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| **Understanding disability through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – challenges and opportunities** |
| **Background/Objectives**The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) represents a major change in the way the services and supports for people with disability are funded. It presents both tremendous opportunity yet significant challenges. At this stage, very little is known about the roll-out of the NDIS to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately affected by disability and often underserved by mainstream services. This has led to strong advocacy and the development of culturally competent service models by community controlled and NGO sector to meet these needs. This project examines how the NDIS meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities affected by disability and promising strategies to improve the ways the NDIA works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations. **Methods**The project will involve a review of program data concerning the roll-out of the NDIS to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will also involve interviews with National Disability Agency (NDIA) staff, local area co-ordinators, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and NGOs and community members. The project takes a co-design approach to developing a study of the roll out of the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This initiative brings together expertise from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations working to provide services to people with disabilities, with researchers and policy-makers. **Results/discussion**This paper presents the current implementation of the NDIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement strategy. In particular, the interaction between the NDIA staff, local area co-ordinators and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) and NGOs is examined with regards to experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in accessing the NDIS program, planning and receiving supports/services through the program.**Keywords**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health; disability; NDIS; evaluation |