UPDATE ON THE ROLLOUT OF THE NDIS TRIAL IN THE TERRITORY

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Minister for Disability Services Robyn Lambley says the NDIS trial is on track to start in the Northern Territory from July 1.

Mrs Lambley had a meeting with the National Disability Insurance Agency in Adelaide this week, to discuss the implementation of the Barkly trial and to see the early results of the South Australian trial.

“The South Australian trial, which is focussed on children with profound disabilities, has been running for nine months and it has provided a valuable insight into how a national scheme could operate,” Mrs Lambley said.

“The meeting also provided an opportunity to get an update on some of the details about how the Barkly trial will operate, including how people with a disability will have their needs assessed, to receive individual care and support packages.

“The meeting highlighted the importance of setting up networks in remote areas to promote and implement the NDIS.

“In the Barkly, it is encouraging to see that the NT Office of Disability and the NDIA are drawing on the local expertise and knowledge of people with a disability, their families, carers, service providers and community leaders, to ensure the Barkly trial is the best it can be.

“In addition, the newly created Ministerial Advisory Council will provide valuable information and insight for me into how the NDIS can best operate in the Barkly.”

The Barkly was chosen to be a pilot site because of its mix of remote, regional and urban communities, and 103 people with a disability and their families will participate in the two year trial.

The Barkly trial is being coordinated by a team of local representatives in Tennant Creek together with expert input from the NT Office of Disability, to transition clients and service providers from the current system into the trial.

“NDIS coordinators have been busy travelling to remote communities in the region, including Ali Curung, Arlanga and Urapuntja Homelands, Ampilawatja, Wutunugurra and Canteen Creek to talk to remote Territorians about the trial, with plans to visit Alpurrurulam next month,” Mrs Lambley said.

“During those community visits, they have been talking with community representatives and answering questions about what the trial will mean for remote people at a grass roots level.

“Many community people were worried that the NDIS would impact on their Disability Support Pension, but they have been reassured this will not be the case.”
There is still a lot of education that needs to be done to inform people so there’s a real understanding of what the NDIS means for remote Territorians, their families and carers.

A DVD is being developed to promote and explain the NDIS to remote Territorians. The idea for this came about from the grass roots reference group that includes members from local indigenous organisations, the NDIA and the NT Office of Disability.

I’m told that the script is nearly finished and it will be translated into local languages and voiced by members of the Aboriginal Interpreter Service.

Local musicians and the Barkly Regional Arts will be also be involved in filming, with the DVD expected to be ready before the start of the NDIS trial on July 1.

It’s great to see the NDIA is using culturally appropriate campaigns to inform remote Aboriginal people about the trial.

I do not expect this to be a smooth pilot, but it will be a great test case in order for the NDIS to successfully expand throughout the Territory and other parts of remote Australia.”

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