

Dear << Politician First Name >>

The NDIS is complex, but it doesn't mean the Victorian Government needs to privatise public disability services. Here's five quick facts about the NDIS and the privatisation of public disability services.

- [FACT 1: It's not about choice.](#)
- [FACT 2: It's not about the NDIS.](#)
- [FACT 3: Privatisation is about costs.](#)
- [FACT 4: Cutting costs = cuts to wages and cuts to quality care.](#)
- [FACT 5: This is your legacy.](#)

FACT 1: It's not about choice.

Your Government has claimed that it needs to transfer public disability services to the non-government sector to give choice to people with disabilities. However, by privatising disability services, your Government is taking away people's choice to continue receiving public disability services under the NDIS.

If this was really about choice, why is it the case that five group homes in Bendigo have been excised from the EOI process under the rationale that this decision is "consistent with Government's previous commitments to clients."? These five group homes house the former residents of the Sandhurst Centre, whom before the last election were promised by then-Opposition leader, Daniel Andrews, they ["will be able to choose whether they remain in state-run care or prefer private residential care."](#)

If it's truly about choice, then why aren't all 2,500 DHHS clients being given the same choice?

FACT 2: It's not about the NDIS.

Under the NDIS more people than ever before will get access to disability services and these people will be able to choose which service provider they want to service their needs. Nothing in the NDIS Act, the Bilateral Agreement between Victoria and the Commonwealth, or the original Productivity Commission report says that the State Government cannot be a service provider under the NDIS.

There is no reason the State Government cannot continue providing services under the NDIS to the existing 2,500 DHHS clients and provide certainty of quality supports to their ageing loved ones.

FACT 3: Privatisation is about costs.

Under the NDIS, the Victorian Government will increase its annual expenditure on disability services from \$1.2b to \$2.5b per annum. This increase is to cover the costs of providing services to over 27,000 Victorians who previously had none. This should be a great Labor legacy, but it has nothing to do with the costs of running public disability services.

Currently, it costs \$400m per annum to run Victoria's 506 group homes. Under the NDIS, service providers (public, private and not-for-profit) get revenue back from the NDIS for delivering services. However, because NDIS pricing is set too low, HACSU has been told by Senior Government Officials that Victoria would only get \$330m per annum back from the NDIS if it remained a public service provider.

Rather than choice, this decision is all about saving \$70m a year by abandoning the most vulnerable Victorian citizens and the dedicated workers who support them.

FACT 4: Cutting costs = cuts to wages and cuts to quality care.

Disability support is a labour-intensive industry, with approximately 80% of costs being used on labour. If you want to cut costs then your only option is to cut wages and if you cut wages you cut quality support.

If you privatise public disability services, workers wages and conditions will eventually fall to the level paid by the non-government sector. This is what that looks like:

	Weekly Wages		
	Public	NGO	Wage Cut
Support Worker (Cert IV)	\$1,077.30	\$958.28	\$86.02
Support Worker (Adv. Diploma)	\$1,383.29	\$1,041.96	\$341.33
House Supervisor	\$1,290.03	\$1,041.96	\$241.07
Area Manager	\$1,875.47	\$1,401.97	\$473.50

Do you really want to give workers a weekly pay cut of over 30%?

FACT 5: This is your legacy.

The future of quality disability services in Victoria is up to you. *It's your choice whether you stand with the people who voted for you at the last election: workers in unions.*

Join us outside Parliament on Wednesday May 10 @ 12.20PM to show your solidarity with families of people with disabilities and the workers who support them.

I also request an opportunity to address the Parliamentary Labor Caucus on these matters at the earliest available opportunity.

Yours in solidarity,

Lloyd Williams
HACSU State Secretary