



Disability

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ **Blue Mountains City's disability statistics relate directly to need for assistance due to a severe or profound disability**
 - this data helps in understanding the prevalence of people who need significant support in the community.
- ▶ 4.5% of the population of the Blue Mountains reported (2011 Census) needing assistance with core daily activities, compared with 4.4% for Greater Sydney.
- ▶ Elizabeth Evatt Legal Centre reports that 25% of their advices are given to people who identify as having a disability.
- ▶ **According to a PwC report into disability in Australia released in 2011, Australians with a disability are some of the most disadvantaged people in our community, with 45% of those with a disability living in or near a state of poverty**
- this is more than 2.5 times the rate of poverty experienced in the general population.
- ▶ The 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers estimated that 4.2 million Australians, or 18.5% of the population, had a disability.
- ▶ The survey also found that 2.7 million Australians provided informal care to an older person or person with a disability, with 29% identifying themselves as the primary carer.
- ▶ Every week, five Australians sustain a spinal cord injury; every 7 hours, a child is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder; and every 15 hours, a child is born with cerebral palsy.

DID YOU KNOW?

The **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)** is a Commonwealth scheme, being rolled out across Australia to give people living with disability access to the support they need.

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is the agency responsible for coordinating the NDIS, registering service providers, conducting planning meetings for clients and implementing the scheme on a national scale. There are currently pilot or trial sites up and running in every state except Queensland.

Sites will be gradually phased in until the whole country is able to access the scheme by 2018. The schedule for the full transition has not yet been released by the government.

Clients will be able to choose the providers they want to work with. This is different to the way many programs have been funded previously - block funding allocated to agencies will be replaced by client-managed individualised packages/services.

Our Goals

- 👁️ **Implement a new community model to better connect people with a disability and their families and carers to opportunities to participate in their local community.**
- 👁️ Provide people with a disability and their carers with **person-centred services and training and individualise funding and service agreements.**
- 👁️ To support people with a disability and their carers to **transition to the NDIS** by contributing to sector capacity building, promoting community education and engagement about the NDIS, and ensuring all people with a disability have equal access to support and information to inform their choices.
- 👁️ Provide support for adolescents with a disability and their families through a range of targeted services and opportunities to improve social engagement and inclusion.
- 👁️ Support **transitioning of people with a disability from school to further education and /or employment** and ongoing disability awareness for schools, education institutions and employers.

Our Goals (cont.):

- 👁️ Promotion of accessible public transport infrastructure and amenities for people with a disability, their carers and families - given the topography of the Mountains, with 27 separate settlements.
- 👁️ Given the significant differences in socio-economic and health status between the Upper and Lower Mountains, ensure services and activities for people with a disability and their families are accessible across the Mountains.
- 👁️ Ensure activities are affordable given we know that people with a disability are more likely to have a low income/live below the poverty line.
- 👁️ As the sector changes, ensure we meet the needs of people with a disability who will not qualify for services under the NDIS.

What We're Doing to Achieve Our Goals

- 📌 **A monthly Community Care Forum** (information and resource) for the ageing and disability sectors is held at

Lawson. This is facilitated by Blue Mountains City Council and the Western Sydney Community Forum.

- 📌 **Nepean Communities in Practice, Person-Centred Approach Workshops** have run in the Blue Mountains every three months during the past year. The plan is for the Communities in Practice to continue, with disability services taking on the coordination and facilitation of the workshops.
- 📌 The **Focus on Early Childhood Inclusion project** has been running for 18 months. This is a capacity-building project with workshops every three months for the Blue Mountains. There are two more workshops funded.
- 📌 The **Early Childhood Intervention Co-ordination Project** meets quarterly at Springwood. This is an interagency program to coordinate services to children with a disability 0-8 years.
- 📌 Linkers for the Blue Mountains have been employed under the **Ability Links** program.
- 📌 People with a disability can now self-manage their funding under the **Living Life My Way** reforms.

✓ **How is State Government Contributing to These Achievements?**

- ✓ The State Government Department of Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care funds initiatives that promote sector capacity building and person-centred services for people with a disability. It is also the lead agency in implementing the NDIS reforms. The State Government introduced the **Disability Inclusion Bill** in May 2014. The main purpose of the Act is to enhance protections and enshrine the rights of people with a disability into NSW law, during the implementation and following full transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS.) When the Bill is enacted it will replace the Disability Services Act 1993 which has provided the main legal foundation for regulating supports, services and funding for people with a disability during the past 21 years.
- ✓ **Living Life My Way:** Living Life My Way is helping people with disability across NSW to get ready for the move to the NDIS by:
 - supporting people to transition to individualised funding arrangements wherever possible;
 - increasing flexibility for current disability service users to exercise choice and control over their supports; and
 - delivering support planning and individual capacity building programs for people with disability to get ready for the change.
- ✓ **Ability Links NSW:** Ability Links NSW is a new way to support people with disability, their families and carers as part of the ongoing reforms of the disability service system in NSW. Ability Links is the NSW approach to local area coordination and is an important part of reshaping and improving the way people with disability, their families and carers in NSW are supported, placing them at the centre of decision-making.

