



The Hon Bill Shorten MP

**Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
Minister for Government Services**

Ref: MS22-001065

An open letter to NDIS disability workers supporting people with disability through the COVID-19 pandemic

Over the past two and a half years, you have been working at the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has profoundly impacted the whole community.

As Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and on behalf of the Australian Government, people with disability and their families, I want to thank you for your professionalism, dedication and resilience in going above and beyond to ensure the health, safety and continuity of high quality supports for people with disability.

Your work is valued by the community: it saves lives and helps to build a more inclusive society where everyone, regardless of their disability, has the same opportunity to participate – socially and economically.

While all Australian governments continue to transition COVID-19 responses as circumstances change, the pandemic is not over and the most vulnerable and at-risk populations still need to be protected against the risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19. This includes many people with disability and this is why you, as disability workers, will continue to play a critically important role.

To protect ourselves and others against serious illness from COVID-19 you are encouraged to continue to be vigilant in all these areas:

- stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations
- continue to use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, such as masks.
- continue to practise good hand hygiene;
- do not attend work and isolate when you are unwell;
- follow public health advice and your employer's workplace health and safety arrangements.

It also remains very important that you continue to actively engage with the people with disability you support around these issues, including on how they can protect themselves and about their plans for what happens if they, or you, become infected with COVID-19.

You can find information, resources and up-to-date advice at the following Australian Government websites:

- www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-the-health-and-disability-sector/providing-disability-support-services-during-covid-19
- www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/getting-help-during-coronavirus-covid-19

I am grateful for the work you do to ensure people with disability remain safe. Please take every step to also stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Shorten". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B".

Bill Shorten MP

16/1/2023