



The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister Morrison,

There are numerous reports in the media that the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has seen the average cost of individual support packages increase by at least 12% per year since 2017. These include:

- your reported description of “a 12.5 per cent growth in payment per participant each year since 2017 ...” from <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-warns-ndis-faces-billion-dollar-cost-blowouts-without-changes-20210506-p57plv.html>;
- “National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) spokesperson Shannon Rees said NDIS packages had increased by 12.5 per cent each year for the past three years on average” in <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-27/queensland-mother-slams-traumatic-ndis-process/100170168>; and
- Minister Reynolds said “Participant packages were growing by 12.5% per annum”, see <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/may/03/linda-reynolds-says-coalition-will-keep-some-form-of-independent-ndis-assessments>.

The NDIA provides various data sets (CSV files) that include the average annual committed cost for NDIS plans. These data include the following values:

date	NDIS participants	average committed plan
31-Mar-19	259,052	\$ 61,000
30-Jun-19	286,015	\$ 66,000
31-Mar-20	364,879	\$ 67,000
30-Jun-20	391,999	\$ 70,000
31-Mar-21	449,998	\$ 70,000

Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4) calculated the annual growth in average NDIS plan cost at 31/3 from the above data and got 9.84% and 4.48% for 2020 and 2021, respectively. These values are well short of 12.5% that the Government described in the media (see above).

So far, I have not found a figure for the average plan commitment for the 2017-18 year (ending either 3rd or 4th quarter) so I cannot calculate the increase from 2018 to 2019.

However, A4's primary concern is that recent increases expressed as percentages based on the data the NDIA provided publicly (see <https://data.ndis.gov.au/data-downloads>) are different from those you and other Government representatives are reported to have told the media.

A4 is surprised that your government is concerned by any of these increases while the average NDIS plan utilisation is 68% (if NDIA data is to be believed). Surely, the bigger problem is that people with disability are unable to have many of their support needs met.

A4 has one question: How come the figures we calculate are different from those you describe? It seems to us that the difference is due to one or more of the following reasons ...

1. A4's per centage calculations are incorrect.
2. The NDIA published incorrect data.
3. The laws of arithmetic changed without our noticing.

Please note, A4 has a firm policy on unanswered questions: see <https://a4.org.au/node/1419>

Yours sincerely

Bob Buckley
Convenor

29 June 2021

Cc: Minister Reynolds
Senator Hollie Hughes
Senator Steel-John
Bill Shorten MP
Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS