



The Hon Dan Tehan MP
Minister for Social Services

Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Telephone: 02 6277 7560

MS18-000877

Mr Bob Buckley
Convenor
Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia
convenor@a4.org.au

23 MAY 2018

Dear Mr Buckley

Bob,

I am writing to you to assure you that no changes have been made to the National Disability Insurance Scheme's (NDIS) access requirements for autism and specifically to Autism Severity Level 2, which appears on the National Disability Insurance Agency's (NDIA) List A for meeting eligibility to the NDIS. Any person with autism who is eligible for the NDIS will continue to receive the reasonable and necessary supports they are assessed as needing.

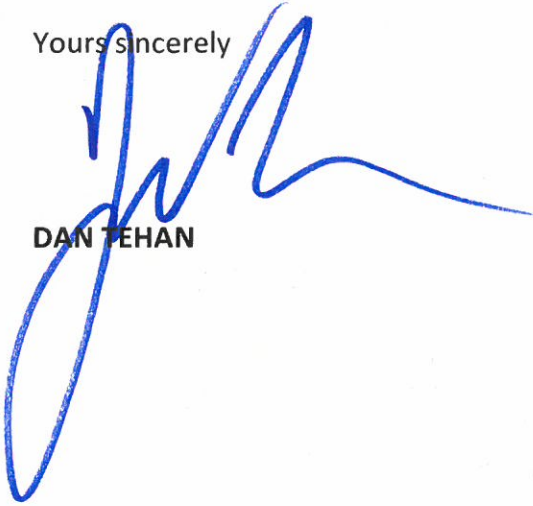
As you are aware, the NDIA recently uploaded an incorrect document to their website. This document indicated Autism Severity Level 2 would no longer be included on List A in the NDIA's operational guidelines, therefore requiring potential participants with Autism Severity Level 2 to provide further evidence to the NDIA on their functional impairments prior to receiving an access decision. The NDIA has contacted a range of stakeholders to advise of, and apologise for, the error.

As the NDIS continues to roll out, the NDIA is working to refine the way the scheme is implemented at a local level, as evidenced by their recent Participant and Provider Pathways review. I am acutely aware that the success of the NDIS depends on a strong and ongoing relationship between the NDIS and organisations that support people with disability. As such, I am committed to working with you to ensure the NDIS is appropriately set up to provide people with autism with the reasonable and necessary supports they need.

Last year, a collaboration was established between the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism and the NDIA to develop Australia's first national diagnostic guideline for autism. This is a critical step in ensuring a consistent and equitable access to autism diagnosis for children and adults. In combination with a functional assessment, this will provide a more contemporary and evidenced based approach in identifying the support needs of individuals with autism and determining their eligibility for access to the NDIS.

I can assure you that no changes will be made to the NDIA's operational guidelines, including List A, unless those changes are informed by research, evidence and extensive consultation with stakeholders and the community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

DAN TEHAN