



NEW FAST-TRACK PROCESS PROPOSED TO SPEED UP NDIS APPEALS

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The proposal by the Federal Government to establish a new alternative dispute resolution process for people caught up in NDIS disputes would make the process of appealing a decision faster and easier.

Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Australia, Ms Monique Earsman, said any genuine attempt to assist those struggling with the NDIA bureaucracy is welcome.

“Families are often placed under unnecessary stress accessing the scheme and then face ongoing challenges maintaining the required level of care for themselves and their loved ones,” Ms Earsman said.

The new scheme is designed to cut the backlog of more than 4500 cases currently listed before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT).

According to NDIS Minister Bill Shorten, the number of appeals stuck in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal was unacceptable.

Mr Shorten said the overuse of external lawyers hired by the NDIA to run cases in the AAT had created a “David-and-Goliath struggle” between the agency and people with disability.

“As minister I want the process to change, so participants are treated with (more) respect than they currently are,” he said.

The Government has appointed Mr Graeme Innes, the former disability discrimination commissioner, to chair a new independent oversight committee to review the disputes.

The oversight committee will appoint expert reviewers to look at existing AAT cases, starting with an initial 15 or 20 matters.

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