

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Portable Training and Professional Development Trial for NDIS Workers Will Be A Win For Townsville Says The Services Union

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The Services Union which represents Disability Support workers in the non-government sector said the announcement by Federal Labor to roll out a Portable Training and Professional Development trial for NDIS workers in the Townsville area, if elected, will be a win for frontline disability workers and people with disabilities and their families in Townsville.

Union members have been campaigning for a number of years for better training along with a plan to address the shortfalls in the NDIS workforce skills development.

Social and Community Sector Lead Organiser for The Services Union, Justine Moran said, the trial will be a huge step in the right direction towards better services and support for people with a disability in Townsville.

"The Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government have done nothing, except taken money from the NDIS to prop up their so called 'Budget surplus,'" Ms Moran said.

"Our Union has long advocated that the NDIS must have a highly skilled, qualified workforce that can deliver high quality services but with no vision or funds for workforce development coming from the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government we have seen a rapid decline in NDIS workers access to skills development."

"We have long advocated for the need to have specific funding for all NDIS workers to access accredited training to build long term careers in the sector and we congratulate Federal Labor in having the vision to follow this through, if elected on 18 May," Ms Moran said.

Federal Labor's trial includes free induction courses, no up-front TAFE fees for 20,000 students studying to work in NDIS or aged care to gain their Certificate III, and ongoing professional development for all NDIS workers, so they can complete their studies or further training.

The Scheme will apply regardless of whether an NDIS worker is full time, part-time, casual or works for multiple employers and will address if there are any skills shortages or gaps.

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Ms Moran said Townsville is the perfect place for the trial because the NDIS is creating between 880 and 950 new jobs in this area.

"This trial will mean more secure jobs for local workers and it will help further establish disability support work as a life-long profession," Ms Moran said.

"Our society would not dare have unqualified teachers in our schools or unqualified nurses in our hospitals and we should not expect anything less than having highly qualified specialists looking after people in our communities with a disability."

"Federal Labor will also lift the staffing cap, set up a Future Fund to secure the long term future of the NDIS, as well as implementing pricing reviews that ensure workers are paid fairly."

"Our Union welcomes Federal Labor's approach to tackling these issues around the NDIS when the Abbott/Turnbull/Morrison Government had ample time to do so, but didn't," Ms Moran said.

"We look forward to working closely with NDIS organisations in Townsville to help roll out the trial if there is a change of government on 18 May."