

# Your Voice, Your Choice

Wellways' experience of preparing at risk individuals for transition to NDIS

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# introducing Wellways

- Who is Wellways?

*Wellways Australia is a leading not-for-profit organisation dedicated to ensuring all Australians lead active and fulfilling lives in their community.*

*We work with individuals, families and the community to help them imagine and achieve better lives.*

*We advocate for change to make sure people can access the best possible care and information when they need it.*

*We provide a wide range of services and assistance for people with mental health issues, disabilities, youth and older Australians and those requiring community care.*

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# Our Vision

An inclusive community where everyone can imagine and achieve their hopes and potential.

# Project background

Wellways, Community Connections and Imagine More designed and delivered the Your Choice, Your Voice project.

The aim of the project was to engage key, hard to engage demographics with support to make an application to the NDIS.

# Project background

The main undertakings of the project were to:

- Raise awareness about the NDIS among people who have traditionally not engaged with the disability or mental health service systems
- Increase the potential for people with disability, including psychosocial disability to consider what constitutes a good life for them; by enabling/encouraging them to set life goals, objectives and to make informed decisions
- Support people with disability to maximise the opportunities the NDIS may afford them to exercise choice and control over the supports and services in their lives, and
- Assist families to be the best able to support their family member with a disability, from a perspective that respects and promotes the agency of the person to exercise control and choice in their life

# Project background

Between May 2015 and December 2016,  
248 ACT residents were assisted to access the  
NDIS.

This was conducted through a range of activities  
which will be looked at in today's presentation

# Project background

- One on one Conversations
- Community Conversations,
- Workshops,
- Inter-agency networking,
- Producing Digital Stories.

# Consumer involvement and Governance Arrangements

The program was supported by a Steering Committee and a Peer Led Working Group, made up of carers and individuals with psychosocial and general disabilities. Over the course of the project the consortium developed several resources and gave advice on direction of activities

# Workshops delivered

- Introduction to the NDIS
- My Goals my Choices
- NDIS Peer Education Module (six sessions)
  - Introduction to the NDIS
  - What to consider pre-registration
  - Accessing the NDIS and Eligibility
  - Assessment and planning
  - Implementing the plan
  - Other NDIS considerations
- Self-advocacy course

# Project background

- Program one supported 15 (22.4%) people whom identified as being CALD background
- Program one supported 2 (3.00%) people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
- Program two supported 29 (12.6%) people whom identified as being of CALD background
- Program two supported 12 (5%) people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
- The predominant age range is 30-50, followed by 50-64

Age Range	Number
0-17	7
18-30	31
30-50	93
50-64	54
Total	248

# Key deliverables

## Program 1: General Disability

Service	Output Measure	Minimum Outputs	Actual
Workshops	Workshops Held	10	16
Community Conversations	Conversations Held	15	22
Networks	Networks Established	6	6
Digital Stories	Number Completed	6	6
One on one sessions	Number of sessions	30	63

# Key deliverables

## Program 2: Psychosocial Disability

Service	Output Measure	Minimum Outputs	Actual
Workshops	Workshops Held	5	15
Community Conversations	Conversations Held	30	41
Digital Stories	Number Completed	6	6
One on one sessions	Number of Participants	70	185
Peer led working Group	Group established	1	Yes

# Combined deliverables

Service	Output Measure	Minimum Outputs	Program 1 actual	Program 2 actual	Total
Workshops	Workshops Held	15	16	15	<b>31</b>
Community Conversations	Conversations Held	45	22	41	<b>63</b>
Networks	Networks Established	6	6	N/A	<b>6</b>
Digital Stories	Number Completed	12	6	6	<b>12</b>
One on one sessions	Number of sessions	100	63	185	<b>248</b>

# User feedback

*” I must say I am **NOT** used to having choice at all in matters like this! So I’m a little overwhelmed.. It’s great! Thank you!”*

Quote from participant in October 2016

# Key learnings

- During the project it became apparent that participants required more than a single session to prepare for the NDIS planning meeting.
- Assertive outreach was key engaging hard to reach demographics
- It takes a long time to prepare (and transition)

# Key learnings

- Most people didn't understand what the NDIS was and what/why they were told to apply for it
- Further, incredible amount of misunderstanding about how funds could be spent
- Navigation of the process for incredibly difficult for most. Particularly for those without a well educated and dedicated Carer or family member to assist
- We didn't appreciate just how big a challenge this was for people

# Key learnings

- Most participants had to be coached through the planning stage of the process (after ARF was submitted and deemed eligible).
- Gathering evidence to support their claim of disability was challenging for many, not because it wasn't there, but rather because most people were used to presenting themselves to services as 'self evident'
- The process of evidence gathering was quite different for psycho-social disability applicants

# Outcomes

All participants that accessed one to one support were supported from pre planning and planning through to the transitioned stage

Approximately 13.5% of participants could identify alternative places to source support prior to engaging with support from YVYC project.

# Outcomes

As the one to one supports were provided it became very apparent that the major need for assistance from the program was in the pre-planning preparation and equipping participants with the skills and ability to discuss their needs at the pre-planning session with the NDIA, including collection of evidence for core supports.

# Outcomes

Some participants had difficulty identifying their needs so needed to be prompted with suggestions to achieve the right balance of supports. This also included supporting participants to consider what they will need to discuss and document for their annual review once the plan has been in place for the first year.

# Outcomes

All participants that have entered the program were given information about numerous services and agencies that offered support under the NDIS and a YVYC branded “Supported Decision Making” information booklet.

Further, participants were given information about the appeals process and the role of ADACAS in supporting this. Finally, all participants were informed about a mobile app created by Advocacy for Inclusion that can assist with supported decision making.

All material supplied was set out in user friendly and simple language formats that included key information:

- Key steps of accessing the NDIS
- Information and support that is available through the NDA
- Support provided by YVYC

# Outcomes

- 98% showed positive increase in knowledge of NDIS,
  - of the 98%, 12% noted significant increase in knowledge
- 96% of participants felt more confident in applying for NDIS,
  - of the 96%, 19% felt significantly more confident
- 95% of participants said they knew more about where to access the service post support from YVYC,
  - of the 95% a further 15% said they knew significantly more about where and how to access support

# Outcomes

Wellways and its partners Imagine More and Community Connections have developed a range of resources both internally and with other organisations that will be available for use to help support individuals in developing their capacity to participate in leadership, co-design and citizenship activities.

Some of these include:

- Wellways NDIS toolkit
- Digital stories
- Courses and workshops developed by ACTMHCN
- Circles of support information
- ADACAS supported decision making framework
- Nouse project brochure

# Outcomes

Program 1:

evaluation on completion of the engagement looking at an enhanced understanding of the NDIS found:

- **Preplanning stage:** 94% of participants had a very good about the NDIS
- **Planning sage:** 97% of participants were very confident applying for NDIS funds
- **Transition Stage:** 98% of participants were confident that they had developed a good understanding about services they could receive with NDIS funding and were confident discussing personal goals.

# Outcomes

Program 2:

evaluation on completion of the engagement looking at an enhanced understanding of the NDIS found:

- **Preplanning stage:** 95.2% of participants had a better understanding about the NDIS
- **Planning stage:** 94.4% of participants were more confident applying for NDIS Services
- **Transition stage:** 98.4% of participants had developed greater or much greater confidence that they had a good understanding about the services they could receive with NDIS funding and were confident addressing short term, medium term and long term goals.

# 18 months on....

What has changed....not much...

- Transition still takes a long time
- Even more so for more marginalised groups
- Psycho-social disability is still largely not well understood and not well supported
- People are still falling through gaps, (that appear to be getting larger)
- The scheme still doesn't adapt well to needs of more marginalized people

# Thank you

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