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Mr Bob Buckley  
Convenor  
Autism Asperger's Advocacy Australia  
[convenor@a4.org.au](mailto:convenor@a4.org.au)

Dear Mr Buckley

Thank you for your email of 12 October 2016 to the Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services, the Hon Jane Prentice MP, regarding best practice early intervention for autistic children and continuity of supports under the NDIS. The Minister has asked me to reply to you on her behalf.

I appreciate you taking the time to raise your concerns regarding the provision of services for children with autism. Your input and that of a range of leading Australian early childhood intervention practitioners and researchers has led to the development of the Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) approach. The ECEI approach has been designed to help identify the type and level of early intervention support that meets each child's needs to achieve their best outcomes. The approach recognises that children with autism require early intervention supports depending on their individual needs and that one size does not fit all.

We are working with a range of partners to deliver the ECEI approach. Partners will need to demonstrate strong early intervention expertise and utilise best-practice approaches, in particular in working closely with families to understand and build skills to support their child. We will closely monitor service provider performance and outcomes to ensure all children receive an appropriate level and quality of support.

I acknowledge your concern in relation to the transition of the Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) program into the NDIS. The Department of Social Services and the NDIA are working closely to ensure this is a smooth transition. HCWA has been identified for transition to the NDIS. Once children transferring from HCWA have an NDIS plan approved under the NDIS, their access to HCWA funding will cease as they will then be eligible to receive funding under the NDIS. For those children under 6 they will be able to access the early intervention supports identified above.

I look forward to meeting with you shortly to discuss your concerns.

Thank you again for your email.

Yours sincerely

**Stephanie Gunn**  
General Manager  
Community Linkages  
National Disability Insurance Agency  
2 December 2016