

Welcome to the MH-NDIS Project Updates!

We are excited to keep you connected with the latest research activities and invite you to explore opportunities to participate. Please feel free to share these updates with your networks. If you'd like to stay informed, simply email us to subscribe and receive regular updates directly to your email inbox.

We look forward to staying in touch with you.

Kind regards,

The MH-NDIS Research Team

Fixing the NDIS for People with Psychosocial Disability

Our five-year project (2024-2029) funded by an Australian Research Council Industry Laureate Fellowship awarded to Professor Jen Smith-Merry aims to address serious deficits in the operation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for one of its largest participant groups: people with psychosocial disability.

In this newsletter we provide updates on completed and ongoing work and how you can connect with this. For more information about the project scope and background and to see our latest publications visit:

[NDIS Psychosocial Disability ARC Laureate Project](#)

Project activities

Targeted Foundational Supports for Psychosocial disability:

Professor Jen Smith-Merry (Laureate Fellow and Program lead) and Dr Bernie Mullin (project Senior Research Advisor) have been presenting at multiple forums across the country to discuss our model of Foundational Supports for psychosocial disability.

- A series of publications is now available that provides an explanation of the foundational support model. The model and supporting documents are available here: [NDIS Psychosocial Disability ARC Laureate Project](#)
- Exploring a foundational supports model for people with psychosocial disability webinar was conducted on 12 November with over 250 people registering interest. Access to the webinar and presentation is available, [Building a system of foundational supports for psychosocial disability across Australia.](#)

Work currently being undertaken:

- Qualitative interviews with stakeholders and people experiencing mental health challenges, outside of the NDIS.
- A major program of work developing a national model of housing and housing related supports for people with a psychosocial disability both within and outside of the NDIS.
- Liyew Gebeyaw has begun his PhD project focused on effective models of supports for people with psychosocial disability in Australian justice and forensic settings.
- Economic Modelling and Scenario Analysis of the Support Pathways for People with Psychosocial Disability

- Access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme for Psychosocial Disability: Analysis of Eligibility Trends and Determinants using Administrative Data, 2013–2025
- Disparities in mental health disorders and service use in Australia: Analysis of the National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing (2020–2022)
- Estimating and Projecting the Prevalence of Mental Health-Related Disability in Australia

Connecting with the academic community :

- Matt Jackman (Phd student) published an article in the *British Medical Journal* titled 'Exploring the Experience of Mania': [Exploring the experience of mania | The BMJ](#)
- Former project honours student Meera Chinnappa published her major honours project on media discourse on the Cost of the NDIS as an article in the *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. Read it open access here: [The Cost of the National Disability Insurance Scheme: Australia's Print-Media Discourse - Chinnappa - Australian Journal of Social Issues - Wiley Online Library](#)
- Jen and Dr Joel Hollier (Postdoctoral fellow) presented on the results of our qualitative interviews with NDIS participants at The Mental Health Services (TheMHS) conference from 2 – 5 September.
- Jen presented on the Foundational Support model at the Mental Illness Fellowship Australia (MIFA) annual forum in Canberra on the 26th of November, to the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation (WAPR) Australia on 23rd October, to the Independent Community Living Australia (ICLA) forum on 22nd October.
- Jen presented on an ecosystem approach to mental health supports at the Mental Health Innovation Institute at Duke NUS Medical School at the National University of Singapore in October. A video of the presentation is available here: [Building psycho-social support ecosystems: lessons from Australia](#)
- Dr Firew Bobo (Postdoctoral fellow) presented research findings titled "Inequities in Accessing the NDIS Among People with Severe Disability: A National Data Linkage Analysis" at the Australian Health Economics Society Conference from 22-23 September
- Jen hosted an international delegation from Malaysia's Centre for Inclusive Studies for Communities and Persons with Disabilities (CIRCLE), University Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) and the Institue Lathihan Islam Malaysia (ILIM) from 21 –22 October.
- Dr Jade Chang (Postdoctoral fellow) gave a poster presentation titled "Recent and proposed changes for the NDIS and related systems, what does it mean for people with mental health support needs?" at the Society for Mental Health Research (SMHR) Conference from 19 – 21 November.

Opportunities to be involved

Ongoing conversations are key to the success and relevance of our project. We are keen to involve people with severe mental illness/psychosocial disability (both NDIS participants and those who are not), carers, community members, service providers, advocates, policy makers and other experts.

Participation in interviews: ongoing throughout the project. If you are interested, you can use this [link here](#). Get in touch with Dr Joel Hollier if you want more information: joel.hollier@sydney.edu.au

Team visits, community discussions and presentations. Our team are available to come and speak to community groups, government departments and academic research teams. Contact Jen for further information: jennifer.smith-merry@sydney.edu.au

The University will be closed from Friday 19 December - Monday 5 January, 2026.

For more information please contact us: mh-ndis.project@sydney.edu.au