

The Hon. Daniel Andrews, MP  
Premier of Victoria  
Level 1  
1 Treasury Place  
East Melbourne 3002

25<sup>th</sup> July, 2017

Dear Premier

### **Issues affecting the future of accommodation support services in Victoria**

As you know, VALID actively campaigned for the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and remains a committed and active supporter. VALID's comments in this letter should not be interpreted as any reduction of support for this vital reform that is fundamental to improving life outcomes for people with disabilities.

The transition of Victoria's supported accommodation services to the NDIS, via Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), represents a fundamental shift in the way in which eligible people with disability will have their accommodation needs met. VALID shares the hope that as the market responds to funding opportunities made possible through the NDIS, new housing will become available in the long term and address the critical shortage of specialist disability accommodation in Victoria.

However, in the case of Supported Independent Living (SIL), VALID is deeply concerned that the current NDIS pricing is grossly unfit for purpose.

In light of several reports, including the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into NDIS Costs, and the Pricing Disability Services for Quality Support and Decent Jobs (UNSW, RMIT, Macquarie Uni & Social Policy Research Centre), along with the experiences of people from within our extensive networks, we believe the current NDIS prices will neither generate services capable of recruiting, training and retaining skilled disability support workers, nor allow them to provide adequate supervision and effective management.

In our experience, the quality of outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities living in group homes is almost entirely dependent on the quality of staff, in particular house supervisors, who support them. In the current context, we have come to the view that privatisation represents a serious threat to the security and wellbeing of group home residents.

For this reason, VALID calls on the Victorian Government to:

- Cease all moves towards the privatisation of services until the issues around appropriate pricing have been satisfactorily resolved.
- Demand that the current cap on NDIS expenditure be lifted to allow NDIA to properly fund the transition to full scale implementation.
- Commit to retaining DHHS as the provider of last resort of both SDA and SIL supports.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Stone  
CEO

CC: Hon. Martin Foley MP