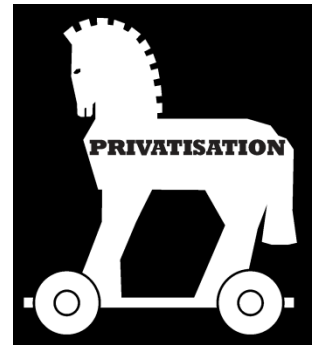




NDIS UPDATE



Newcastle PSA Community Forum unites union and people with disability in support of a real NDIS

On 4 December, Panthers at Newcastle was packed with PSA members, other unionists, people with disabilities, their families and community leaders to discuss the operation of the Hunter trial of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The PSA was represented by Assistant General Secretary Steve Turner.

Many peak groups including the Combined Pensioners and Superannuants have now endorsed the PSA campaign to retain Government run disability and home care services in NSW.

More than 100 PSA members and concerned citizens from across the state contributed questions to the forum panel at Panthers via the PSA's online "Have Your Say" portal.

Members were then asked to vote on the question they most wanted asked of the panel.

The 4 questions with the highest number of member votes were put to the panel. Following is a summary of the panel's responses.

Why is the NSW Government using the introduction of an NDIS as an excuse to cease providing any specialist disability services or basic community care services?

It's a combination of ideology and money.

The State Government is demonising Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC) claiming services have not evolved and changed to support client choice and rights.

We all support better funding for disability support services. None of the reports or research that led to the NDIS called for privatisation. 40% of services are delivered by the public sector. Handing these services to the non-government and private sector will reduce choice not increase it.

Who is going to look after individuals with high and special needs?

The State Government has not answered this. Experience in aged care, mental health and education show that the private and non-government sector do not and cannot provide a service for all.

Who will be the provider of last resort? If the Government knows, they aren't telling anyone.

Staff need to make life changing and difficult decisions about staying in the disability sector. What is the meaning of these clauses in the NDIS Enabling Bill?

14(3) "A transfer of employment under this section does not require the consent of the person transferred"

14(4) & (5) "a transfer agreement may specify an employment guarantee period for the transferred employee in terms of notice,

timeframes, salary conditions and ongoing employment if a future employer does not want the services of current staff.”

The PSA has not been given an answer to this question.

Under the Enabling legislation ADHC staff can be transferred to a new private sector employer without consent or compensation, and without an 'employment guarantee period.' It may be open to the new employer to reorganise their business and make newly transferred staff redundant. The legislation does not protect the accrued redundancy entitlements of ADHC staff, and a staff member's redundancy pay may be forfeited upon transfer.

The PSA and other unions are meeting with ADHC to discuss these and other employment issues but the Enabling Bill, the legal framework for this transition, was pushed through State Parliament before any consultation with unions."

Why is NSW the only state demolishing its public ageing disability and home care support services and staff with the introduction of NDIS?

The PSA can find no other state that has decided to completely abandon the provision of disability services as part of the NDIS.

The Productivity Commission Enquiry Report, which formed the model for the NDIS, does not advocate full privatisation.

The PSA is continuing to hold workplace meetings with all ADHC members. If you would like to arrange a meeting in your workplace please contact your Organiser.

ADHC management in their Q&A information are claiming that the wages, conditions and employment of ADHC workers are safe with any new employer.

This is not legally guaranteed at the moment. Join our campaign to protect your wages and jobs. We need a campaign contact at each and every workplace. If you can help please email us at:

PSACampaigns@psa.asn.au

For information contact

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