



The Hon Bill Shorten MP

**Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Minister for Government Services**

Ref: MC24-009367

Ms Bridget Mather
Chair
Zonta Australia Committee
bridget.mather29@gmail.com

Bridget

Dear Ms Mather,

Thank you for your letter dated 19 August 2024, concerning the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Bill 2024 (the Bill) and funding for menstrual and other personal hygiene products. I understand you also wrote to the Minister for Finance, Women and the Public Service, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, regarding the same issue.

The Bill was passed by the Australian Parliament on 22 August 2024. This critical NDIS legislation puts people with disability back at the heart of the scheme and will make the NDIS better, stronger, fairer and more sustainable.

The hard work starts now as we join with the disability community to co-design the reforms and how and when they will be implemented. There will be changes to how NDIS participant budgets are set so they are more flexible and provide clearer information on what participants can and can't spend their money on, which allows more choice, and more control to determine the best way to use NDIS funding to support their disability needs.

The new rule about what is an NDIS support is the first rule that will need to be in place to support commencement of the legislation. This will be a transitional rule which will set out what the NDIS will and will not fund. It will stay in place until a longer-term rule can be designed with the disability community and agreed with the states and territories.

I acknowledge your concerns regarding funding for menstrual and other personal hygiene products being listed under 'lifestyle' products. Significant feedback was received through the public consultation process and the lists will be updated to recognise that products to manage menstruation can be a disability support for some participants.

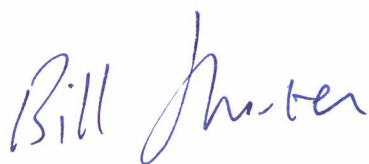
While the Australian Government acknowledges the impact of cost-of-living pressures, in particular some people with disability, the NDIS can only fund supports or services related to a participant's disability and not include day-to-day living costs unrelated to a person's disability support needs.

I am committed to listening to feedback from people with disability, their families and the organisations that support them. Following careful analysis of the feedback received, a report will be published which will inform decision making about what remains on the lists.

Discussions with the disability community will continue over the coming months as we work to make positive changes to the NDIS recommended by the NDIS Review. I encourage you to visit www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers-programs-services/ndis-reforms to keep informed on what is happening and how they can stay involved.

I appreciate you bringing this matter to my attention. I trust the information provided will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Shorten". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bill Shorten MP

10/9/2024