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Government tackles NDIS market with sector engagement

The Morrison Government today encouraged the disability sector, people with disability, and their families and carers to share their insights on ways to improve the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) market.

Minister for Families and Social Services, Paul Fletcher, said an online consultation that opened today is part of the Government's multi-faceted approach to addressing supply gaps or 'thin markets' in the NDIS.

"The NDIS is clearly changing lives. The latest NDIS quarterly data released in February shows that close to one in three people entering the scheme are receiving disability supports for the first time," Mr Fletcher said.

"We also know that across different parts of Australia, both in highly urbanised centres and in the most remote regions, thin markets exist," Mr Fletcher said.

"Thin markets may occur in certain locations, for example where people live in regions with few or no service providers, or in different support types or participant cohorts, such as participants with certain specialised support needs.

"As the NDIS rolls out nationally, it must continue to evolve and improve so participants have access to quality services with greater choice and control," Mr Fletcher said

"While 'thin markets' have always existed in the disability sector, the Government is taking action.

"The Government recently announced an \$850 million a year injection into the NDIS market to grow the NDIS services market and increase the choices available for NDIS participants to meet their goals.

Assistant Minister for Social Services, Housing and Disability Services, Sarah Henderson, said the stakeholder engagement activities are part of the Government's NDIS Thin Markets Project led by Ernst and Young with partner, First Peoples Disability Network.

“The thin markets discussion paper and online survey published on the Engage website from tomorrow will be followed by 24 face-to-face targeted consultations with providers and peak organisations in capital cities, regional centres and remote Australia,” Ms Henderson said.

“The feedback from these activities will generate innovative approaches to solve service delivery gaps which will ultimately inform policy direction, including a framework for market design and responses in thin markets, and trial projects to test solutions.

“The Government recognises that ‘thin markets’ is a complex issue existing in diverse locations with people with a range of needs requiring more than a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach,” Ms Henderson said.

The Government has also recently announced a package of measures to foster market growth including:

- the NDIS Demand Map, which projects local demand for disability services under the NDIS
- the Boosting the Local Care Workforce website, which provides resources for providers to adapt to the scheme
- \$5.6 million in Transition Assistance Funding to support businesses transition to the NDIS
- the first round of projects funded through the Jobs and Market Fund, which will address collective market and workforce challenges in the NDIS.

“These initiatives will support new providers wanting to enter the NDIS market and also help existing NDIS providers sustain or expand their services,” Ms Henderson said.

For more information

To respond to the Thin Markets Discussion Paper and take the online survey until 17 May 2019 go to: engage.dss.gov.au/

Find the NDIS Demand Map at the Boosting Local Care Workforce website blcw.dss.gov.au/

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