Web watch

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DISABILITIES AND THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

ABOUT THE SCHEME

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012* (Cth) passed through Parliament to little fanfare on 21 March 2013 after the acceptance of amendments made in the Senate (http://jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/node/2281). The Bill establishes the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) (to be called DisabilityCare Australia) and the NDIS Launch Transition Agency. Budgetary information is at http://jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/node/1875 and http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview201213/NDIS.

The NDIS will provide people with disabilities with more control over their care. The person's needs and goals will form the basis of his or her funded NDIS support package.

About 26,000 people with disabilities, their families and carers will benefit from the first stage of the NDIS from 1 July 2013. The NDIS website (http://www.ndis.gov.au) provides information on, or links to:
* news about the NDIS
* a number of discussion forums with specific timeframes (many have closed)
* recruitment information
* draft legislation (first and third readings, and the Bill as passed by both houses), an overview of the legislation, transcripts of speeches and explanatory memoranda (http://aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bId=r4946)
* NDIS Draft Rules (for children, for becoming a participant, for nominees and more at http://yoursay.ndis.gov.au/document/index/11). This section also includes an "easy read" paper explaining the NDIS Rules (http://yoursay.ndis.gov.au/document/show/19, a downloadable PDF).

BACKGROUND DISCUSSIONS ON THE SCHEME

Anne Manne[1] made the case for an NDIS in August 2011, writing that "[o]ur country has never been wealthier, yet disability services are rationed tighter than petrol in Britain during the Blitz. Funding is a lottery" and "[p]eople battle for years through what one submission to the inquiry aptly called the 'confusopoly' – the labyrinth of bureaucratic red tape you must navigate to gain even the most basic help. People are pitted against one another in a competitive system, a 'misery olympics'." She wrote "[i]t needs a big idea" and that is what the NDIS is.

Articles on *The Conversation* commentary website (http://theconversation.com) have discussed aspects of the NDIS including:
* Chris Boyle discussed the extension of the NDIS to schools to support students with special needs (15 May 2012)
* Donna McDonald discussed ageism in the NDIS (31 January 2013)
* Matthew Yau discussed coverage of the services of sex workers by the NDIS (14 March 2013)
* Donna McDonald discussed the implementation plans for the first stage of the NDIS, which covers small trials for different age groups in Newcastle, South Australia, Tasmania and the Barwon area of Victoria (28 March 2013).

Moira Byrne tells her personal story of caring for a child with significant physical and intellectual disabilities and chronicles the variability of service provision in different States and Territories (http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/love-and-disability-a-mothers-story/501).

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[*] All websites viewed April 2013.

[1] Manne A, "Two Nations: The Case for a National Disability Insurance Scheme", *The Monthly* (August 2011), http://www.themonthly.com.au/case-national-disability-insurance-scheme-two-nations-anne-manne-3636.

Ellen Fanning describes John Della Bosca's work in support of the NDIS (http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/hidden-in-plain-sight-part-two/153). He says that soon after he became Minister for Disabilities he was asked to meet with a parents group. When he entered a room full of people in their 70s and 80s he thought he was in the wrong place, but discovered that these were the elderly parents of children with disabilities, concerned about what would happen to their children when both parents had died. Della Bosca promoted the idea of a no-fault insurance scheme for disabled people, where people receive the support they need whether they had been injured in a motor vehicle accident or at home, or whether they had been born with, or acquired, a disability.

Vision Australia has provided a list of Frequently Asked Questions on the NDIS (http://www.visionaustralia.org/about-us/national-disability-insurance-scheme/faq%27s-on-the-ndis) covering topics such as:

- the status of the NDIS
- how it will work and whether there will be any costs
- how it will impact on existing services
- who will be eligible and how people will be assessed
- the launch sites
- Vision Australia and the NDIS
- seniors and the NDIS
- brokerage services (registered plan management providers).

LIBRARIES AND DISABILITIES

Libraries have a role in providing information about disabilities to all people, and in supporting people with disabilities in their use of libraries.

ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association) has a policy on library and information services for people with a disability (http://www.alia.org.au/policies/disabilities.html) which aims to promote and improve services. It is based on "the right of people with a disability to equitable access to information through all library and information services".

ALIA also publishes guidelines on library standards for people with disabilities (http://alia.org.au/policies/disability.standards.html). These guidelines provide practical information on:

- planning and evaluation
- access provisions
- provision of appropriate resources
- provision of appropriate services.

The Twila Ann Janssen Herr Research Award for Disability Services is open to personal financial members of ALIA early in their careers. It provides the opportunity to undertake a project in the area of library and information services for people with a disability (http://www.alia.org.au/awards/herr.disability).

Open Road, part of the State Library of Victoria, provides disability awareness information online at http://www.openroad.net.au/access/dakit. The site is divided into three sections:

- core information and handouts (including words used to describe disability, expectations of people with disabilities, interacting with people with disabilities and assisting people with disabilities)
- suggested activities (analysing depictions of people with disabilities in the media, and matching the names of famous people with disabilities with their occupations and disabilities)
- resources (lists of fictional books about people with disabilities, videos addressing themes to do with disability, websites and organisations).

Libraries that provide information about disabilities include:

- Disability Information and Resource Centre South Australia (http://www.dircsa.org.au/services/library)

- NSW Council for Intellectual Disability (http://www.nswcid.org.au/easy-english/ee-pages/library.html)
- IHC New Zealand library (http://www.ihc.org.nz/resources/our-library).

ONLINE INDOOR MAPPING

Indoor mapping technology takes the benefits of digital navigation from the street to the insides of buildings. Most buildings already have accurate interior maps in the form of plans and architectural drawings that can be used as the basis for digital maps. Blake Jessop has described potential commercial applications of indoor mapping (http://www.screenmediadaily.com/technology-indoor-navigation-mapping-apps-iphone-android-google-maps-micello-point-inside-microsoft-bing-906617.shtml).

Wise and co-authors have written on indoor navigation for the vision impaired,[2] an area in which there is still no fully successful navigation device.

Sony Mobile has created two different apps for indoor maps. One supports panning and zooming on different floors, and displays meeting rooms on a map. The other supports walking directions, voice guidance, and an augmented reality view. The author also provides information on setting up your own indoor map service (http://developer.sonymobile.com/knowledge-base/technologies/indoor-maps).

Google launched its indoor maps in Australia in March 2013. This service relies on wireless networks rather than GPS, meaning it can function indoors. Chris Jager has provided a list of Australian Indoor Maps; these are mainly for shopping complexes, but also include airports, train stations and sporting venues (http://www.lifehacker.com.au/2013/03/google-launches-indoor-maps-in-australia). Access to the service is via Google Maps, which is available for Android and iOS devices or via the browser on a mobile phone (http://maps.google.com/help/maps/helloworld/index.html; https://plus.google.com/+GoogleMaps/posts/HCBcs2ydUFx).

Google now provides indoor floor plans for 10,000 buildings (http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2012/07/17-organizations-that-made-their-floorplans-public-on-google-maps). Videos on its site show how Google Indoor Maps work, and invite people into mapping partnerships.

Google promoted Google Indoor Maps for libraries at the ALA (American Library Association) annual conference in 2012 (http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2012/06/shows-events/ala/google-debuts-new-service-for-libraries-at-ala-conference-ala-annual-2012).

Patrick Hogan discusses the presence at ALA of both Google and StackMap, a small start-up company whose product will map an item's shelf location within the building. StackMap works with integrated library systems and any mobile device (http://www.alatechsource.org/blog/2012/07/mapping-your-library.html).

Apple acquired indoor mapping firm WiFiSlam in March 2013 (http://features.techworld.com/mobile-wireless/3437672/indoor-positioning-market-heats-up-with-apple-acquisition-of-wifislam).

Ryan Fass suggests that a major use of the software might be for indoor navigation for businesses, including finding your way to offices anywhere in the world, and as a replacement for electronic key cards (http://www.citeworld.com/mobile/21628/apple-wifislam-indoor-maps-navigation).

Several technology companies have formed the In-Location Alliance to create open standards for indoor maps that would make it easier for companies to embed indoor navigation services into their products (http://www.fiercemobileit.com/press-releases/accurate-mobile-indoor-positioning-industry-alliance-called-location-promot).

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[2] Wise E et al, "Indoor Navigation for the Blind and Vision Impaired: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?" (Paper presented at the 2012 International Conference on Indoor Positioning and Indoor Navigation, 13-15 November 2012), http://www.gmat.unsw.edu.au/snap/publications/wise_etal2012a.pdf.

DO NOT CALL, DO NOT MAIL AND DO NOT KNOCK

I have been on the Do Not Call register run by ACMA (Australian Communications and Media Authority, https://www.donotcall.gov.au) for some time. You can list your home phone, personal mobile number or fax number to reduce telemarketing calls. Registration is free and ACMA has recently announced that registrations will now last for eight years.

Under the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006* (Cth), there are exemptions for charitable, educational and religious organisations, for Members of Parliament and political candidates, and for non-commercial market and social researchers (https://www.donotcall.gov.au/faqs.cfm).

I have just discovered that there is also a Do Not Mail register, run by ADMA (Association for Data-driven Marketing & Advertising, http://www.adma.com.au/consumer-help/do-not-mail-service). Anyone in Australia can register a residential address to stop receiving addressed, unsolicited mail. You can register for yourself or for a deceased person. Registration does not stop mail from companies of which you are a customer, mail from companies who are not members of ADMA, business-to-business promotions, and unaddressed mail.

You also have the option of displaying a Do Not Knock sticker at your gate or front door. Following a Federal Court decision, this is considered to be the same as asking a door-to-door salesperson to leave a premise under Australian consumer law (http://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/ sales-methods/telemarketing-door-to-door-sales). Get a PDF file of the sticker at http:// transition.accc.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/1070453 and read more at http://donotknock.org.au.

FOR FUN: ACCOMMODATION

Airbnb is a wonderful website with links to non-traditional accommodation options such as castles, treehouses, tipis and boats. Many of the options seem to be rooms in people's houses. The "wishlists" section groups accommodation into categories such as "atypical places" and "trees and Zzzs" (https://www.airbnb.com.au/wishlists/little-listings). Listing is free. Hosts pay a percentage when they receive a booking and guests pay a service fee.