

## **FARE AND NOFASD RAISE CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS ON EXCLUSION OF FASD FROM NDIS ELIGIBILITY**

**26 March 2021:** The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) and the National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (NOFASD) have called on the Australian Government to immediately confirm that people with FASD will not have their access to the NDIS restricted further.

This follows shocking reports in today's [Sydney Morning Herald](#) that the Australian Government is considering legislative changes that will deny NDIS funding to people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

[FARE](#) and [NOFASD](#) expressed concern at the devastating impact that the reported legislative changes will have on the lives of people with FASD.

Caterina Giorgi, CEO of FARE, said, "It is one step forward and two steps back for people with FASD and their families. Just as people with FASD were starting to get the supports they need, it now looks like it will all be taken away."

Sophie Harrington, Chief Operating Officer at NOFASD said, "Some of our members are already in desperate circumstances emotionally, as a result of existing barriers to accessing disability support. Further restrictions or challenges to people with FASD, their families and carers would be devastating."

"So many children with FASD are only just getting the NDIS support they need now, and to take that away from them would be heartbreaking."

Today's revelations come just a week after the Senate inquiry into [Effective approaches to prevention, diagnosis and support for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD Inquiry\)](#) handed down its report.

The FASD Inquiry had several recommendations that would improve the National Disability Insurance Agency's interaction with people with FASD, including policy changes in the NDIA and the addition of FASD into the List of Recognised Disabilities.

The FASD Inquiry report also acknowledged that access to the NDIS is already unacceptably difficult.

Professor Elizabeth Elliott, Professor of Pediatrics, University of Sydney and Board member of NOFASD, said, "People with FASD have complex needs and are counting on their government to do more to support them – not less."

FASD is the term used to describe the lifelong physical and/or neurodevelopmental impairments that can result from fetal alcohol exposure.

Caterina Giorgi also said, “People with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and their families should have access to disability supports through the NDIS. These supports are life changing. Any moves to remove these will devastate people with FASD & their families.”

“Just last week a Senate Inquiry into the Effective approaches to prevention, diagnosis & support for FASD recommended further support for people with FASD, who are already experiencing difficulties in accessing the help they need.”

The Government is yet to adopt all of the FASD Inquiry recommendations.

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**NOFASD Australia** is a family-focused organisation and is the essential bridge linking those with lived experience with researchers and clinicians.

The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is a not-for-profit organisation working towards an Australia free from alcohol harms. We do this through developing evidence-informed policy, enabling people-powered advocacy and delivering health promotion campaigns.

FARE has been working with communities across the country to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians for 20 years.