Shaping the National Disability Insurance Scheme for rural areas

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The National Disability Insurance Scheme will formally start with five ‘launch sites’ on 1 July 2013, and is proposed to roll out to a full national scheme within the ensuing four years. This major initiative, based on an ‘insurance’ approach, will bring significant changes to the way in which people with disability and their carers interact with service providers and funders.

The Alliance is conducting a project, funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), to consult with people in rural and remote Australia on the best ways to connect and deliver access to services for people with disabilities living in rural, regional and remote areas. The project will focus on practical solutions to the special challenges facing people in those areas, to ensure that the NDIS is effective for rural people living with a disability and their carers and communities.

This presentation will describe the design and progress of the project, and generate further discussion of the ways in which the NDIS can best deliver in the future.

Aspects to consider include a rights-based approach; the experiences of people in the health sector providing services for people with disabilities; the potential role for rural and remote health service providers in the delivery of the scheme; economic security and affordability; and the opportunities for interfacing with health reforms such as needs-based planning through Medicare Locals.