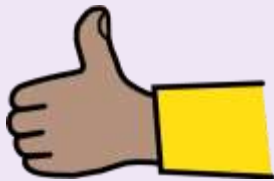
Add a fair excuse if there is a good reason.  
Match the rules used in Centrelink.  
Check first if the money was really wrong.

## **Idea 18. Do not punish family nominees**



### **What is the problem?**

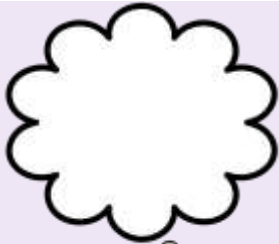
A nominee helps a loved one with their NDIS.  
Many are unpaid family members.  
The new law could fine them in court.  
That is too much for someone helping with love.



### **What we think could fix it**

Take out the new fine for nominees.  
Or add a safe rule for people doing their best.  
Protect unpaid family helpers.

## Part 4. Things missing from the law



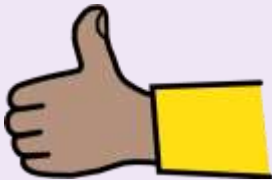
Some big things are missing from the law.  
I will share 5 ideas to add.  
These would help many people.

### Idea 19. Let people check before they buy



#### What is the problem?

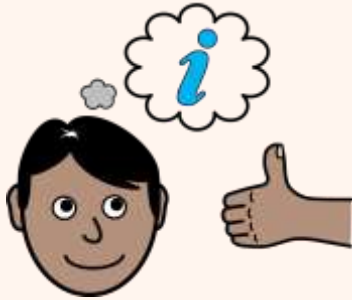
There is no way to check if you can buy a support.  
You spend the money and hope for the best.  
Even staff give different answers.  
If the NDIA later says no, you owe the money back.



#### What we think could fix it

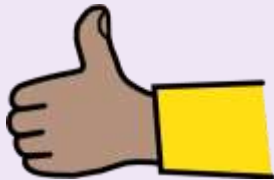
Make a clear way to ask before you buy.  
If the NDIA says yes in writing, that yes must stand.  
Set a time limit for them to answer.

## Idea 20. Keep promises in writing



### What is the problem?

Sometimes the NDIA writes a yes in a letter.  
Later they can change their mind.  
Then you owe back all the money.  
That is not fair.



### What we think could fix it

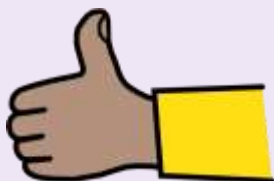
If the NDIA says yes in writing, keep their word.  
Do not make you pay back money for their mistake.

## Idea 21. Let people ask for a review



### What is the problem?

Sometimes the NDIA takes back money you spent.  
You cannot ask a tribunal to look at the choice.  
You have no fair way to fight it.



### What we think could fix it

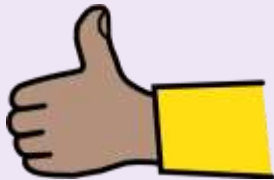
Let people ask for a review.  
Set time limits for the NDIA to act.  
Treat people fairly.

## Idea 22. Make all NDIS papers Easy Read



### What is the problem?

The NDIS sends out lots of papers.  
Many people cannot read them.  
They miss important news about their plan.  
The NDIA does not have to make Easy Read papers.



### What we think could fix it

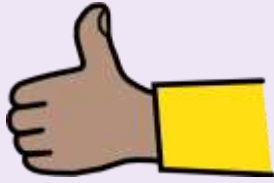
Make Easy Read the law.  
Give people help to understand their plan.  
Use supported decision-making.  
All of this should be free.

## Idea 23. Let people swap to cheaper helpful things



### What is the problem?

Some things on the 'not on list' list could really help.  
Like an app that reminds you to brush your teeth.  
A few hours with a lawyer to check work papers.  
These cost less than other supports.  
The rules do not let you swap to them.



### **What we think could fix it**

Let people swap to a cheaper helpful thing.  
If it works the same or better, let it be paid.  
Allow a review if the NDIA says no.

## Part 5. NDIS providers



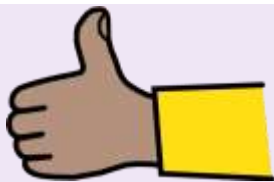
Providers give support to NDIS people.  
I will share 2 problems for providers.  
These also help everyone in the NDIS.

### Idea 24. Have one safety team, not two



#### What is the problem?

Right now we have the NDIS Commission.  
They check providers and keep people safe.  
The new law adds a second team at the NDIA.  
Two teams cost more money.  
They might give different answers.



#### What we think could fix it

Keep just one team to do this work.  
The NDIS Commission already does it well.

## Idea 25. Let an outside group set prices



### What is the problem?

Now the Minister will set the price for NDIS supports.

But politicians might change prices for the wrong reasons.

Prices could be too low for safe care.



### What we think could fix it

Let the IHACPA group set the prices.

They already set prices for hospitals and aged care.

This was the idea from the big NDIS Review.

## Part 6. Big changes to fair funding



These changes are very big.  
I will share 8 problems.  
They change how the NDIS decides what to pay for.

### Idea 26. Keep choice and control in the law



#### What is the problem?

The new law puts money first.  
It removes the rule about choice and control.  
This sends the message that disabled people are a burden.  
That is a bad shift in how the law thinks.



#### What we think could fix it

Make money one part, not the boss.  
Keep choice and control in the law.  
Treat people as people, not as costs.

### Idea 27. Count lived experience as evidence



#### What is the problem?

The new law puts research at the top.  
But many disabilities do not have big research.  
New supports do not have research yet.  
Your own life and your doctor are not counted enough.



### **What we think could fix it**

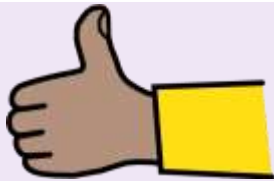
Count lived experience as proper evidence.  
Count what your doctor sees too.  
Do not block support just because research is missing.

## **Idea 28. Cheaper must still do the same job**



### **What is the problem?**

The new law looks for cheaper supports.  
But it dropped the rule about same results.  
A cheaper support might not help you the same way.



### **What we think could fix it**

Put back the rule about same results.  
A cheaper option must do the same job.

## **Idea 29. Be fair to parents and families**



### **What is the problem?**

The new law says parents should do most care.  
But it does not say what a normal parent does.  
It forgets parents who have a disability too.  
It forgets families with more than one disabled child.



### **What we think could fix it**

Compare to what any parent would do at that age.

Think about the parent's own health.

Think about the whole family load.

## **Idea 30. Protect dignity in personal care**



### **What is the problem?**

The new law says family must help first.

Only if there is harm will paid help be given.

This places a heavy load on family carers.

It can also take away dignity in personal care.



### **What we think could fix it**

Think about dignity and choice.

Think about the carer getting tired or old.

Protect intimate personal care choices.

Keep paying for capacity-building.

## Idea 31. Other services must really exist



### What is the problem?

The NDIA can send you to another system.

Like the health system.

But that other system might not give you the help.

You could wait years.



### What we think could fix it

Only send people to a service that is real.

It must be open and ready for them.

It must be fast enough to help.

## Idea 32. Make NDIS rules open and clear

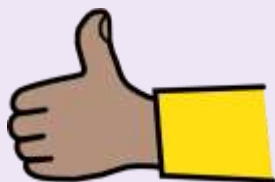


### What is the problem?

The new NDIS plans use a computer to set budgets.

The computer rules can change at any time.

The Parliament will not see when this happens.



### What we think could fix it

Publish the rules and the technical report.

Make the Parliament able to vote on changes.

Talk to disabled people before any change.

## Idea 33. Tell us how the NDIS is going



### What is the problem?

We do not know how the NDIS is going.  
Not much data is shared with the public.  
Now computers will make more choices.  
We need to see what is happening.



### What we think could fix it

Share data every 3 months.  
Show how many claims are knocked back.  
Show safety problems and missed help.  
Show data for First Nations and CALD people.

## Part 7. Computers making choices



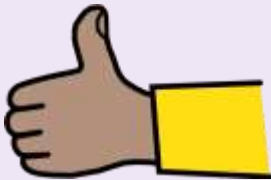
The new law lets computers make choices.  
I will share 2 ideas.  
These choices must be safe and fair.

### Idea 34. Make safe rules for computer choices



#### What is the problem?

Computers will look at claims and plans soon.  
The safety rules are not strong in law.  
We have seen this go wrong before.  
It was called Robodebt.



#### What we think could fix it

A real person must check any bad choice.  
Hold off using computers until rules are strong.  
Test the safety rules first.

### Idea 35. Check the law after 2 years



#### What is the problem?

No one knows what all these changes will do.  
Some changes could really hurt people.  
We need to check what is happening.



## **What we think could fix it**

Look at the law after 2 years.

Talk to disabled people during the review.

Share the results with Parliament.

If people are being hurt, fix the law.

# My final words



I want the NDIS to last a long time.

I support that big goal.

But the law has problems.

I want the Senate to fix the 35 things above.

Strong laws protect people now and in the future.



I would like to talk to the Senate about my ideas.

You can email me at  
[info@thegrowingspace.com.au](mailto:info@thegrowingspace.com.au)

Thank you for reading my Easy Read paper.

# Hard Words Glossary

These are words from the paper.

Here is what they mean.

**NDIS:** A scheme that pays for disability support.

**Senate:** A group of people who check new laws.

**Bill:** A new law before it is voted on.

**Participant:** A person on the NDIS.

**Nominee:** A person who helps you with NDIS.

**Provider:** A person or group that gives support.

**NDIA:** The team that runs the NDIS.

**NDIS Commission:** The team that keeps NDIS people safe.

**Minister:** A leader in the government.

**Plan:** A list of supports paid by the NDIS.

**Cap:** The most you can get.

**Funding:** Money to pay for supports.

**Eligibility:** Who can join the NDIS.

**Assessment:** A check on what help you need.

**Reassessment:** A new check on your plan.

**Revocation:** When the NDIA stops your plan.

**Suspension:** When the NDIA puts your plan on hold.

**Claim:** Asking the NDIS to pay back money.

**Debt:** Money the NDIA says you owe.

**Review:** A check by someone else.

**Tribunal:** A place that checks unfair choices.

**Advocacy:** Speaking up for someone.

**Supported decision-making:** Help to choose for yourself.

**Automated:** Done by a computer.

**Self-manage:** When you look after your own NDIS money.

**Easy Read:** Short words with pictures.

**Compensation:** Money paid for an injury.

**First Nations:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**CALD:** People from many cultures and languages.

**Cohort:** A group of people.

**Sustainable:** Can keep going for a long time.

**Functional capacity:** What you can or cannot do.

**Peer-reviewed:** Checked by other experts.

**Materially improve:** Make a real and noticeable change.

**Safe harbour:** A safe rule that protects you.

**Robodebt:** Past computer mistakes that hurt many people.

**Parliament:** All our elected leaders together.

**Replacement Supports:** Swapping one support for another.

**IHACPA:** A group that sets fair prices for care.

# Important notes

**Make it easy does not give health, legal or any other professional advice. Check with a Professional.**

**Make it easy can make mistakes. Check important info.**

Easy Read by The Growing Space  
info@thegrowingspace.com.au

the  
**GrowingSpace**