.49

National Disability Futures – how the NDS and Futures Studies are Helping Service Providers to Create Preferred Futures

Colin Russo
Engaging Futures
Australia

Abstract

In this paper, futures methods of CLA, futures wheels and scenarios map outcomes of the event "Futures thinking, Strategy Development and Transformative Research": a three-day strategic foresight course presented by international futurist Professor Sohail Inayatullah (National Disability Services, 2016). The course helped attendees to develop critical futures narratives about the future of their organisations and the disability sector. The course builds upon the NDS Queensland state conference Shaping the Future. Preparing for Change, in April 2016 – attended by nearly 500 participants. Attendees of the three-day strategic foresight course mapped trends and challenges to create preferred futures.

Introduction

This article contains the author's perspectives about the scenarios that emerged from attendees of the three-day course presented by Professor Inayatullah – the author was one of three facilitators who helped guide attendees during the event. Participants selected a focus question, a compelling issue and used questioning and creative process to design the futures they desire.

Within the broader disability history timeline, a most relevant occurrence for participants of the workshop, was how the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) was formed and how it 'changes the game'.

The Event

The world's first UNESCO Chair of Futures Studies, Professor Sohail Inayatullah was engaged by National Disability Services Queensland to facilitate "Futures Thinking, Strategy Development and Transformative Research": a three-day strategic foresight course in Brisbane about disability sector futures, held 19-21 October, 2016 (National Disability Services, 2016). The workshop followed the state conference *Shaping the Future*.

Preparing for Change in April 2016 - NDS Qld engaged Professor Inayatullah to provide a futures keynote and in-depth workshop at the NDS Qld state conference which was attended by nearly 500 participants. The State Manager of NDS Qld said, "the three-day strategic foresight course builds upon a groundswell of interest arising from our conference in how futures thinking can assist in transforming futures under the NDIS".

During the three-day strategic foresight course, participants responded to critical questions like the following:
- **What emerging issues could affect the futures of disability organisations?**
- **Will service providers be able to make the shift to a person based national disability system?**
- **What are the possible impacts of corporate and community interactive leadership and sharing?**
- **Can new technologies assist and empower persons with disability?**
- **What scenarios and strategies create engaging futures?**

Australia's new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and global shifts in rapidly changing market-places were strong foci of the futures questions responded to during the course.

National Disability Services Queensland (NDS Qld) organized the strategic foresight course for disability service provider leaders to reimagine the futures of their organisations under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which rolled-out nationally in July 2016. The NDS is Australia's peak body for non-government disability service organisations, representing more than 1100 non-government service providers. Collectively, NDS members operate several thousand services for Australians with all types of disability.

Service provider leaders participated in the strategic foresight course to create alternative desired futures for their organisations. By using futures methods, participants mapped trends and challenges to understand possible futures.

The initial exercise participants of the course completed, was an historical timeline of how the NDIS emerged.

Emergence Of The Council Of Australian Government Nds Strategy

The Council of Australian Government NDS Strategy has emerged from international, national, State and Local Government involvement in disability strategy.

In 2007, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was open for signing and the following year Australia became one of the first nations to ratify the Convention. The purpose of the Convention is currently to:

> *promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity (p.4).*

In 2008, Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory governments built upon the Convention by signing the National Disability Agreement. Introduced in 2009, the Agreement provided clear objectives and responsibilities for the three levels of the Australian government to care for people with disabilities and their families.

Later in 2009, engagement with community and stakeholders by the National People with Disability Carers Council resulted in the creation of the report SHUT OUT: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia – National Disability Strategy Consultation Report.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2010-2020 National Disability Strategy emerged from all of the above developments. Community engagement with people with a disability was thought to be "an essential part of the Strategy" (COAG, p.10). Delivered in 2011, the Strategy's six key policy areas create a socially inclusive society in which individuals can achieve their objectives. The six policy areas of the Strategy follow:

1. Inclusive and accessible communities – the physical environment e.g. public transport and social and cultural life.
2. Rights protection, justice and legislation – statutory protections e.g. anti-discrimination and justice systems.
3. Economic security – jobs, opportunities and financial independence.
4. Personal and community support – inclusion and participation in the community, person-centred care and informal care.
5. Learning and skills – early childhood education and care, schools and further education.
6. Health and wellbeing – health services, health promotion and the interaction between health and disability systems, wellbeing and enjoyment of life.

Supporting the achievement of objectives of both the National Disability Agreement and the National Disability Strategy is a national agenda for research into matters relating to disability for the nation – the National Disability Research and Development Agenda (2011). The Agenda includes five directions that focus Australian research into disability issues:

• Australian disability demographic profile and trend information, including access to social and economic inclusion data.
• Research focusing on human rights, participation in community life, access to mainstream activities and services, and broader systems change.
• Evaluations, reviews and research to contribute to the evidence base to improve service delivery and support options.
• Analysis of the factors that support sector sustainability, sector development and improved organisational capability.
• Research on the profile, experiences and issues affecting diverse and/or disadvantaged group of people with disability, such as:
  o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
  o People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  o Women with disability
  o People in regional, rural and remote areas.

The priority areas, as are outlined in the National Disability Agreement and the National Disability Research and Development Agenda, are:

a) Better Measurement of Need
b) Population Benchmarking for Disability Services
c) Making Older Carers a Priority
d) Quality Improvement Systems based on Disability Standards
e) Service Planning and Strategies to Simplify Access
f) Early Intervention and Prevention, Lifelong Planning and Increasing Independence and Social Participation Strategies
g) Increased Workforce Capacity
h) Increased Access for Indigenous Australians
i) Access to Aids and Equipment; and

j) Improved Access to Disability Care.

Other key documents aimed at improving the lives of individuals with a disability, their families and carers, are the National Health Reform Agreement (2011), the Productivity Commission Inquiry into National Disability Long-term Care and Support Scheme (Disability Care and Support, Report no. 54, 2011), and the National Carer Strategy and Action Plan (2011).

NDIS Changes The Game

Australian disability support organisations today no longer resemble institutions of the 1970's. The main shifts are the providing of care closer to home and by focusing on local and social approaches befitting local cultures rather than only centralised medical models. The problem for today's disability sector that the NDIS is counteracting is a 2011 Productivity Commission report that found the previous system of disability management was "underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient" (Laragy, 2016). Workforces are also being shaped by rapid changes in workplaces everywhere - driven by global digital highways and technology transformations. These combined changes mean that vast potentials exist for new corporate models in the disability industry. Better access for persons with a disability to customized services at cost effective prices and in a consistently caring way is a preferred future. At the same time, larger corporate organisations experience disruption while trying to align with updated requirements. In a rapidly changing world, corporations expect the NDIS to evolve and will need to remain flexible to benefit from NDIS offerings. Smaller corporations must also operate along modern principles to take advantage of the NDIS program, creating bridges for the education and accreditation of staff who have traditionally operated as low skilled volunteers in low to high care facilities.

The pendulum is now swinging to balance social, medical and governance models where manageability and serviceability are priorities. New efficiencies are hoped to translate into a leap forward in provision of care, by providing additional services for those who need it most. A criterion for receiving support from the NDIS is needing support from a person or equipment to do everyday things because of an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent (NDIS, 2016). The NDIS has raised awareness of the need for a national disability support program that creates consistency in managing programs that meet client needs, across all Australian states and territories.

Following the mapping of the historical timeline of how the NDIS emerged, participants used the futures method of emerging issues analysis (EIA) to map trends and issues of disability futures.

Anticipation Of Signals Impacting National Disability Futures

During the workshop, emerging issues (and weak signals or black swans) were anticipated by using emerging issues analysis (EIA). EIA identifies and studies issues across an S-curve that are influential to the future. The method of 'futures wheels' was then used to explore first and second order consequences of such changes or developments. Major groupings of the anticipated future factors identified by service providers are shown below in the following three tables.

The first table deals with technological change from the perspective of transformation of current technology into future artificial intelligence and its impacts on the disability workforce. The first column "Positive Futures" shows the benefits of technological change to individuals. Then, long-term possibilities of deeper transformations to personal communication systems, human abilities and global connectivity are considered for their effects on workplace practices as we know them today. Risks include abuse of ethics and a loss of jobs though with morally sound outcomes for disabled individuals. This disruption could occur as a result of workplace automation and technologies that displace workers from traditional roles.

Table 1. *Rise of Artificial Intelligence*

Positive Futures	Human Transformation	Risks	Safety Factors
People more able to achieve tasks. Tracking for dementia and other diseases	One-to-one communication enhanced by electronic sharing of sensory perception	Abuse of ethics	Moral uses
People want self-determination and to be provided with personal AI clinicians	"Professor X" style communication with whole communities	Becoming superseded, like factory workers replaced by robots	Uses for evolution and for doing difficult jobs or unhealthy jobs e.g. involving X Rays
Other meanings for life are found	More human and emotional needs satisfied via AI online	Waste	Design to enhance human relationships
Story determines the future as limitations lessen	Transformation from apps to VR to AI to telepathy to cybernetics	End of work as we know it	Customise for local markets

The next anticipatory futures table, shows the results of a futures wheel that explored emerging issues around possibilities of the traditional job and how it transforms beyond what we know today. The first column "Introduction of Universal Basic Income" explores how choice of work location can expand employment opportunities and the duties that workers deliver. Further, universal basic income influences organisations to recruit diverse stakeholders to expand capacities of the organisation. They do this through marketing to open up new possibilities for what a wider client base demands. As these demands unfold, more flexible workforces are needed to cope with change and to call for creation of new work portfolios and required skills to delver them. Disruptions to the traditional organisational model mean the end of the office as a result of being replaced by a virtual world of apps, robotics and online assistants. Such a world needs changes in workforce legislation, agreements and guidelines.

Table 2. *End of the Traditional Job*

Introduction of Universal Basic Income	Participant Drivers	More flexible workforce	Relationship change
Choice of where to work	Recruitment of diverse stakeholders	Variety and diversity of niche skills	Power differences, self and industry drivers
Employment opportunities	Capacity building	Portfolio of work	Federal, State systems, legislation, tax refunds
Reduction of poverty	Self promotion and marketing	End of the office	Social media, consumer influences
Duties of workers	Workers choose functions	Virtual world	Mainstream accessibility

The last EIA and Futures Wheel table explores organisational change and transformation of emerging national disability futures. The first column "Organisation Transforms" shows that

organisations move from being providers of single, traditional products to diversifying their offerings under new business names, locations, models and functions. Training and accreditation are key to sustaining these transitions. Then, participation with the disability sector leads to innovative platforms within the sector and creates cultural change more broadly in society.

Table 3. *From Expert Providers to Participatory Providers*

Organisation Transforms	Participation with Disability Sector	Innovative Platform	Cultural Change
Diversification 1. Niche products 2. Target markets 3. Outsource HR, accounting, legal	Involvement: 5%-10% by 2016, & 50% by 2026	Skills matrix: 1 What's needed 2 Barter/trade 3 Equipment/cars	Deregulation and pricing
Business start-up support	Other platforms 1 State 2 National 3 Global	Peer to peer support	Shared values
Training	Consortiums	Increased organisational demand	Industry & Identity
Accreditation	University/commercial	Casual contractors increase	Stigma, acceptance and inclusion

Other emerging issues and trends include the constantly changing shape of the nation's demographics bell-curve. As populations increase, the number of people available to provide care by comparison to the number of people in the workforce or who are at home, is shifting.

Further social trends include changes in shared values as generations of consumers are raised with different influences in the school, home and workforce environments. The following table provides examples of common values shifts experienced from the 1940's over successive generations to the 2000's. The social trends indicate why people with disabilities expect different types of service and products.

Table 4. *Values Shifts Over Four Generations*

When raised at home	Generation Name	Values
1940's-1950's	Postwar baby boomers or veterans	Raised with little income, respect for authority, traditional family, education inaccessible
1960's-1970's	Gen X or Latch-key	Raised while parents were off at work and were given key to the house, optimistic, education is a birthright
1980's to 1990's	Gen Y or Millenials	Baby boomer's children, tech-savy, ethnically diverse, credit card aware, saw major purchases of cars etc. See education as means to an end
2000's to 2010's	Gen Z or Technologists	Technologists, raised with online purchases, saw new homes and investments purchased. Education is expensive but valuable

The above emerging issues and consequences were considered to be critical uncertainties driving the futures of the disability sector. Participants then created scenarios of a range of possible futures.

Scenarios

During the workshop, scenarios were created to help service providers take an alternative view of multiple possible futures in the context of their organisations and an environment of rapid change.

Here are some 2026 glimpses of possible futures from the scenarios the participants prepared. They include topics such as 'Corporate collaborativism', 'Embracing technology' and 'First and second order sector macro-scale change and deep systems changes'. References added throughout this article and in the following scenarios have been sourced and elaborated upon by the author:

1. Corporate collaborativism and alternative business models Moon landing metaphor - small facilitatory steps by service providers produces a great leap ahead for the industry	By taking small steps, this scenario sees service providers meeting client and government requirements in at least part of the business. Then, service providers facilitate a learning organisation model and a matrix model to transform internal corporate practices. This internal growth leads to new external strategies for cooperating with other agencies and providers. Alternative models of business cooperation, commons and co-design arangements add to and guide possibilities and preferred futures. In these areas of the scenario, the community becomes empowered, engagement increases and responsiveness to local to global markets increases. Further, as new providers strengthen into larger ones, they outsource corporate services such as human resources, accounting or training services for smaller providers. This innovation results in support for smaller organisations, who then focus on customising client services while contributing to sector growth. A growing industry creates stability for new employees though the faster it grows the more pressure it places on those employees to offer new and up to date services to organisations. By taking small steps, leaders are able to review their branch areas to sustainably (at less cost to human resources) produce value for money. This success attracts additional government funding. Services further improve, and this increases the happiness of people with disability and their families, communities and global reputation of the industry.
2. Embracing technology Cloud technology metaphor – living high in the cloud and observing more technological possibilities globally	This scenario sees new knowledge and use of technologies greatly improve both intellectual and physical disability futures. In 2026, technology becomes a great enabler, for example, by clarifying brain waves into clear thinking, decision-making and actions. For persons with a physical disability, particularly paralysis, a new "wireless transmitter" (Regalado, 2015) is developed to give them a way to control electronic devices like smart phones, tablets, TVs, computers, wheelchairs and driverless cars. More radically, "gene editing" (Regalado, 2014) has also emerged, allowing scientists to disable genes or replace them. With a vast global array of technologies available, disability organisations help individuals by coaching and guiding them in their availability and use e.g. apps, robotics, artificial intelligence and virtual reality systems.

3. First and second order sector macro-scale change and deep systems changes Metaphor - Waves of change produce a futuristic and democratic playing field.	In the long-term future, the above scenarios are integrated into organisations via an initial wave of change, building a superior industry to the one we have today. The second wave of change occurs in this scenario when a local supplier perfects that the client market has been hoping for – human assistance via a consistent service producing reliable and dependable results better than before. The new organisation exemplifies what the market wants and buys up smaller organisations and converts them into its privatized franchise model. Then, by using economies of scale and by working democratically, a third wave or trend emerges on a large societal scale. Persons with a disability and their support communities are promoted as being champions to society. It is their stories of conquering adversity that are the focus of attention. The NDS moderates the impacts of monopolization in the industry and the transition to an equal playing field occurs, thereby sustaining an advanced and democratic disability services sector.
4. Global investment and marketing strategies Metaphor – Advanced holographic systems in which the disability services sector co-locates multiple systems in the same host A second metaphor is of a celestial bridge, connecting business models and services across time and space	At the organisational level, investment opens up areas of research and development of technological support services never before thought possible. In this scenario, new businesses emerge from new pioneers of disability care policy, practice, products, technologies and continual feedback with clients. Sponsored by major global business models such as the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative new brands emerge in the market-place who are investing in the long-term future. The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative is an allocation of $3 billion with a plan of bringing together scientists, tools and technology, and investment funding. There is extreme optimism to cure diseases, link brand names to major organisations for the publicity benefits and to support sharing of knowledge about practices. In this scenario, the NDS provides resources, global linkages and national democratic scrutiny of the marketplace and thereby sustains affordable care – ensuring that it is evolving, accessible and is consistently priced throughout the industry. They balance this US privatised business model by researching practices globally and make them accessible. Democratic models arise from Norway and Sweden and cultural shifts in holistic family care emerge from Eastern countries. Reputable practices and a selection of services that meet low and high care client needs appears. This process works via new visibility of pricing structures i.e. the product lifecycle, its costs and benefits are linked to performance measures and outcomes. In this scenario, the market introduces, yet protects the industries from monopolies for the long-term. The benefits of affordable prices and exposure of organisations to new levels and types of education, training and business models entices growth and diversity. Corporate assistance builds new strategies for investment measures, networking, business model redesign and considers local to global markets, cultural conditions, technological supports and events programs. All diversity is embraced and is facilitated in the disability services sector within the context of trends, challenges and preferred futures.

The above scenarios see service providers transitioning to the NDIS over the coming years through strategies that keep their options open during times of rapid change. The disability industry is subject to population and demographic changes that it has no formal control over e.g. Brisbane growing by one-third and the Gold Coast doubling in size by 2026 and demographics shifting from 'baby boomer' needs to 'millenials' interests. Ongoing technological changes also pressure the disability sector to expand and to take on-board new systems and practices.

CLA And Bi-Variate Analysis

The futures method Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) provided a framework for investigating and shaping possible futures into a coherent new future. It was used to generate four new scenarios by combining it with a bi-variate analysis to show more facets of disability futures in different environments. CLA provides four official layers of 'litany' – headlines and data, 'systems' – the apparent and more deeply connective world sustaining current operations, 'worldview' – perspectives about the subject offering distinct and alternative views, and 'myth/metaphor' – ways of knowing and communicating via analogies and other deeply held and influential stories of the past, present or futures. Bi-variate analysis was applied to structure four new scenarios around two sets of oppositional variables e.g. Disappearance of the NDIS and Thriving of the NDIS. CLA was used to map the conditions that would support, for example, the failure and disappearance of the NDIS, and the success and thriving of the NDIS.
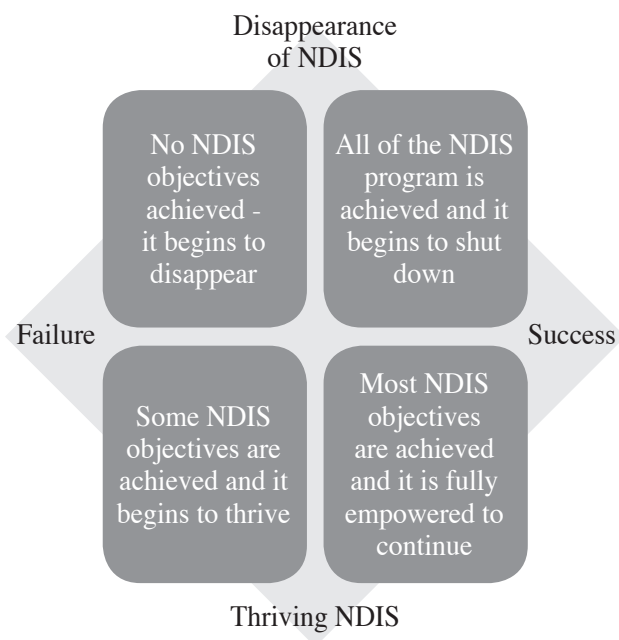

Disappearance of NDIS

| No NDIS objectives achieved - it begins to disappear | All of the NDIS program is achieved and it begins to shut down |

Failure / Success

| Some NDIS objectives are achieved and it begins to thrive | Most NDIS objectives are achieved and it is fully empowered to continue |

Thriving NDIS

*Figure 1.*Bi-Variate Analysis with Litany layer of CLA displayed

The first CLA shows that in an environment of failure, NDIS objectives and service provider objectives can't be achieved. With a small number of successful achievements (up to 25%), the NDIS departs, making room for a new program to emerge.

Table 1. *Failure, then Disappearance of the NDIS*

Litany	'NDIS failure disappoints thousands with a disability'
Systems	No skill sets
Worldview	Lost the way
Myth metaphor	Ghost town

With half of NDIS' objectives achieved, a change in the business model builds in and renews optimism. This means that the NDIS is constantly listening to clients and adapting its strategies based on foresight and feedback.

Table 2. *Failure, then Thriving of the NDIS*

Litany	'NDIS emerges from the ashes with new services'
Systems	Change in the business model- half of NDIS objectives are achieved and it begins to thrive
Worldview	Open for engagement and workshopping possible futures and more client satisfaction
Myth metaphor	Termites eat the wooden door

The third CLA, shows a thriving disability sector as the NDIS is achieving more of its goals.

Table 3. *Success, then additional Thriving of the NDIS*

Litany	'Fortune smiles on NDIS as hard work pays off for clients'
Systems	NDIS objectives are achieved and it is fully resourced to continue. Community is empowered and more clients are consistently treated very well.
Worldview	Most people support disability services. and the focus is now on making visible the process of creating medical break throughs, new discoveries and permanent solutions and making this a priority for more investors, product, entrepreneurs and governments globally
Myth metaphor	Evolving golden door

Fourthly, the following CLA is of a very successful NDIS program, that has taught disabled indviduals to survive on their own. At this stage, the NDIS has achieved its vision and aims and begins to close down.

Table 4. *Success, then planned disappearance of the NDIS as its ultimate goal is reached*

Litany	'Queensland farewells the NDIS as it sails into the sunset'
Systems	Clients disappear, then NDIS closes – 'sunset clause' allows funding to transfer to other areas of disability support e.g. poverty alleviation measures
Worldview	A successful NDIS shuts down - NDIS has helped all clients to permanently stand on their own
Myth metaphor	Butterfly flys away when done

The above CLAs set in a bi-variate analysis show the macro-scale of sector change – a long-term futures outline inclusive of least desired and most preferred futures.

What is the author's critique of the process or outcomes? While the process was robust and generated legitimate alternatives, helping everyone to check their assumptions and create a shared and layered view of possible and preferred futures, additional method-based critical applications are possible e.g. for a four-day course. Some research of timelines and critical positions can be woven into researching possible futures. An example of how this task can be completed either in a fourth workshop day, or when taken back into the workplace – or indeed as is being written here as a journalistic study, follows.

Critical Application Of CLA

Next, 'critical silhouettes' are applied by the author to table 5 above "*Success, then alternative to disappearance of the NDIS as its ultimate goal is reached*", to shape longer-term (2050) possibilities. The word 'silhoutte' means to cast or show something against a brighter background. It is used here with the term 'critical' which means here to identify additional states and outline a point of transition from one state to another. Critical silhouettes help us to shoot for the stars, release us from prisons of style and fashion by clarifying juxtapositions – including opposites, super and supra positions, temporal reflexivity - to guide questioning activity in each layer, leading to possibilities, strategy, and foresight.

A note on the precise method chosen among possible 'critical silhouettes': critical oppositional positions are used in bullet pointed lists of table 5, below. Then, two causations are hyphenated. The first, is a simple causation drawn from the human condition. Then, a complex causation is drawn from the priorities in the documents listed above. Further, the year 2050 is applied where a more futuristic scenario is more easily imagined. These critiques correlate with the CLA layers.

Table 5. Success, then alternative to disappearance of the NDIS as its ultimate goal is reached

'In the year 2050' CLA Layers		Bulleted oppositional positions of 'for and against'. Then, a hyphenated simple and complex causation
Litany	'Rapid human advancements improve liveability—disabilities no longer seen as limitations'	• For: society funds advanced 'disability' augmentations, for its most needy – why? It is a human and moral position to take collective responsibility for the needy – further, this promotes 'health and wellbeing' helping people to do more • Against: Individuals say no to enhancements seeing themselves as complete – why? It is a natural position to see someone as complete and self-evidencing of factors e.g. liveability, joy and happiness. The 'against' position relates to 'measurement of need', 'disability standards', efficiency of whole society

Systems	Improved management systems	• For: Improved managements systems – why? They improve personal systems of pharmaceuticals and prescription medicines, tech advancements, spiritual guidance, and knowledge which has the combined effect of increasing access to enablers of hands, hearts and minds – in business systems, they improve how 'disability demographic profile and trend information' is collected and applied and how 'social participation strategies' and 'analysis of the factors that support sector sustainability, sector development and improved organisational capability' are aligned with preferred futures. Ongoing futures studies are essential to this alignment. • Against: Some stakeholders prefer to work in unconstrained settings free from wider guidances – why? Underlying beliefs and values disconnect some providers, for religious or cultural reasons, from wider networks – and relates to 'people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds' and 'better measurement of need'.
World view	Clearer understanding of actions that lead directly to client satisfaction achieve preferred futures. Resources are available to more who are in greatest need according to their vision and strategies and how they sustain humans in their environment.	• For: Egalitarian society takes the view that all people are equal and deserve equal rights. Further, this view is extended from local to global and to becoming benefactors of more cultures – why? It sees the world as connected at all levels of society – and relates to 'improved access to disability care' and 'broader systems change' that ultimately bring peaceful, democratic and respectful outcomes. • Against: Neo-liberal protectionist stance, reserves funding for those who are in the system of creating that funding – why? For provision of funding to organisations that best deliver outcomes most needed by society – this relates to 'improved organisational capacity'. It can be inclusive of democratic values, but frowns upon wide allocation of local funding where no direct line of return on investment is demonstrated.
Myth metaphor	The butterfly constantly changes e.g. it is a starting point in a metaphor of both a natural body and transmutable craft e.g. an aircraft folds its wings for faster travel.	• For: The butterfly is a metaphor for technological and human advancement – why? It is 'a triumph of the human spirit' that we should evolve/improve 'from the chrysalis to the butterfly' all in our families and communities – and this relates to the UN vision that we should 'promote respect for their inherent dignity'. • Against: Those against, are against the mechanization of this view – why? They believe that the world is already fulfilling - This view also relates to the UN vision of promoting respect for indidividuals' inherent dignity.

All human beings have capacities that are limited by form. Instead of the NDIS disappearing, it could assist everyone to overcome their limitations in a world where humans are having to compete with machines. Further, individuals can self-selectively improve their limitations, aim for the stars – the singularity, and new learning about insight and action – helping people live in ways that help themselves and others. Here the meta-view is of seeing carers in the community as role models, like 'Mother Teresa's' who are always giving back more to the world they live in than what they physically receive – the reward is partially spiritual and deeply satisfying. Critically, for carers and individuals, there is pain and suffering and work to achieve 'transcendance' as there is in all other communities and this work should be justly rewarded. Work should be responded to, in light of the carer's and individual's needs.

Strategy And Foresight

While attendees from various stakeholder organisations noted their own personal preferences for preferred futures, they also discussed the following examples as important steps to achieving preferred and engaging futures. They include:

(1) Applying foresight and futures methods to shape organisational strategies.

(2) Opening provider organisations to becoming learning organisations participating in accredited training and offering accreditation to trainees.

(3) Staff upgrading their knowledge and experience to be human and tech-savy alongside tech-savy consumers.

(4) Maintaining continual feedback loops, developing new business models with a matrix of skills and services on offer to service changing client needs.

(5) Working with a preferred future vision of diverse organisational services operating in an environment that everyone wants. Ensuring that this vision is inclusive of adaptive legislation.

(6) Ensuring that a marketing and publicity of the sector, its individuals and vision becomes a desired priority for more people nationally and globally.

(7) Following a 'best for less' model that attracts more funders and investors.

(8) While economics are important it is also hoped that our national approach to disability services will keep pace with international changes while empowering local communities to work with providers transparently, warmly and successfully in meeting performance measures.

(9) In order to achieve a state of constant positive transformation for their organisations, attendees were asked to prepare a narrative about their own life and how they learn more about the future. The updating of this narrative is also valued as a powerful strategy for bringing foresight into organisations.

Most recently (December, 2016), COAG's Disability Reform Council wrote a Communique advising that it "continues its work to monitor and strengthen the transition of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)" (p.1) and that:

> more than 38,500 people with a disability have joined the NDIS since 1 July 2016. More than 24,000 people with a disability have had a plan approved and there are more than 5,400 young children referred to the Early Childhood Early Intervention gateway (p.1).

Conclusion

Attendees of the three-day course discussed sustainable and unsustainable futures, by engaging in the creation of possible and preferred futures.

Initially, participants explored emerging issues and the consequences of those futures if left unaddressed in a business-as-usual future. In this future there is little direction emerging from organisations in the disability sector – they are responding to their environment by reacting and not creating the future. This lack of internal control means that, for example, the focus of attention is on daily business and not on foreseeable challenges or opportunities. The consequences include disability sector organisations failing to keep up to date even as generations of new clients emerge wanting different kinds of services based on new trends. Participants identified and then unpacked further ramifications of this future: the 'Rise of Artificial Intelligence', leading to the 'End of the Traditional Job', and the need to transform 'From Expert Providers to Participatory Providers'.

Following the application of EIA and discussions of consequences, attendees created alternative scenarios to the business as usual futures, such as 'Corporate collaborativism and alternative business models' and 'Global investment and marketing strategies'. Another alternative was of 'First and second order sector macro-scale change and deep systems changes'. A core strategy in this scenario was to promote persons with a disability and their support communities as being champions to society where their stories showcase triumph over adversity e.g. life stories of individuals participating in the Paralympic Games are emulated in more areas of life.

The bi-variate analysis and CLAs deepened the alternative scenarios and took them into explorations of least preferred and most preferred futures e.g. scenarios of failure and success of the NDIS. These scenarios led to the development of strategy and foresight to accelerate the disability sector toward staff training, accreditation of staff, learning how to work collaboratively across more areas of disability organisations and the sector, improving on marketing messages, and developing effective models for embracing ongoing futures challenges.

While the alternatives discussed within this paper addressed scenarios focusing on the disability sector, I note here that attendees also discussed broader issues addressed by government agencies e.g. climate change, population growth and decline, energy availability and cyber crime. I acknowledge that additional scenarios are possible based on outliers and new challenges. Other issues include the resting of supervision over the NDIS to gain institutional memory, or as disability providers prefer, supervisory appointments of those with a 'lived experience' with disability (Tingle, 2016).

The course helped attendees to align inner-stories, vision and strategies for preferred futures.

The National Disability Services organisation, as an umbrella organisation continues supporting service providers to adapt and innovate in a complex and rapidly changing environment.

Correspondence

Dr. Colin Russo
Engaging Futures
Email: colinrusso@engagingfutures.com

References

Australian Associated Press. (2012). PM introduces NDIS bill to parliament. Retrieved from, http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/gillard-introduces-ndis-legislation/news-story/571522e8b26ce8cb933368a398c9a531

Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. (2008). National Disability Agreement. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. (2011). National Disability Research and Development Agenda. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Chan Zuckerberg Initative. (2016). Chan Zuckerberg Initiative announcement LIVE with Priscilla. Retrieved from, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKt8XUYqRjw

Council of Australian Governments. (2011). National Health Reform Agreement. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2011). National Carer Strategy Action Plan (2011-2014). Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Laragy, C. (2016). Understanding the NDIS: how does the scheme work and am I eligible for funding? Retrieved from, http://theconversation.com/understanding-the-ndis-how-does-the-scheme-work-and-am-i-eligible-for-funding-58726

National Disability Insurance Scheme (2016). The NDIS Checklist. Retrieved from, http://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist

National Disability Services. (2016). Strategic Foresight Course presented by Sohail Inayatullah - website Retrieved from, http://www.nds.org.au/events-and-training/three-day-strategic-foresight-course-presented-by-sohail-inayatullah

Productivity Commission 2011. (2011). Disability Care and Support, Report no. 54. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Regalado, A. (2014). Who owns the biggest biotech discovery of the century? *MIT Technology Review*. Retrieved from, http://www.technologyreview.com/s/532796/who-owns-the-biggest-biotech-discovery-of-the-century/

Regalado, A. (2015). A Brain-Computer Interface That Works Wirelessly. *MIT Technology Review*. Retrieved from, http://www.technologyreview.com/s/534206/a-brain-computer-interface-that-works-wirelessly/

The Council of Australian Governments Disability Reform Council. (2016). 5 December 2016 Communiqué. Retrieved from, http://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12_2016/coag_disability_reform_council_communique_5_december_2016.pdf

The Council of Australian Governments. (2011). 2010-2020 National Disability Strategy. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

The National People with Disabilities and Carer Council. (2009). SHUT OUT: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia – National Disability Strategy Consultation Report. Canberra: The Commonwealth of Australia.

Tingle, L. (2016). Canberra continues push to control NDIS. *Australian Financial Review*. Retrieved from, http://www.afr.com/news/canberra-continues-push-to-control-ndis-20161221-gtflrc

United Nations. (2007). United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol. Retreived from, http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf