

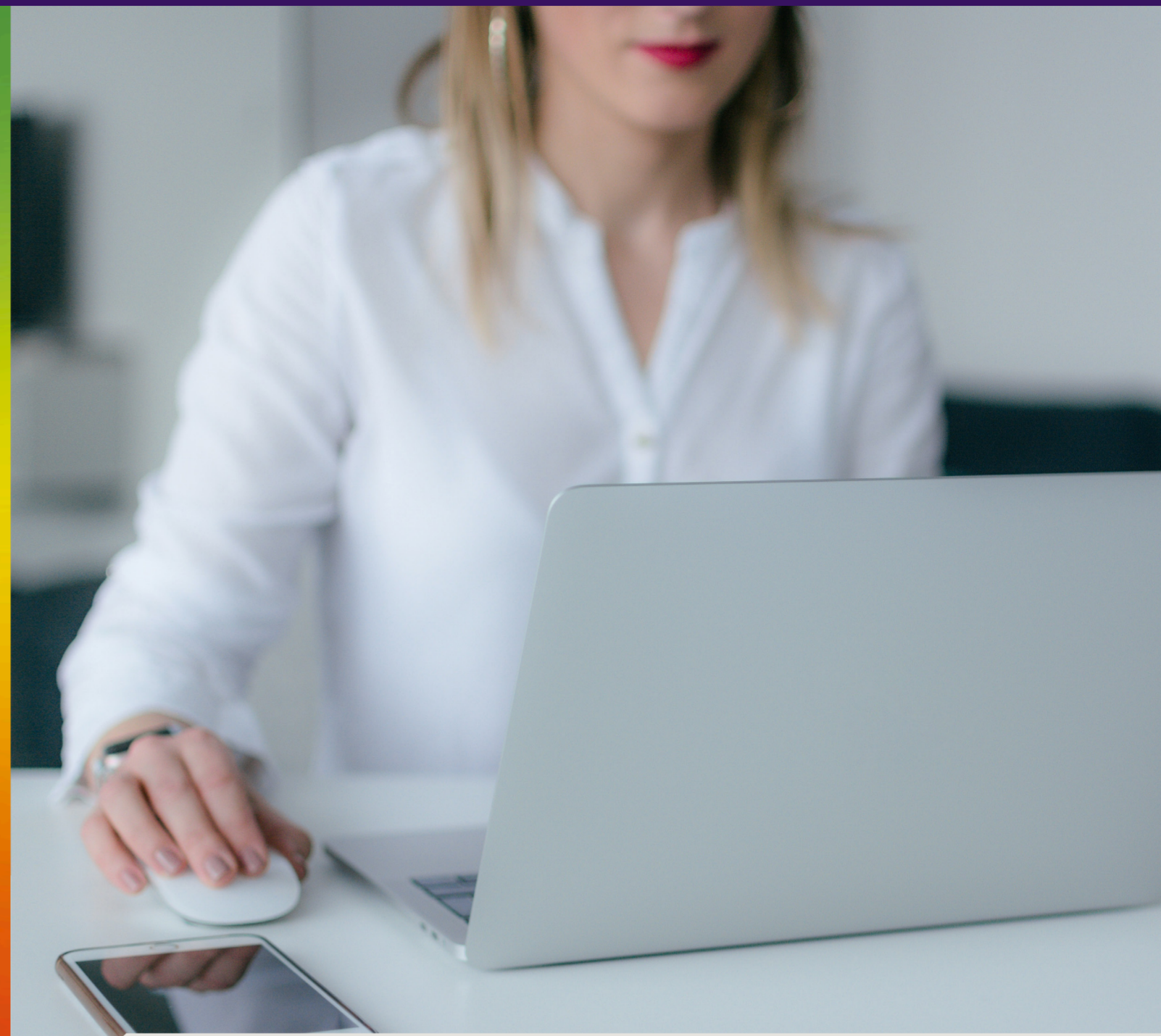
Perspectives of autistic adults on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

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BACKGROUND

The aim of this study is to explore the perspectives of autistic adults regarding the NDIS through a mixed method approach.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) supports Australians impacted by disability with their independence and goals. With autism being the largest primary disability category within the NDIS, it will be important to examine perspectives of the autism community regarding the scheme to inform future policy and decision making.

Autistic people will have lived insight as to the needs, priorities and challenges faced within the community. Providing a platform in which their viewpoints are communicated on a collective level can assist them to contribute to decisions made by the scheme, which invariably impact their lives.

This study uses a mixed method approach to examine the data. Quantitative analyses will be conducted on close-ended responses provided regarding the NDIS application process, planning meetings, knowledge of staff on autism, adequacy of support, ability to utilise allocated funds, and the results of the participant's most recent review. Additionally, responses to an open-ended question regarding the scheme will be examined through Braun and Clarke (2022)'s reflexive thematic analysis approach to generate themes from the data.



Participants were recruited as part of a broader survey that explored the perspectives of the autism community on various topics of relevance.

FINDINGS

The study is currently at the coding phase. While codes are yet to be grouped into themes, proposed themes may concern:

- Cost as a barrier in accessing NDIS
- Complexity of application process
- Lack of energy to apply
- The need to increase staff awareness surrounding autism
- Comfort in knowing that supports are available
- Accessibility due to diagnostic level and masking ability
- Anxiety around being labelled as "disabled"
- Supported through child's access
- Lack of information and consistency regarding supports available
- Uncertainty surrounding possible changes

Codes and themes are currently in the process of being reviewed and may be subject to change.

"I am so burned out by fighting the NDIS for my daughter. I don't have the energy to apply for myself."

Participant