Queensland

What's new in the NDIS?

Summary of key trends Q2 2019/20

Provider Choice are driving innovation in the NDIS for all participants, providers and support coordinators. Provider Choice also offer plan management services.

Provider Choice

Content

1. Participants **3**

1.1. Scheme has grown to largest size ever 3

1.2. In Queensland, 58% of all new participants are children under 15 years 3

1.3. Young children receive their funding faster 4

1.4. 60% of participants in QLD are male 5

2. Disability **6**

2.1. More Queenslanders who access the NDIS have a developmental delay 6

2.2. Autism is the most common primary disability in the NDIS 6

3. Support coordination **7**

3.1. Growing need for support coordinators 7

3.2. Support coordinator employment 8

4. Managing plans **9**

4.1. More Queenslanders choose autonomy 9

4.2. More Queenslanders get support from a Plan Manager 9

5. Contact us **11**

1. Participants

1.1. Scheme has grown to its largest size ever

Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continues to grow. At the end of 2019, almost 339,000 people received NDIS funding - a new record.

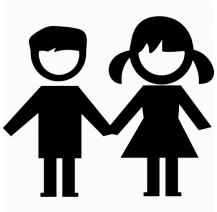
In Queensland, the first families with a disability were able to access Australia's new disability support in 2016. Since then, the scheme has matured fast in the state. Nearly 1 in 5 NDIS participants (18%) live in Queensland, this is in line with the even distribution of disability across Australian states.

Fast facts - NDIS participants in Australia and Queensland

	New participants Sept-Dec 2019	**Total participants** 31 Dec 2019*	**Share of total**
Australia	28,225	338,982	100%
Queensland	6,573	61,583	18%

** excludes children in the scheme's Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) stream*

1.2. In Queensland, 58% of all new participants are children under 15 years



The number of children in the scheme is growing fast. This is due a recent change in the way in NDIS access for kids. The government announced in June 2019 that the agency would improve some processes to resolve delays and backlogs for children with disability.

The new fast-tracking of children's applications has begun to change the participant profile in the NDIS. The scheme is now supporting more children than ever. In the December quarter alone, 58% of all new NDIS participants in Queensland were children under 15 years.

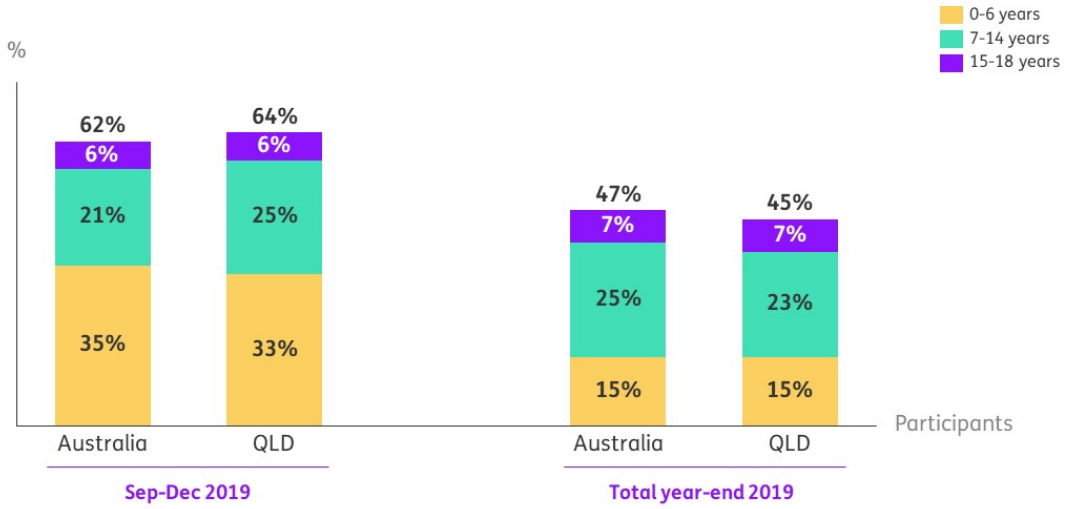
Australia-wide, more than one third (35%) of all new participants who joined the NDIS between September and December 2019 were aged 6 years and under.

In Queensland the growth among school-age children is particularly strong. Every fourth participant (25%) joining the NDIS in Queensland during the December quarter was between **7 and 14 years** old - above the national average of 21%.

Overall, 45% of all NDIS participants in Queensland were children under 18 years at the end of last year.

Source: COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report December 2019

The NDIS supports more children



1.3. Young children receive their funding faster

The NDIS bureaucracy is working faster to unlock much-needed funding for the scheme's youngest participants. **Australia-wide**, the number of young children (0-6 years) waiting more than 50 days to get a plan approved fell significantly from 1,686 to 712 between September and December 2019.

Fast facts - waiting times for children in the NDIS

- On average, children (0-6 years) in Australia **waited 44 days** for a plan in the Dec quarter.
- That's a big improvement over the July quarter, when young children waited on average 104 days to receive a plan.

1.4. 60% of participants in QLD are male

There are more males in the NDIS than females.

By the end of 2019, 62% of all NDIS participants across Australia were male and just over one third (37%) were female.* The numbers are similar for Queensland, with **60% male** and **39% female** participants.

The reason for the gender imbalance: the most common disabilities in the scheme affect more boys than girls, and more men than women.

* *1% of participants had an indeterminate gender, which includes those where gender is not recorded.*

Fast facts - typical disabilities in the scheme that affect more males

Autism generally affects more males than females, and it is a common disability in the scheme. Almost one third of NDIS participants lists autism as their primary disability. This explains why there are more than 3.2 times the number of male participants with autism compared with females.

Developmental delays occur more frequently in boys than girls. This explains why there are 2.5 times more males with developmental delays in the scheme than girls.

Intellectual disability can occur in tandem with autism. This partly explains why there are 1.3 times more male participants with intellectual disability than female participants. One fifth (20%) of all participants in the NDIS report "intellectual disability" as their primary disability. It is to be expected that autism is likely a secondary disability for some of these participants.

2. Disability

2.1. More Queenslanders who access the NDIS have a developmental delay

The number of new NDIS participants with developmental delay is growing across Australia and in Queensland. This trend is directly linked to the growing share of children in the scheme, as the diagnosis is for children.

Fast facts - developmental delays in the NDIS

- **In Australia**, the share of new NDIS participants with a developmental delay increased by 15% in the December quarter. That's three times the share of previous quarters (5.1%).
- **In Queensland**, 13% of participants joining the scheme in the December quarter had been diagnosed with a developmental delay, compared to 4% in previous quarters.

2.2. Autism is the most common primary disability in the NDIS

Autism is the most common primary disability in the scheme. Australia-wide, just under one third (**31%**) of all NDIS participants were listed as having autism as their primary disability at the end of the year 2019. **In Queensland,** the situation is no different.

Other commonly reported disabilities in the NDIS at the end of 2019 were intellectual disability, psychosocial disability and developmental delay.

Fast facts - most common disabilities in the NDIS at year-end 2019	
Autism	Australia: 31% Queensland: 30%
Intellectual disability	Australia: 23% Queensland: 22%
Psychosocial disability	Australia: 9% Queensland: 8%
Developmental delay	Australia: 6% Queensland: 5%

3. Support coordination

3.1. Growing need for support coordinators

More Australians living with a disability are receiving NDIS funding to pay for a support coordinator.

Australia-wide, the proportion of NDIS participants who had been granted funding for a support coordinator in the final three months of 2019 increased to **40%** – from an average of 37% in previous quarters.

As a result of the uptick, 38% of all NDIS plans in Australia included funding for support coordination at the end of 2019.

In Queensland, funding for support coordinators is also on the rise. Between September and December, **39%** of **QLD**-based participants received funding for support coordination – more than in previous quarters (35%). The overall proportion of Queenslanders who relied on a support coordinator at the end of last year stood at 36%.

3.2. Support coordinator employment

The market for support coordinators is becoming more mature. The number of support coordinators operating has reduced, likely meaning better support coordinators remain offering their services.

In total, 810 support coordination services have operated in Australia since its inception in 2013, about one quarter (198) of which were in Queensland. However, in the December quarter only about half the Australia-wide services (406) and only 99 in Queensland were operating (**active**) – an indication the market may now contain players who are higher quality.

The majority of QLD-based support coordinators who were operating in the December quarter were registered as **companies/organisations**. Only 16% were registered as **sole traders**.

To a certain extent the **outlook** for support coordinators appears positive in light of recent circumstances. The 2019 Tune Review, a review into the scheme, is a good example. The independent expert writing the review recommended that the government provide more funding to help people navigate the NDIS. It does however remain unclear whether this recommendation will lead to greater sustained funding for support coordination in the future.

4. Managing plans

4.1. More Queenslanders choose autonomy

Managing your disability funding all by yourself is becoming more popular across the nation. Queensland is in line with the broader trend.

An increasing number of NDIS participants prefers to manage all aspects of their funding on their own, including the bookkeeping, budgeting and invoicing. They enjoy the **greatest amount of freedom and choice** when it comes to spending their NDIS budget. Often, parents choose self-management when managing their children's plans.

Fast facts - self-managed plans

- **Australia-wide, 30%** of all plans were self-managed (18% fully and 12% partly self-managed) at the end of 2019. That's up from 20% of all plans in December 2017.
- **In Queensland,** the picture is similar, with 19% of all plans fully self-managed and 12% of all plans partly self-managed at the end of the year.

4.2. More Queenslanders get support from a Plan Manager

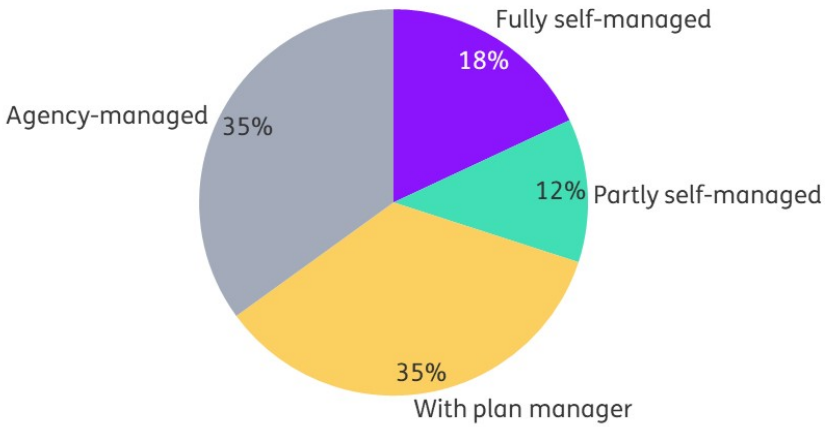
Plan Managers are available at no out of pocket cost for all NDIS participants. These providers help participants with paying invoices managing budgets, and reducing that comes with managing a plan.

Plan Managers take on the task of paying provider invoices on time. They also help participants understand what exactly they can spend their

funding on. And they ensure that a participant's budget lasts until the end of the planning period.

In addition, plan managers are now offering tutorials and seminars to help participants, who prefer to do it all themselves, get better at self-managing their plans. **Provider Choice** is now offering this as an additional service to provide participants with the opportunity to take more control over their plan.

Active plans by management type in Queensland



Source: COAG Disability Reform Council Quarterly Report December 2019

Fast facts - plan management

- **Plan management is growing.** Between December 2017 and December 2019, the proportion of participants who have a Plan Manager increased from 16% to 42% Australia-wide.
- **At the end of 2019**, **35%** of all NDIS participants across Australia had engaged a Plan Manager to help them with the tedious paperwork that comes with receiving and managing a plan.
- **In Queensland,** the trend is even a little stronger. **37%** of all NDIS participants in the state had engaged a Plan Manager by year-end. And the popularity of plan management increased further over the December quarter, during which 42% of new participants in QLD opted for this free support, compared to 40% in the rest of the country.

5. Contact us

Do you have any questions? Our friendly team is happy to share more insights with you.

Send us an email to **enquiries@providerchoice.com.au**. We're looking forward to hearing from you.