

26 May 2021

Hon Bill Shorten  
Shadow Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

***By email: [bill.shorten.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:bill.shorten.mp@aph.gov.au)***

Dear Shadow Minister

The planned reforms to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) have caused widespread concern for people with disability, their family, supporters and the wider disability sector.

Dietitians Australia is concerned that the introduction of independent assessments, in their current form, will make it more difficult for nutritionally vulnerable individuals to access the scheme and the supports and services they need to achieve their goals.

Alarming, the independent assessments provide inadequate assessment of food and nutrition habits and dietitians assessments would be excluded from the process. This means that nutritionally vulnerable individuals, such as those at risk of malnutrition or swallowing disorders, will not be adequately identified at a critical access point to the scheme.

This places these individuals at risk of:

- Exclusion from the scheme
- Inadequate funding for nutrition supports and dietitian services
- Greater risk of potentially avoidable deaths due to poor access to dietitian services and lack of integrated care in the context of NDIS services

Accredited Practising Dietitians need to be an integral part of these conversations as food fuels function for all sectors of our community.

Both myself and members of our Advocacy and Policy team would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you. We are seeking your support and guidance to navigate how dietitians can have a seat at the NDIA planning table to ensure the nutrition voice is heard and to offer our expertise about broader issues relating to food and nutrition.

We look forward to a meeting at your convenience.

Yours sincerely



**Robert Hunt**  
Chief Executive Officer