

# Amicus on NDIS choices

CHOOSING who to provide NDIS funded supports can be a daunting process; navigating registered and non-registered providers, self-employed contractors, agencies or to employ staff directly.

Bonny Gutteridge, Support Coordination Manager at Amicus Inc, has 15 years within the disability sector, working within the NDIA before her current role at Amicus, offers advice.

"The most important thing is trust; you must feel safe and listened to and know the care you will receive is professional and open to your feedback," Bonny said.

If your plan is managed by the NDIA, you can only access support from a registered provider.

"Registered providers must show evidence they can provide the registered support, you can be confident that staff are properly trained and have security checks. They also undergo regular audits to ensure they maintain a high level of service," Bonny said.

Self-managed and plan managed plans have the op-



**CHOICE:** Amicus can help you in navigating the regulations around NDIS, and advise on your many options.

tion to choose providers who are not registered with the NDIA, plus having access to registered provider support is available. Some supports must be provided by a registered provider, such as Spe-

cialist Disability Accommodation, Specialist Behaviour Support Services and where a restrictive practice may be applied.

"An agency like Amicus is independently audited

against NDIS practice standards, and findings are submitted to the Commission. Unregistered providers are not required to undertake this rigorous checking, so it's hard to know if they are ap-

plying the standards, so you need to do your research," Bonny said.

Self-employed support providers must have an ABN, manage insurance, tax and superannuation. It is impor-

tant to confirm the appropriate insurance, the correct qualifications and skills for the specific support type, and to check their continuity plan for sickness and annual leave to ensure supports are reliable.

If directly employing staff, you will need to recruit and meet standard employer obligations including payroll, superannuation and Workcover insurance.

Bonny advises that from February 1, 2021 the NDIS commission will commence the implementation of new NDIS worker screening.

"Registered NDIS providers will only engage workers who have an NDIS worker screening clearance in risk assessed roles. You can request unregistered providers demonstrate or obtain a clearance to support you before choosing to work with them."

All providers of NDIS funded supports must agree to abide by the NDIS Code of Conduct and have a complaints process if you need to provide feedback. You can also make a complaint directly to the NDIS Commission.