

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE AGENCY BOARD Document 1
BOARD MEETING 5/2015 OF 30 JULY 2015
Section 22

Link to Strategic Priorities and Risks

Section 22

Key Issues and Sensitivities

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- e. Reference groups have been established to assist with understanding appropriate levels of support, for example, the autism reference group. The Agency commenced an early intervention autism project in November 2014 consisting of two phases. Phase 1 of the project conducted research regarding evidence based good practice for appropriate supports for children with autism, factors that assist in deciding upon individualised levels of early intervention, factors that determine levels of modifications required, and timeframes for reviewing outcomes. This phase has been completed and the final report will be available soon following review by the stakeholder group. Phase 2 will implement the finding of phase 1 and is scheduled for the period August to December 2015.

AGENDA – BOARD MEETING NO. 8/2015

Date: Tuesday, 8 December 2015

Location: Level 9, 300 Elizabeth Street, Sydney
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BOARD MEETING NO. 8/2015 – UNDER THE LINE ITEMS

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**NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE AGENCY BOARD
BOARD MEETING 8/2015 OF 8 DECEMBER 2015**

SA EARLY CHILDHOOD EARLY INTERVENTION

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Link to Strategic Priorities and Risks

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Key Issues and Sensitivities

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10. For all children 0 to 6, the Agency will engage and commission early childhood services to undertake assessment and make recommendations about the appropriate supports required for children. These providers will have a capacity to

provide emotional support and guidance to families, lower intensity services and support inclusion for the child in mainstream settings. This enables early intervention supports to be well adjusted to the need of the child and family in a timely manner and avoids the need to rush young children to diagnosis. Children who require longer term early intervention supports will be able to be referred to early childhood early intervention support providers through a more structured process. (See **Attachment A**).

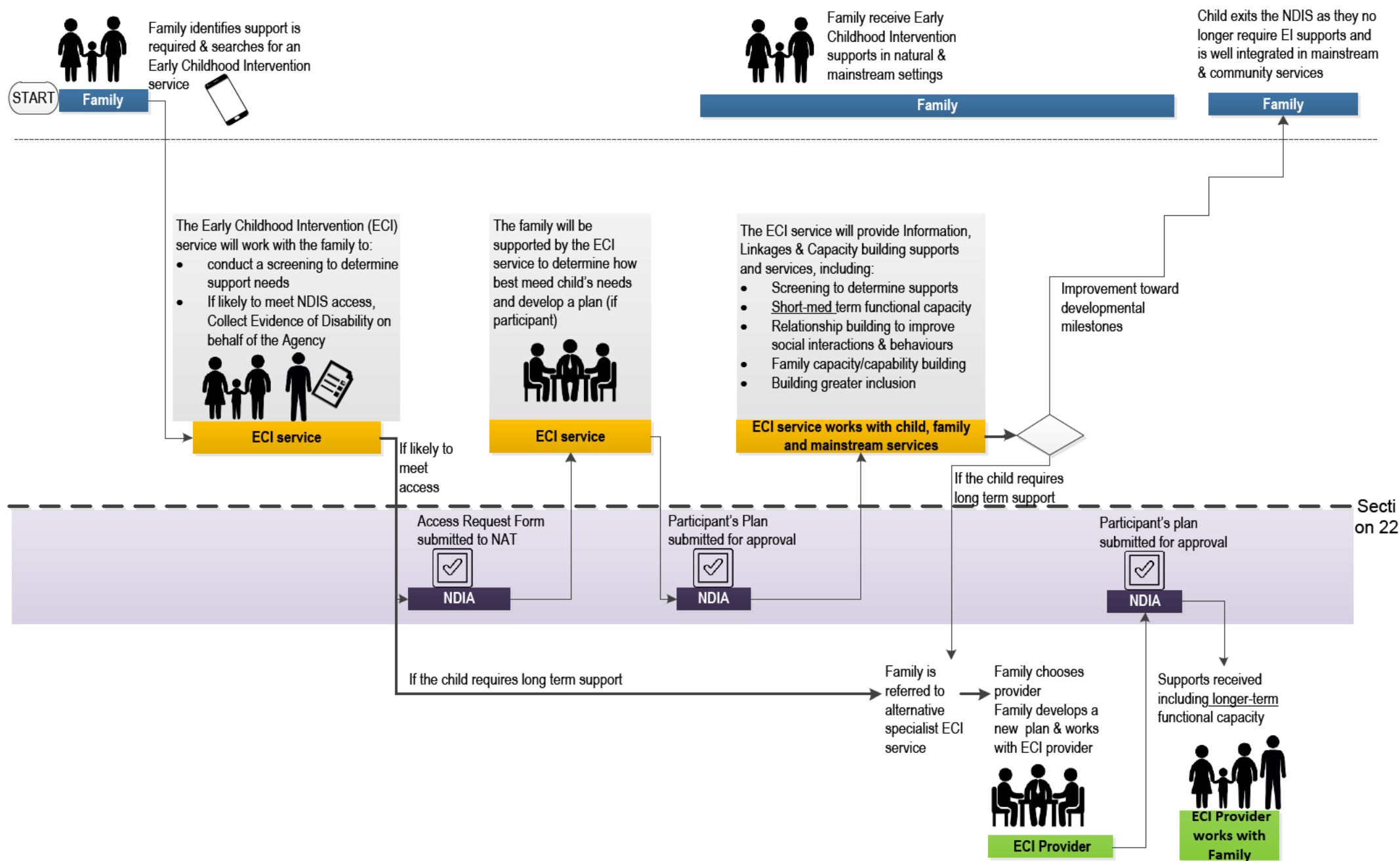
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The approach for early childhood early intervention will allow consistent early intervention support appropriate to the child's functional impairment and family circumstances. This includes intensive allied health supports as appropriate and identified through skilled expertise.

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Attachment a - Proposed NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY: NDIA BOARD PAPER

AGENDA – BOARD MEETING NO. 1/2016

Date: Friday 29 January 2016**Location:** Level 9, 300 Elizabeth Street, Sydney

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ITEM	TITLE	PRESENTER	TIME
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3.5	SA early childhood early intervention analysis	Peter De Natris/Anne Skordis/Sarah Johnson	30 mins
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UNDER THE LINE ITEMS

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National Disability Insurance Agency Board
Board meeting 1/2016 of 29 January 2016

SA early childhood early intervention analysis

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Link to Strategic Priorities and Risks

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Key Issues and Sensitivities

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11. The Executive Management Group has approved a revised approach to deliver early childhood early intervention supports for children with developmental delay and disability. This approach is informed and based on evidence-based good practice and builds on the early intervention approach recently commenced in the NBM site.
12. Children in the NBM are being referred directly to one of the four Access providers. These providers, as Agents of the NDIA, are Early Childhood Intervention support services engaged to provide:
 - Information
 - emotional support
 - screening and assessment
 - plan development
 - initial early intervention supports to children and their families/carers.
13. The approach promotes inclusion of children within mainstream and community settings and has long term benefits for all organisations. This will enable mainstream services to build capacity to reasonably adjust to include children with additional needs, as an effective alternative to or as supplementary to funded supports. The work links directly to the outcomes framework and will be evaluated (**Attachment B**).
14. The Agency plans to build on the approach implemented in the NBM as the design for early childhood 0 – 6 year old participants supported by the scheme. It requires a shift in the way the NDIS has currently been delivering early childhood supports. It is focused on improving the participant experience.
15. The design moves a number of functions and roles from the Agency to a network of contracted access providers for initial information, screening, planning and early intervention responses and supports.
16. For all children 0–6, the Agency will engage and partner with appropriate early childhood service providers to undertake assessments and make recommendations about the supports required for children. These providers will have a capacity to provide emotional support and guidance to families, lower intensity services and support inclusion for the child in mainstream settings. This enables early intervention supports to be well adjusted to the needs of the child and family in a timely manner and avoids the need to rush young children to diagnosis.

17. Children who require longer term early intervention supports will be able to be referred to alternative early childhood early intervention support providers through a more natural, supported and structured process. (**Attachment C**).

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19. This approach for early childhood early intervention will allow for the development of consistent early intervention support appropriate to the child's developmental delay and functional impairment in the context of the family/primary care givers circumstances. This includes appropriate intensive allied health supports and identified through acknowledged planning support through clinical oversight.

20. This approach will require a comprehensive change and stakeholder management approach. Key areas of focus include:

- Communications and messaging
- Partnership with SA Government
- Market development
- Sector and workforce development
- Redesign of SDOM, Operational Guidelines and catalogue of supports
- Training of existing and new staff

21. The proposed approach will also require a significant change management effort in SA to focus families, key stakeholders and market players to agree on the outcomes the NDIS should deliver through early childhood early intervention. The current debate is focused on inputs which provide limited opportunity to shape the narrative to a more sensible focus on child development and inclusion. (**Attachment D**)

22. In time, the Agency will also transition existing 0 – 6 participants in SA as re-planning occurs and the network of access providers is formed. The implementation of additional support and tools developed for planners in SA will assist them to review plans and transition children to this newer model. This will achieve the aim of increasing the capacity of children's natural support systems.

23. The Agency has commenced the development of a comprehensive work plan incorporating Governance and project elements in context to each jurisdiction. Detailed project plans and project management methodology will be used to ensure the Executive has strong visibility of the progress and the risks to be managed (**Attachment D**).

Consultation

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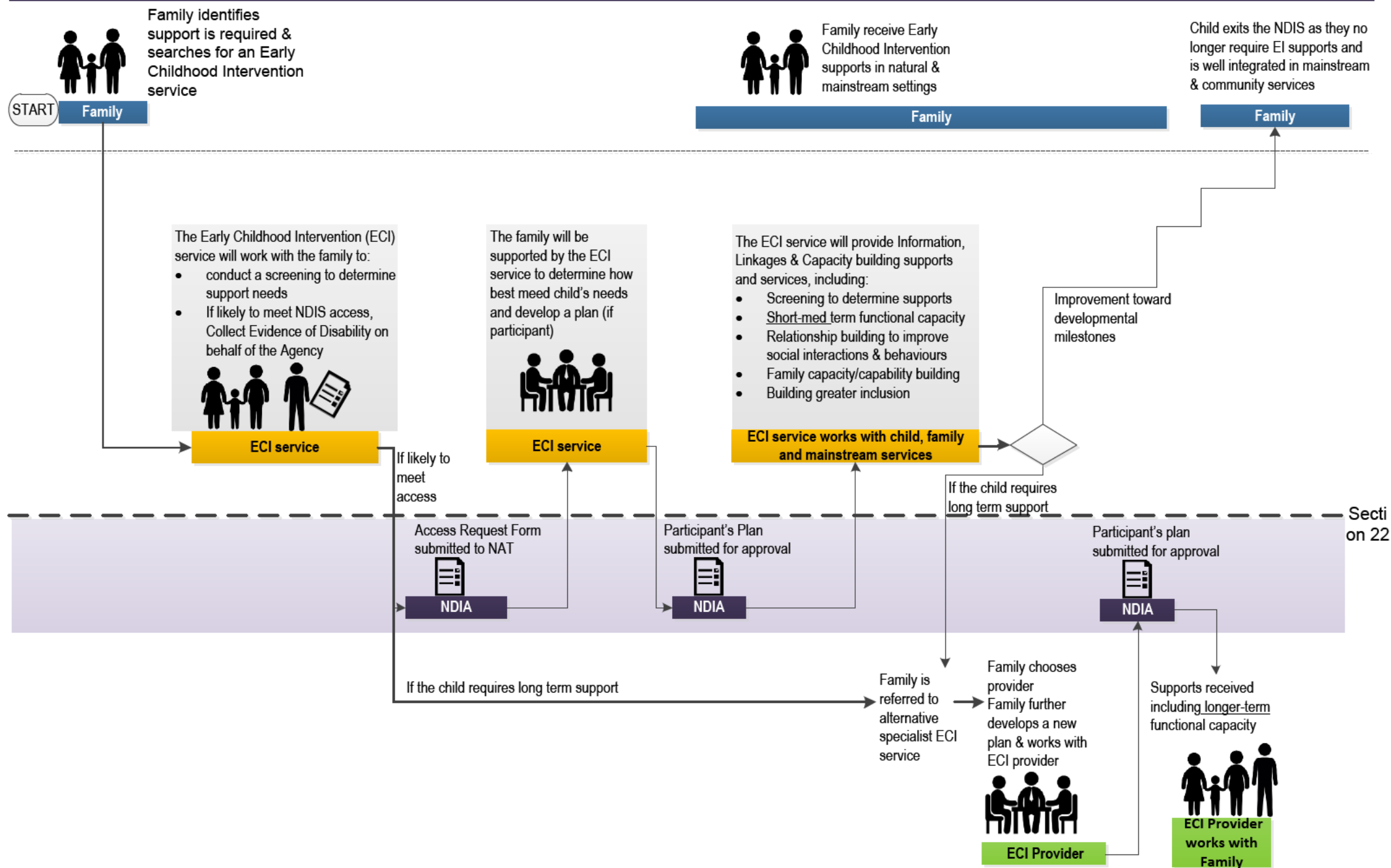
Background

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Attachments

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Attachment C - NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention Approach



EARLY CHILDHOOD EARLYINTERVENTION OPERATING MODEL

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

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THE CURRENT APPROACH

Since commencement of the NDIS, early childhood early intervention supports have been identified and provided through an individualised funded support package in much the same way supports to older and adult participants are provided through the NDIS. The current approach to providing support to these children is for families to have an access determination and plan completed by the Agency. Planners identify supports required. Generally early childhood early intervention supports have been funded under the 3 transdisciplinary packages of support that range from \$6,000 to \$16,416 per annum.

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Overall this approach will deliver better outcomes for children and their families and will contribute to greater scheme sustainability, reducing lifetime costs and building the capacity of mainstream. This approach will also enable the Agency to test a number of variations of the ECEI approach in different contexts and will ultimately contribute to a more effective national approach to ECEI.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EARLY INTERVENTION INCLUSION APPROACH

Some state and territory jurisdictions have implemented changes to early childhood intervention services or have started to strengthen inclusive service delivery through government systems.

Although there is a strong evidence base and broad consensus that inclusive, family-centred early childhood intervention is best practice, many states and territories have varying degrees of maturity in implementing this approach. This means there are no fixed models for how to operationalise best practice early intervention; although increasingly more positive evidence is becoming available as to how this might work.

THE NDIS ECEI APPROACH

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**Release of NDIA Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI)
Approach and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) report
26 February 2016**

APPROACH

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- **What is in place to make sure the advice and referrals the access partners give are consistent across the country?**

The access partner will draw on their specialised early childhood knowledge to determine appropriate supports for children with a developmental delay or disability. They will place great emphasis on supporting the child through existing local community mainstream services.

The NDIA-commissioned Early Childhood Intervention Australia (ECIA) to develop best-practice guidelines for early childhood intervention. Early childhood intervention providers will use these guidelines to ensure best-practice approaches are applied consistently across the country.

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EVIDENCE

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- **Who will the guidelines be used by and how?**

Early childhood intervention providers will use the ECIA best-practice guidelines to ensure best-practice approaches are applied consistently on a national basis.

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DIAGNOSIS/AUTISM

- **Will this approach rely on a child receiving a diagnosis to receive support and services?**

The NDIS ECEI approach will help all children with developmental delay or disability

and their families achieve better long-term outcomes through support services in their local community, regardless of diagnosis.

- **Will children with autism receive 20 hours of intervention?**

Through the NDIS, all children and families are treated as individuals to ensure they receive the right support they need to meet their goals and aspirations.

In relation to early childhood early intervention, supports will vary according to the individual needs of the child and their family, regardless of diagnosis.

The access partner will use their professional judgement and expertise to ensure a child with a developmental delay or disability receives the appropriate supports for their individual circumstance.

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- **If a child is diagnosed with autism, what support will they receive? How is it determined?**

Not all children with a developmental delay or disability will achieve their goals through a uniform approach. They will differ, depending on their individual need, the length and type of intervention and how and where they are delivered.

The access partner will use their professional judgement to ensure all children with a developmental delay or disability receive the appropriate supports for their individual circumstances, regardless of diagnosis.

- **At what point will children be diagnosed with autism or other disabilities?**

There is no specific point in the ECEI approach where a child needs to have a medical diagnosis to receive support. Access to the NDIS is not based on a medical diagnosis.

The design approach is based on functional assessment, not a medical diagnosis. While medical diagnosis may be important, it should not be the only consideration for a young child.

Good early childhood intervention approaches recognise that a developmental delay and/or learning disability can include numerous disorders. It is about the appropriate response obtained through the assessment of functional impact that needs to be the key focus.

For the NDIS, diagnosis remains an informing aspect and it may be required for other systems such as health or education.

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- **Does the ECIA approach settle on an objective test for autism diagnoses?**

The ECEI approach will provide children and families with timely access to supports, without unnecessarily rushing to diagnosis.

The access partners will have the skills and expertise to determine the appropriate supports a child and their family need to meet their goals and achieve the best outcome.

Children identified as needing more long-term intensive supports will be directed to a specialist early childhood intervention provider.

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