

# The Way Forward Conference

I pay my respects to those Elders  
both pass, present and future leaders.



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# ***Disability in Aboriginal Communities***

- **There is no accountable word for disability in traditional Aboriginal language**
- **Disability in some Aboriginal regions is viewed as family and community business**
- **Disability is generally not labeled in Aboriginal communities, as as a deficient, it can be spoken more in terms of watch out for that one as he may not learn the same as the rest of the mob**



# National Disability Insurance Scheme

- **Designed as a social model of disability care rather than the medical model of disability**
- **If its true to its design, should support our most disadvantaged Australians today, being Aboriginal people with disability**
- **Gives the individual the choice of how their life can change with the appropriate supports**
- **Has the potential to create a substantial workforce in Aboriginal communities**



# NDIS and our Aboriginal Communities

- **Designed for the individual, while Aboriginal families are a collective**
- **Seeking outside support can be the last resort due to fear of formal processes that have impacted on Aboriginal communities in the past**
- **The scheme was never designed for First Nations people, incorporating culture, traditions and geographic isolation**



# NDIS Challenges supporting Aboriginal people with Disability

- **Aboriginal people and communities are naturally suspicious of outsiders, we currently have today the highest rates of child removal since the stolen generations and incarceration rates in the world.**
- **Aboriginal mothers particularly feel they will be judged more, if they have a child with disability**
- **Aboriginal people are reluctant to work with any formal systems, there needs to be Aboriginal local area coordinators across all regions**
- **Non Aboriginal workers must acknowledge that competing priorities in communities will always override the best held intentions and flexibility is for-most .**



## ***“Proper Way” of doing business in our communities***

- **Acknowledgement that disability is a new conversation for many of our mobs**
- **Engagement of more Aboriginal workers in the NDIA**
- **Training in disability awareness**
- **Build relationships in communities**
- **Offer any content or resources in a variety of mediums, remember we are a oral community**
- **Listen and be flexiable**



**This is a once in a life time social change  
and there can be no more deserving group  
in Australia today than Aboriginal people  
with Disability.**

**Thank you for listening**