

From: [\[REDACTED\]](#)
To: xxxxxxx.xxxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx
Subject: NDIS explained [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Friday, 27 October 2023 12:12:00 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[DA0726_NDIS_explained.pdf](#)
[MC23-002036-Hughes.pdf](#)

Dear Senator

Please find attached the refreshed guidebook, *NDIS explained*, and an accompanying letter from the Hon Bill Shorten MP, Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. This guidebook has been developed to support you and your office to further understand the NDIS and assist you in responding to any queries or concerns raised by constituents. For more information about who to contact if you receive an enquiry, please refer to the attached letter from Minister Shorten.

National Disability Insurance Agency

E [\[REDACTED\]@ndis.gov.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@ndis.gov.au)

NDIA logo



The NDIA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging.





**THE HON BILL SHORTEN MP
MINISTER FOR THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME
MINISTER FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES
MEMBER FOR MARIBYRNONG**

Senator Hollie Hughes
senator.hughes@aph.gov.au

Ref: MC23-002036

Dear Senator

I am writing to ensure you have what you need to respond to constituent enquiries about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) have developed a guide to support you and your office to:

- understand what the NDIS is and how to apply
- explain how a participant should get ready for a planning meeting and creating a plan
- explain how participants should work with providers
- answer Frequently Asked Questions.

Additionally, the guide includes what to do if you receive feedback about the NDIS.

The Member and Senators Contact Officer (MaSCO) service provides a direct link between Members of Parliament (MPs) and Senators and the NDIA. This service can assist your office to resolve queries or concerns raised by constituents.

If your office receives an enquiry from a constituent, a direct representation can be made to the MaSCO team by emailing s47E(d) - certain operations of a@ndis.gov.au. The team will investigate the matter and report back to you.

To ensure the MaSCO team is best placed to respond to your constituent's enquiry, there are some steps recommended for your office to take prior to making a representation to the MaSCO team:

1. Ensure you have received sufficient personal information to enable the NDIA to locate the participant's file including the participant's full name, address, phone number and/or email address and most importantly the NDIS participant number (a 9 digit number (43x xxx xxx)).
2. Ensure there is sufficient information for the NDIA to investigate and resolve the concern. For example, has the constituent provided detail regarding their issue and what attempts they have made to resolve their concerns before raising the matter with your office.

- FOI 2924-1029
3. Wherever possible, obtain written consent for their personal information to be shared between the NDIA and your office. If written consent is not available, the NDIA will seek to obtain consent as part of our engagement with them.
 4. Consider if the matter raised is a specific NDIS participant/provider related concern, or perhaps the matter concerns an allegation of fraud or wrongdoing, which would be best directed to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
 5. Where possible encourage your staff to use the enquiry template. They can email [\[redacted\]@ndis.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@ndis.gov.au) to receive the template.

I recently announced the addition to the MaSCO service to include phone numbers to further enhance the efficiency of the service. This addition will enable you to reach out to your MaSCO contact and discuss enquiries that have previously been sent to the [\[redacted\]@ndis.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@ndis.gov.au) mailbox.

| State/Territory | MaSCO contact | Phone number |
|---|---|---|
| New South Wales Australian Capital Territory | s47F - personal privacy | s47F - personal privacy |
| Victoria | s47F - personal privacy | s47F - personal privacy |
| Queensland Western Australia | s47F - personal privacy | s47F - personal privacy |
| South Australia Tasmania | s47F - personal privacy | s47F - personal privacy |
| Northern Territory | s47F - personal privacy | s47F - personal privacy |

If you have any questions about the MaSCO service, please email [\[redacted\]@ndis.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@ndis.gov.au)

I trust this information is of assistance to you and your office.

Yours sincerely



Bill Shorten MP

27/10/2023



ndis.gov.au

NDIS explained

A guide for Australian
senators and members

October 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The NDIA acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation and the Traditional Custodians of the lands across which our Agency conducts our business.

We pay our respects to the custodians of the land on which we work as well as their ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

The NDIA is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, seas and their rich contribution to society.

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From the Minister

As Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), I have the ongoing privilege of working alongside many great Australians from the disability movement – fierce campaigners who fought for a legacy that would ultimately change the lives of hundreds of thousands of people with disability.



It's now been a decade since the NDIS was first legislated in 2013. It was and remains a bold initiative. The NDIS provides needs-based funding to offer Australians with profound disability the opportunity to live a fulfilling life. And it is here to stay.

But for the NDIS to thrive, and for even more Australians with disability to experience its lifelong benefits, we need to deliver systemic reform. And that's not just across the Scheme itself, but the entire disability support ecosystem.

The Australian Government has commissioned an expert panel to conduct an independent review of the NDIS that has people with disability at its heart. Co-chaired by Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM and Ms Lisa Paul AO PSM, the NDIS Review is guided by participant and community feedback with a commitment to restore trust and confidence in the Scheme.

The NDIS Review will look at the design, operations and sustainability of the NDIS. It will also look at ways to make the market and workforce more responsive, supportive and sustainable. It will report back to me by the end of the month.

In the meantime, our government has already begun systemic reforms to get the NDIS back on track. This year's Budget is investing more than \$720 million over four years from 2023-24 to lift the capability and capacity of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), improving its systems and ensuring every dollar goes to supporting participants.

The investment's 10 key initiatives include enhancing the NDIA's lifetime planning approach, better supporting participants to manage their plan within budget, and furthering Scheme access to people in remote and First Nations communities.

Crucially, we are also leveraging the new Fraud Fusion Taskforce by cracking down on fraud and non-compliance through the simultaneous investigations of hundreds of millions of dollars in payments.

Australians know the NDIS is as fundamental to our social democracy as Medicare and universal superannuation, fair pay and the pension.

As members of parliament and senators, you can play an important advocacy role – both in the chamber and in the community. I trust that the information contained within this guide will assist you to promote and empower the Scheme for generations to come.

The Hon Bill Shorten MP
Minister for the NDIS

October 2023



Kurt Fearnley AO
Chair, NDIA Board



Rebecca Falkingham PSM
Chief Executive Officer, NDIA

From the **Board Chair and CEO**

We are honoured to be leading the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) as we enter the second decade of delivering the Scheme. It's a critical time for the Agency and Scheme, as we adjust our focus and pave the way for better support for people with disability today and into the future.

The NDIA supports more than 610,000 participants across the country, including more than 95,000 children with an approved plan. Significantly, as a result of the Scheme, more than 370,000 participants are accessing supports related to their disability for the first time.

More than half of parents and carers of participants are now in paid work, showcasing both the transformative effect of the NDIS on individual lives and the positive impact on economic and social community outcomes.

We have learned many lessons since the NDIS was first trialled 10 years ago, and our focus is now on reform. We are working closely with the NDIS Review, and will be guided by its findings in how we improve the Scheme.

By putting people at the centre of the NDIS, we are working on building trust, confidence and pride in the Scheme. We are making NDIS plans more transparent and flexible, and in turn making life easier for participants to achieve better outcomes.

We have enhanced support for decision-making, and home and living, allowing participants to have greater control over their NDIS journey through a new Supported Decision-Making Policy. We have also reinvigorated our focus on specific cohorts, including culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

By increasing the number of hospital liaison officers and NDIS hospital discharge planners, the NDIA has improved hospital discharge rates.

We continue to work in partnership with the disability community to design and implement Scheme reforms through a co-design program centred on amplifying the voice of people with disability. The Participant Safeguarding Policy was co-designed with NDIS participants and the disability community. The NDIA is also collaborating with the First People Disability Network to co-design a new First Nations Strategy.

We are also working to build and support a more diverse workforce within the Agency. Disability, First Nations and LGBTIQ+ inclusion plans, developed through consultation, will help us to drive an inclusive culture.

While we acknowledge the challenges ahead, we continue to implement changes to improve outcomes and remain committed to ensuring the NDIS is the best it can be for participants.

Kurt Fearnley AO
Chair, NDIA Board

Rebecca Falkingham PSM
Chief Executive Officer, NDIA

October 2023

What is the NDIS?

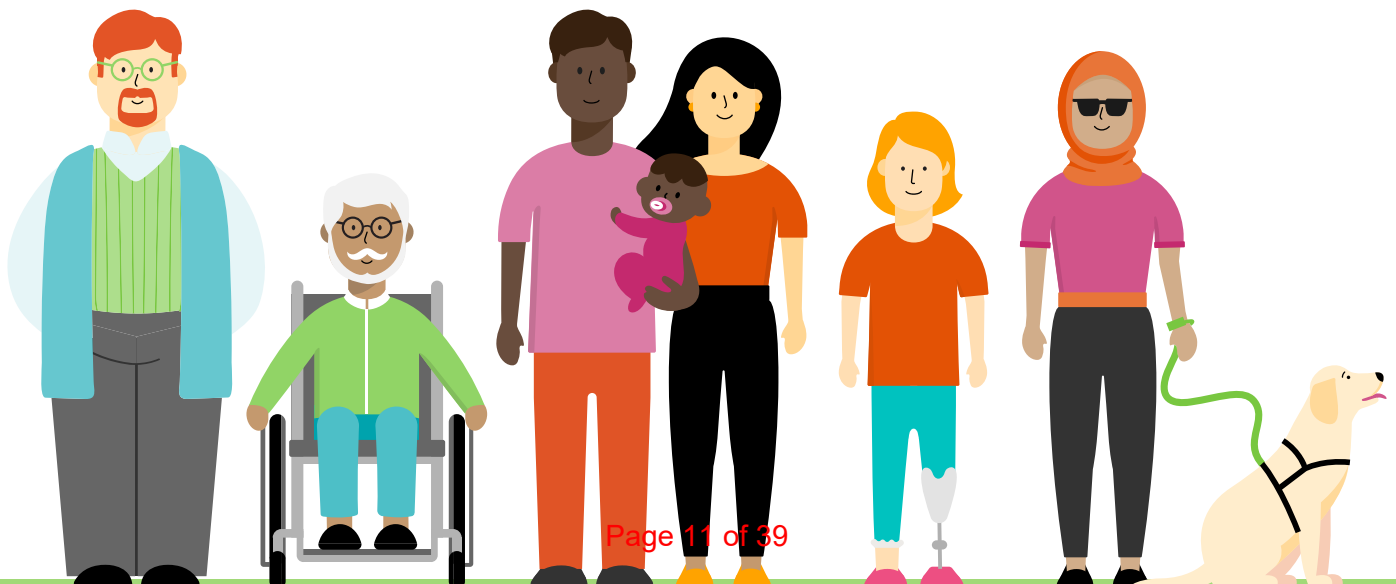
The NDIS is Australia's national scheme for people with disability. It provides funding to eligible people with a disability, based on their individual needs. People with disability remain at the centre of decision-making, through the principles of reasonable and necessary supports and individual choice and control.

The NDIS focuses on early intervention where early supports can reduce the impact of disability on you or your child. The NDIS also connects anyone with a disability to services in their community. This includes connections to doctors, community groups, sporting clubs, support groups, libraries and schools, as well as providing information about what support is provided by each state and territory government.

The NDIS is administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), an independent statutory agency. The NDIS now supports more than 610,000 Australians with disability to access the services and supports they need.



**Learn more
about the NDIS**



Who delivers the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)

The NDIA is the independent government organisation that runs the NDIS. The NDIA makes decisions about whether someone is eligible to become an NDIS participant and, if so, how much funding they will receive. This is based on legislation called the [NDIS Act 2013](#) which sets out what supports and services are considered reasonable and necessary for the NDIS to fund.

Local area coordination (LAC) partners

Local area coordination partners are community-based organisations that the NDIA funds to help deliver local area coordination services in some parts of Australia. Local area coordination partners work with people with disability aged 9 to 64. For most people in this age range, a local area coordinator will be their main point of contact for the NDIS.

Local area coordinators work with all people with disability, not just NDIS participants. They can:

- help all people with disability to connect with supports, activities in their community and other government services to meet their needs
- share information about the NDIS and help people access the NDIS if needed
- work with NDIS participants to help them use their NDIS plan
- work in local communities to help them become more accessible and inclusive for all people with disability.

Early childhood partners

The [early childhood approach](#) helps children younger than 9 who have a developmental delay or disability. Early childhood partners deliver the early childhood approach.

Early childhood partners employ early childhood educators and allied health professionals who help children and their families access supports and services that are tailored to the child's individual needs and circumstances.

Early childhood partners also help with connection to other appropriate supports such as community health services, playgroups and educational settings.

The NDIS by the numbers

At 30 June 2023, more than...

610,000

Australians are currently accessing the NDIS

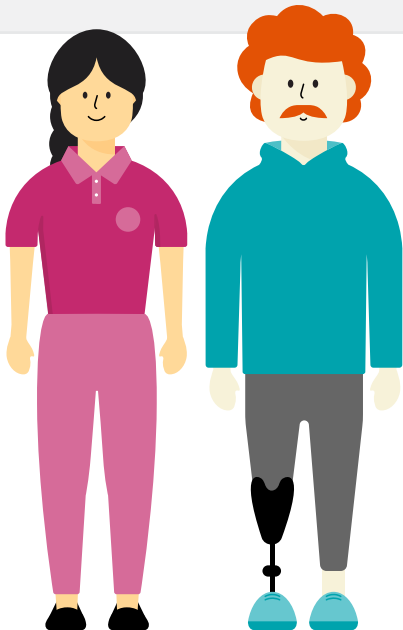


390,000

participants are receiving supports for the first time

17,000

children are currently accessing connections through the early childhood approach



9,000

organisations and sole traders are actively providing supports across Australia

Participant outcomes

from Scheme entry to most recent plan reassessment (at 31 March 2023)

Participation in community and social activities



An increase by 7 percentage points from **35% to 42%** for all participants aged 15 years and older.

Participation in paid work for participants with autism



An increase by 12 percentage points from **9% to 21%** for participants aged 15 to 24 with autism.

Participation in paid work for participants with an intellectual disability



An increase by 9 percentage points from **11% to 20%** for participants aged 15 to 24 with an intellectual disability.

Participation in paid work for parents/carers of participants



An increase by 6 percentage points from **46% to 51%** for parents/carers of participants aged 0 to 14 years who have been in the NDIS for at least two years.

Positive perceptions of whether the NDIS has helped with choice and control



An increase by 10 percentage points from **67% to 77%** for participants aged 15 years and older, from first reassessment to most recent reassessment.



Explore the latest data



Read the latest quarterly report

Getting the NDIS back on track

The Australian Government is getting the NDIS back on track by improving outcomes for participants and ensuring the sustainability of the Scheme for future generations.

Reforming the agency which delivers the Scheme and ensuring every dollar goes to NDIS participants is an important part of the government's strategy in the 2023-24 Budget to create more opportunities for more Australians and improve government services.



As a first step, the Budget commits a total of \$910 million over 4 years to improve the NDIS, and support and safeguard people with a disability and the Scheme.

This includes \$732.9 million to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the NDIS which will uplift capability, capacity and systems to better support participants:

Capability

\$429.5 million investment in the NDIA's workforce capability and systems resulting in better consistency and equity in decision-making for access and planning decisions for NDIS participants.

Flexibility

\$63.8 million to take a lifetime approach to ensure plans are more transparent and flexible for life events.

Evidence-based supports

\$29.3 million to support the quality and effectiveness of services provided to participants, through improving oversight of services and increasing take up of evidence-based supports.

First Nations and remote communities

\$7.6 million to pilot approaches to partner with communities to improve access to supports in remote and First Nations communities.

Better planning

\$73.4 million to better support participants to manage their plan within budget, including assistance from the NDIA during the year and holding plan managers, support coordinators and providers to account.

Independent living

\$56.4 million to strengthen supported independent living decisions, including by introducing a home and living panel with highly trained staff to improve consistency across decisions and updating guidelines for planners to improve participants' ability to live independently.

Blended payment trial

\$24.6 million to work with participants and providers to trial blended payment models, to increase incentives for providers to innovate service delivery and improve outcomes.

Fraud

\$48.3 million to crack down on fraud and non-compliant payments in the Scheme and to develop a business case for new IT platforms and systems to detect and prevent fraud and non-compliant payments.

Suzanne shares her journey to reduce mental health stigma

Suzanne is an Australian-Vietnamese fashion and mental health advocate who is empowering and inspiring others to take control of their mental health – and she’s also a fierce supporter of the NDIS.



The 31-year-old Brisbane local and NDIS participant, who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder a few years ago, was only 14 when she had her first psychotic episode. She was hallucinating, hearing voices and had frequent panic attacks.

'I really struggled with getting assessments in on time and was really stressed all the time around school. I remember calling 000 and needing emergency help. I then stayed for 3 months for my first psychiatric ward admission,' Suzanne said.

'I remember I was always using the hospital system as the only way to cope. I didn't know much about community support and how to reach out to the community instead of the hospital system.

'It was not until I was 25 or so that I started taking control of my mental health. I use my Bipolar diagnosis to advocate, empower and inspire others through my survival and storytelling.

'My mental illness is my superpower, and I am no longer ashamed about my mental illness. I speak openly, confidently, and honestly about my experiences.'

Suzanne said she was 'one of the lucky ones' who was able to access the NDIS during its trial in Queensland, thanks to support from Carers Queensland's NDIS local area coordination, partner in the community program.

As a person from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, Suzanne says she's always felt supported in the right way.

'I am very lucky and blessed. I also have a really good support team and, a wonderful support co-ordinator who knows and understands me,' she said.

'The major highlight of getting the NDIS was how the NDIS helped support me in my driving and building up confidence in driving. I am a confident driver now; I drive to work for my full-time job.'

Suzanne said given her heritage, one of the biggest challenges was feeling as though she needed to suffer in silence and pretend everything was okay.

'It is so common in the Asian cultures to just "harden up" and "get over it". Therefore, the work I do as a Vietnamese person, I try to break the stigma and share my story,' she said.

As a sought-after mental health and fashion advocate, Suzanne's story of courage and perseverance has touched the lives of thousands of people, with many reaching out to thank her for sharing her experiences.

'I've had people share that my story was very relatable. I even had one lady who started crying, I believe it was tears of joy, in front of me and said that she, too, has Bipolar and feels alone in her diagnosis and my story really resonated with her,' Suzanne said.

'I love when others come up to me after hearing me speak. It makes me feel so empowered and amazing that I can touch lives in different ways positively.'

Suzanne said the best part about being in the world of fashion is going to events, meeting people and telling them she's a mental health and fashion blogger.

For those living with mental health disability who are yet to embark on their NDIS journey, Suzanne urged them to hold on to hope.

'There's a light at the end of the tunnel. There's always a silver lining. Keep on going and don't give up on life,' she said.



From hard knocks to happiness, Tua sings from experience

Tua has suffered hardship, pain, and loss.

But now the creative and determined 56-year-old Sydney musician is creating a happy life, with support from the NDIS. The proud and soulful Polynesian woman is preparing to release her first recording, 'I'm still standing up'.

‘It’s about struggling and feeling defeated but making the choice to live my best life and not feel sorry for myself,’ Tua says. ‘I’m in constant pain. That can be depressing, but thanks to the NDIS, I have the opportunity to do what I love.’

Tua lives with dystonia, associated with Parkinson’s disease. Her chronic pain, which sometimes causes tremors and cramps, is partly managed with medication.

Music is Tua’s release. ‘I’m floating on clouds when I sing,’ she says. ‘It makes such a difference to how I feel about myself and my life.’ The NDIS supports Tua’s musical journey with funding towards her community, social, and recreational activities.

Tua’s music is more contemporary than the singers who have influenced her: Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald, and Billie Holliday. But Tua is making her own tunes now, and it’s having a huge influence on her wellbeing.

‘I love making music. It puts me on another planet, another level,’ Tua says.

Tua sings and plays all the parts on her first track. ‘My goal was to create professional sounding music in a studio. Thanks to the NDIS I’m achieving that goal,’ Tua says.

Tua’s journey towards a better life has not been easy. A few years after Tua’s diagnosis in 2017, her relationship broke down and she lost her job.

Then she became homeless, living in crisis accommodation and transitional housing for 7 months before being offered social housing. During this time, her mother passed away. When her friends suggested she apply for the NDIS, it was a turning point.

‘Prior to getting on the NDIS I was in a really bad way. Now I see life differently because I’m able to do the things that improve how I feel,’ Tua says.

Tua’s support workers enable her to do those things, and she is grateful that they are positive and encouraging. ‘I consciously choose people who want to walk with me on my journey. They care, and that’s important. They’re like mates. I’m very lucky,’ she says.

Soon after accessing the NDIS, one of Tua’s support workers talked to her about choice and living her best life. ‘I choose to do what makes me happy, like music, and now I’m also doing art.’

Tua also has NDIS funding for a chiropractor, physiotherapist, and an exercise physiologist who runs a ‘Parkinson’s Warrior’ program, focusing on movement, balance, and fall prevention. ‘The Parkinson’s Warrior program has been fantastic. It has improved my balance and coordination,’ Tua says.

Tua believes her physical improvement is linked to the way she feels about herself. ‘I have improved because my mental health is better,’ Tua says.

‘The recipe for happiness is to choose to do what you love. The NDIS has given me the opportunity to make those choices. Even though I can’t change my Parkinson’s, every day when I wake up, I’m happy to wake up.’



**Read the latest NDIS
participant stories**

The participant journey

1 Applying

2 Creating a plan

3 Using a plan

4 Reassessing a plan



1 Applying

The NDIA makes decisions about who can access the NDIS based on the information they provide about their disability and how it impacts on their day-to-day life.

To be eligible for the NDIS, a person must:

- ✓ have a permanent disability that significantly affects their ability to take part in everyday activities or a developmental delay
- ✓ be less than 65 years old when they first access the NDIS
- ✓ be an Australian citizen, permanent resident or hold a Protected Special Category visa
- ✓ live in Australia.

If a person meets the access requirements outlined on the NDIS website, they can start an access request over the phone by calling the NDIA on **1800 800 110**.

In this phone call, they will be asked to provide the following information:

- Name, age, where they live and residency status
- Evidence of age and residence
- Evidence of disability and how it impacts them
- Current and relevant reports from health professionals
- Permission to talk to other people about their disability.

2 Creating a plan

To get ready for a planning meeting, participants should think about their immediate support needs and their current and future goals.

Examples of things participants will be asked about in their first NDIS planning conversation include:

- their personal details
- their community and mainstream supports
- how to manage everyday activities
- their safety, including equipment, accommodation or help to take care of themselves or their home
- the goals they want to achieve
- ways to manage their plan
- the support they need to use their NDIS plan.

At the end of the planning conversation, the NDIA will talk to the participant about their next steps, including how their plan will be reviewed and how to start using the funding in their plan.



**Apply to
access the NDIS**

3 Using a plan

Once a participant's plan is approved, further support will be provided so they understand:

- different budgets and how funding can be used
- who can help with using the plan, and
- the different options for managing a plan.

A participant's plan will include the following information:



Basic information

This section includes basic information about the participant's disability, their day-to-day activities, where they live, who they live with, or who cares for them.



Family and friends

This section includes information about the support the participant gets from family and friends that is not funded but will help them pursue their goals.



Services and community groups

This section includes information about services and supports funded and delivered by community or other government services like support groups, health centres, libraries and public transport.



Goals

This section includes the current goals the participant would like to pursue as part of their plan and the long-term goals they have identified for their life. Goal setting is an important part of the NDIS. The supports a participant receives may help them pursue the goals in their NDIS plan.



Funded supports

This section tells the participant what funding they have been allocated in each support category and what this funding is for. A participant may not have all the support categories funded in their plan. Some people might have one or two support categories funded and others may have more.

This will depend on the participant's individual needs and may change from plan to plan based on the supports and services they need. A participant's funding is based on what is reasonable and necessary for their needs, in addition to the support provided by family, friends and other community and government services that they need to live their life. Participants must only use their NDIS funding on supports and services that are related to their disability.

4 Reassessing a plan

Every NDIS plan includes a reassessment date. The first plan reassessment usually happens 12 months after the plan started. It is an opportunity to check if the supports are working for the participant and helping them to pursue their goals.

The NDIS is designed to increase a person's skills and independence so they can live a fulfilling life. As they pursue their goals, the amount of support they need is likely to change.

Participants or authorised representatives have the right to ask the NDIA to vary or reassess their plan. If a participant is not happy with their plan, they can still ask the NDIA to review its decision.



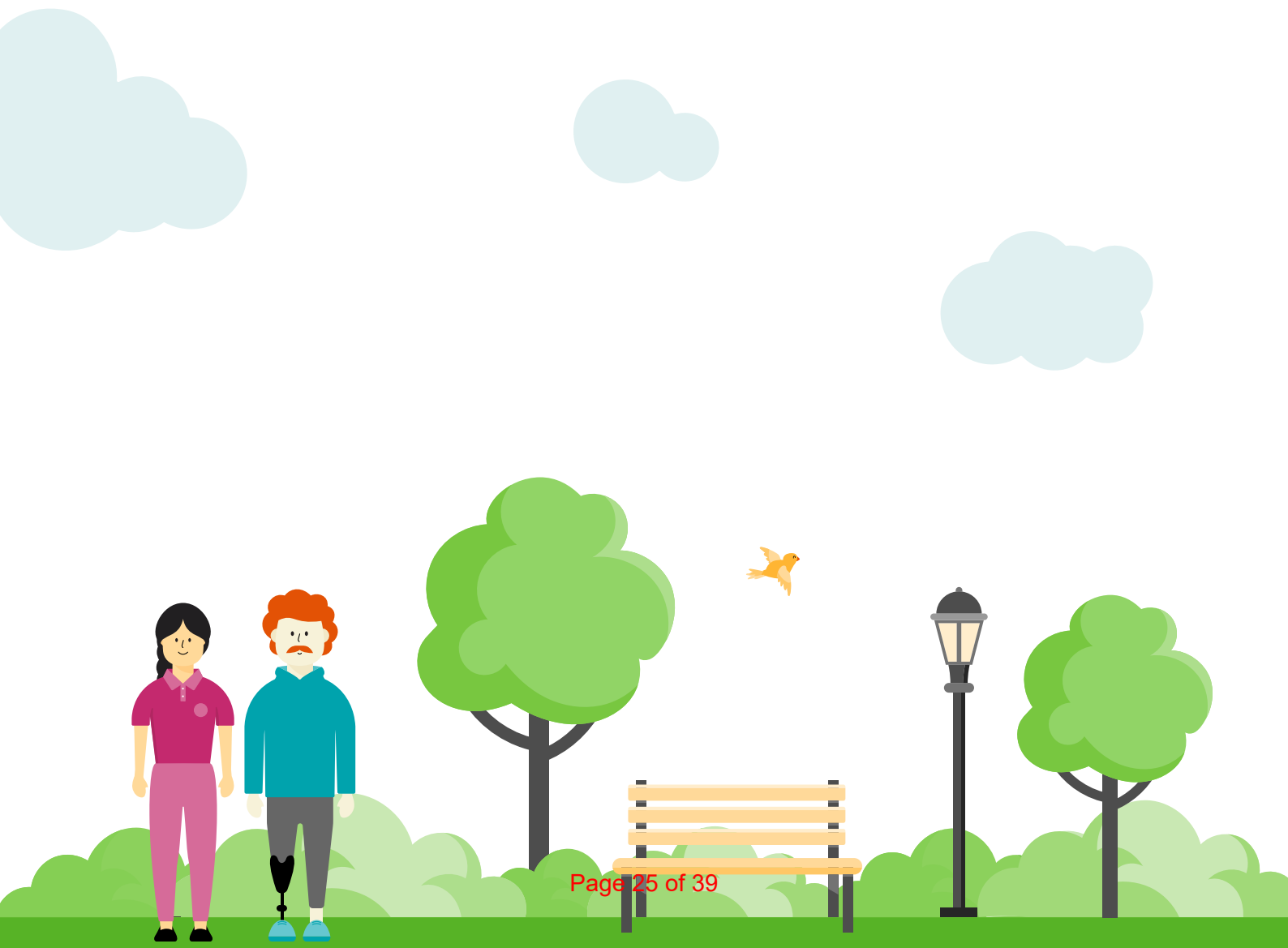
Learn more
about the NDIS
participant
planning process



The provider journey

The NDIS provides the necessary funding to people with a permanent and significant disability so they can access the supports and services they need to live and enjoy their life.

Every NDIS participant has an individual plan that lists their desired outcomes, the supports they will use and the funding they have received.



What providers do

Providers are an important part of the NDIS, delivering supports and services that help participants pursue their goals.

Providers can be registered with the [NDIS Commission](#) or unregistered.

Registered providers

When registering, providers choose which 'registration group(s)' to apply for. A registration group is linked to the types of services they may offer.

Registered providers can demonstrate they have met the specific quality and safeguards requirements as part of their marketing to potential participants.

Benefits of being a registered provider



Connecting and delivering supports to a wide range of participants, including those with NDIA-managed funding.



Being part of a vibrant, innovative and competitive marketplace.



Extending your online presence through the [NDIS provider finder](#) tool in the myplace provider portal.



Marketing your services as being a registered provider.



Accessing online business systems through the [myplace provider portal](#), including tools to manage your service bookings and fast payment processing.



Accessing updates and information from the NDIS about business system and process changes, including tools and resources that you can use to train your staff.



Access to supplementary training modules offered by the NDIS Commission.

Who providers work with

Plan managers and support coordinators create and manage connections between NDIS participants and supports, offering participants self-direction, choice and value.

Plan managers

Participants can choose to have a registered plan management provider to manage their funding and budget for the supports in their plan.

Support coordinators

Support coordinators help participants to implement supports in their plan, including informal, government services, community activities and funded supports.

Pricing

The [NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits](#) include a support item against which the cost of the delivery of support can be claimed.

The guide lists the maximum price providers can claim for personal care, community access, domestic assistance and professional services.

Participants and providers can negotiate lower prices.

Provider compliance

Providers who deliver supports and services under the NDIS must operate and comply with relevant Australian laws, rules and regulations.

Not following the NDIS rules and regulations is non-compliance. This includes following the rules in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits.

Non-compliance can range from a simple mistake to criminal matters such as fraud. It can be accidental or deliberate.

The NDIA have a range of resources to help providers do the right thing including guidance on:

- [making service agreements](#)
- record keeping
- making claims.

The NDIS Commission also has information and guidance on their website to help providers do the right thing, including the [NDIS Practice Standards](#) and the [NDIS Code of Conduct](#).

Making complete, truthful and accurate claims

Providers are responsible for ensuring that claims for payment are complete, truthful and accurate.

The NDIA reviews claims regularly to ensure they are compliant.

A correct claim will show the:

- right participant
- exact support delivered and line item
- correct rate and correct date.

As part of their compliance monitoring, the NDIA might contact providers to prepare information about supports and/or services they have been paid for.

Record keeping

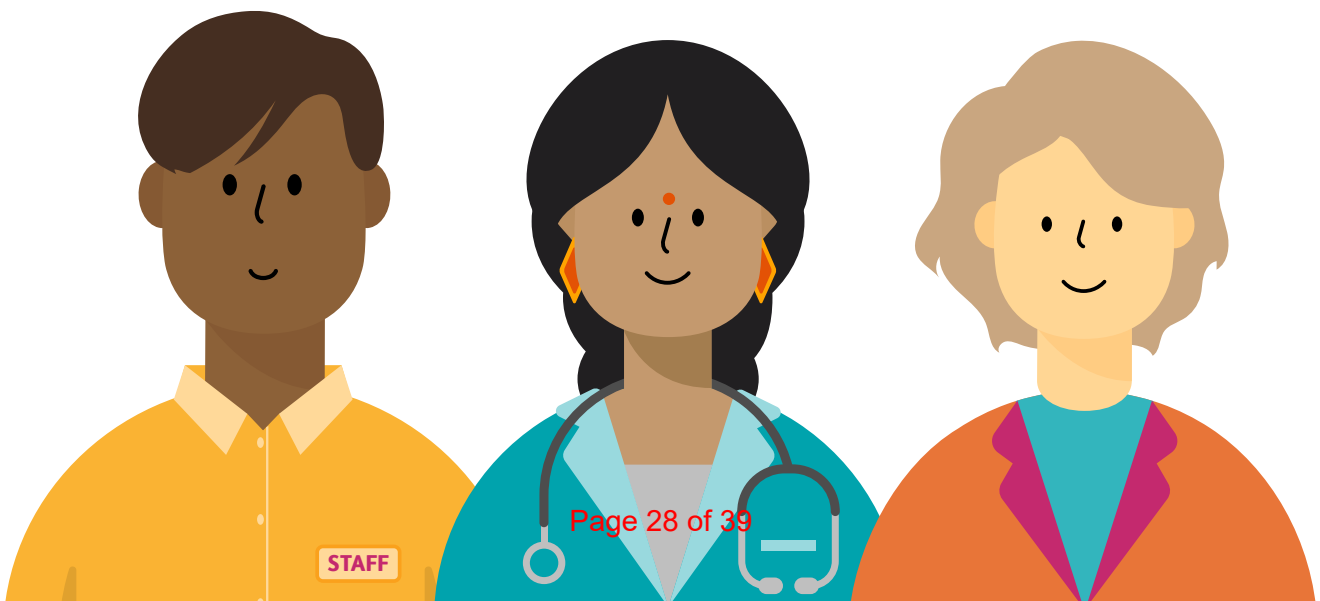
To show their claims are correct, providers must maintain complete and accurate records of supports delivered to NDIS participants. These include:

- invoices
- service agreements
- other documents that can validate the claim for supports provided.

Providing this documentation allows the NDIA to verify the quantity, type and duration of the support delivered if selected for a compliance review.




**Learn more
about the
NDIS provider
process**




NDIA Members and Senators Contact Officers


The Members and Senators Contact Officer (MaSCO) service provides a direct link between members and senators and the NDIA. This service can assist your office to resolve queries or concerns raised by constituents.


Call your MaSCO team

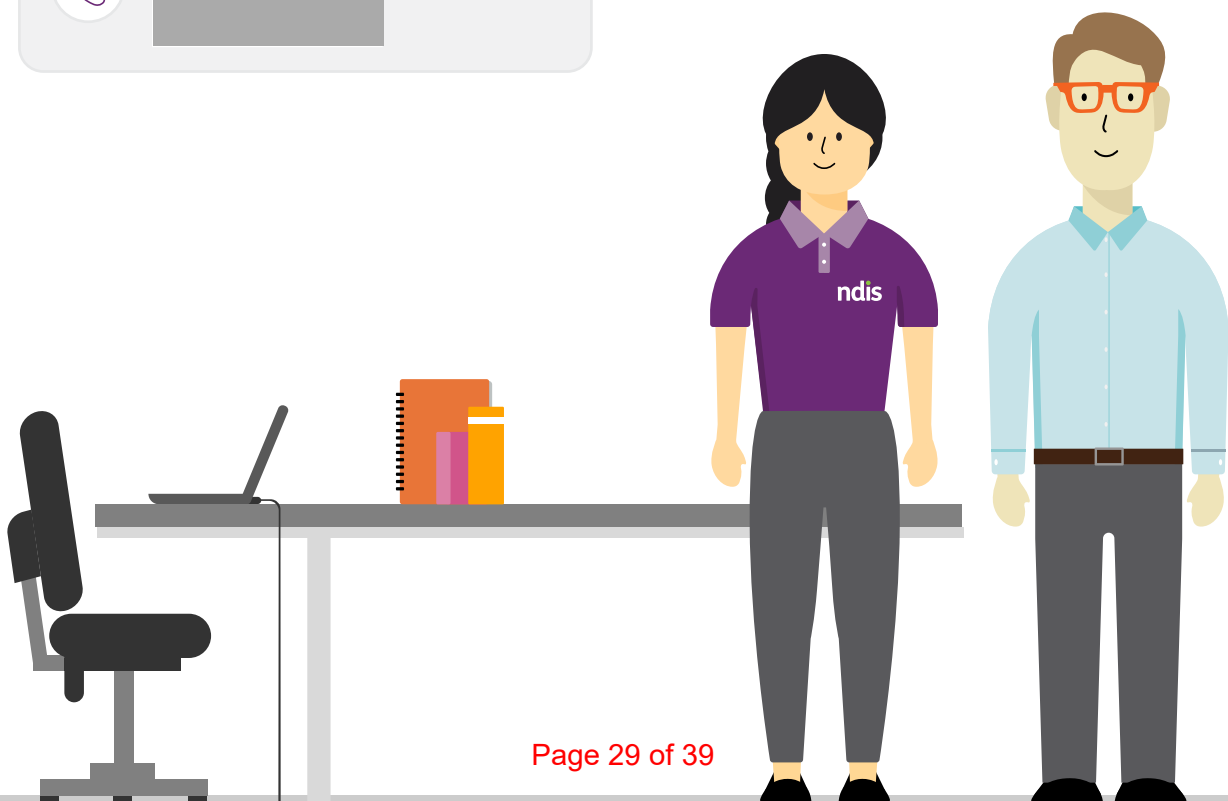
 **SA & TAS**
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 **QLD & WA**
s47F - personal privacy

 **NT**
s47F - personal privacy

 **VIC**
s47F - personal privacy

 **NSW & ACT**
s47F - personal privacy



What to do if you receive a complaint about the NDIS

If your office receives feedback or a complaint regarding the NDIS from a constituent, a direct representation can be made to the MaSCO team by emailing:



They will investigate the matter and work with business areas within the NDIA to address the concern.

What information should I include in my email?

To ensure the MaSCO team is best placed to assist in the resolution of your constituent's concerns, there are some steps recommended for your office to take prior to making a representation to the MaSCO team:

1. Ensure there is sufficient information for the NDIA to investigate and resolve the complaint. For example, has the constituent provided detail regarding their concerns? What attempts they have made to resolve the matter before escalating it to their local MP?
2. Ask the constituent if they consent to their personal information being shared between the NDIA and your office. If your constituent is not the NDIS participant, ensure the participant has also consented to this.
3. Consider if the complaint is a specific NDIS participant/provider-related concern.

4. Where possible, ensure your staff are using the template on the following page to make representations. The template outlines the information needed for the MaSCO team to both efficiently and effectively investigate the matter. Your staff can either copy and paste the template from the digital version of this booklet or recreate the template themselves. They should then include it in the body of an email and sent it to s47E(d) - certain operations of ag@ndis.gov.au.

What can I expect when I refer a complaint to the NDIA?

Once a representation is received, there is a set of service standards the MaSCO team adheres to. These include:

- Electorate offices receive an email acknowledgement of their representation within 1 business day of receipt.
- The constituent is contacted via their preferred communication method (as recorded in the NDIS business system) within 2 business days of receipt. This contact is to clarify the concerns raised and confirm next steps.
- A final response and outcome will be provided to the electorate office within 21 days of the representation being received. If it is a particularly complex representation this may take longer, however, your office will be informed and kept up to date. This will include details of the final contact and closure with the constituent.

| Participant/enquirer details | Answer |
|---|--|
| Participant name | |
| Enquirer name | |
| Participant NDIS number | |
| Participant date of birth | |
| Participant address | |
| Enquirer phone number | |
| Enquirer email address | |
| Consent checklist | Answer |
| Does the enquirer have consent to act on behalf of participant? | <p>Yes – please select all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plan nominee <input type="checkbox"/> Authorised representative <input type="checkbox"/> Child representative <input type="checkbox"/> Electorate office (EO) sought consent from participant directly and details were provided <p>No: If no, EO should attempt to seek consent from participant before referring to MaSCO</p> |
| Reason for escalating complaint via electorate office | Answer |
| Has the participant/enquirer attempted to resolve the issue by contacting the relevant NDIS contacts? | <p>Yes – please select all that apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1800 800 110 <input type="checkbox"/> Local area coordinator/EC coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> NDIS contact <p>No: If no, EO should encourage participant to approach the NDIA in the first instance to resolve the matter prior to escalating to MaSCO</p> |
| Issue details and desired outcome | Answer |
| Issue summary | |
| Desired outcome / action | |

If you have any questions about the MaSCO service, please email [647E\(d\)@ndis.gov.au](mailto:647E(d)@ndis.gov.au).

Engaging with the NDIS

There are several ways in which the NDIA engages with parliamentarians and their staff.

The NDIA's 2023–24 engagement program for parliamentarians includes:

- Regular drop-in sessions at Australian Parliament House or virtually throughout the year
- A webinar series on understanding the NDIS, including information about key services, processes, and interfaces
- A quarterly online update to outline major announcements and changes for constituents in your electorate
- Regular email alerts with important information, such as details on how to support NDIS participants during disasters and emergencies.

On request, the NDIA can support information sessions and community stalls at events hosted by your office. You can also contact the NDIA's Community Engagement team if you have any general enquiries about the NDIS not being addressed in a complaint or representation.

Before any NDIS events, the NDIA will contact your office to provide more information. All these events are available to federal MPs and senators.

For more information, please email:



[s47E\(d\) - certain operations of agencies@ndis.gov.au](mailto:s47E(d) - certain operations of agencies@ndis.gov.au)



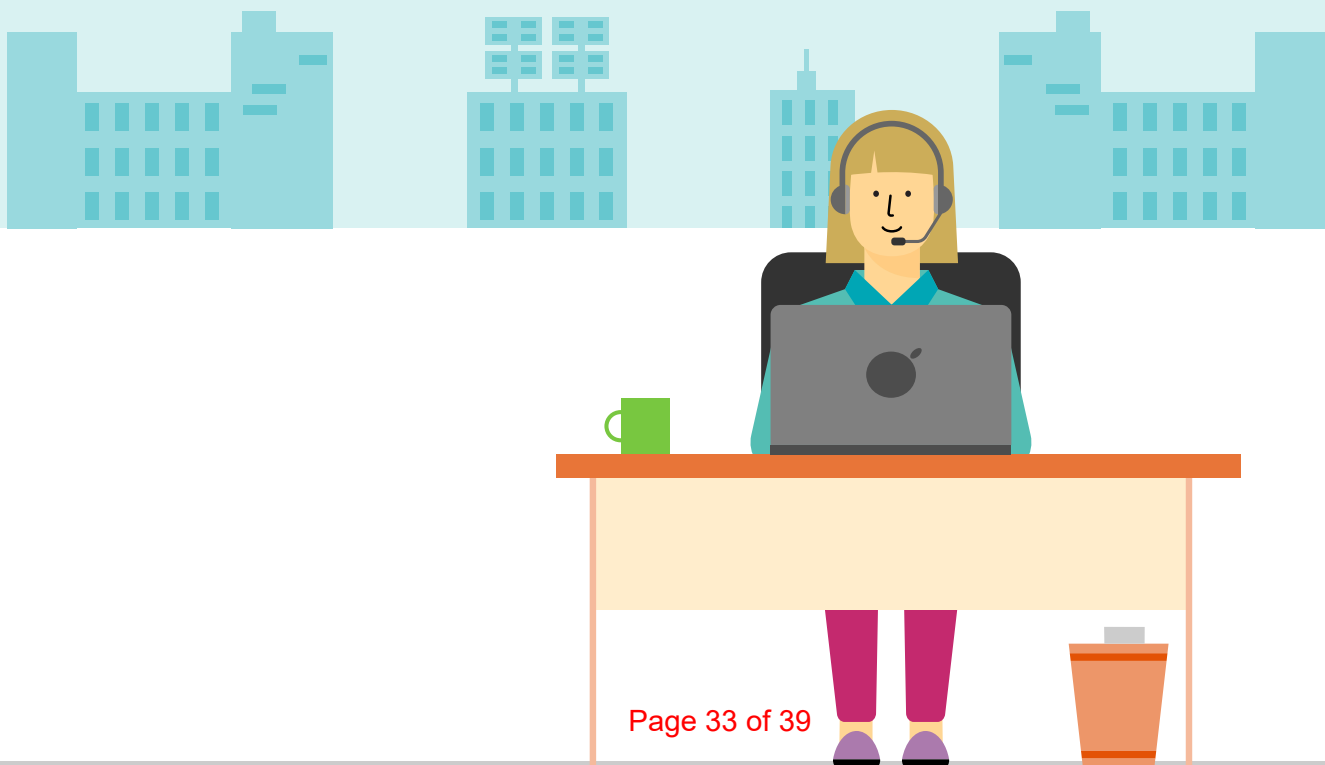
The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is the national independent agency established by the Australian Government to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services through regulation.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner is Ms Tracy Mackey.



View the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission website



The role of the NDIS Commission is to deliver nationally responsive regulation of providers and workers (including compliance and enforcement) and deliver education, engagement policy research and market oversight. Its work includes:

- responding to concerns, complaints and reportable incidents, including abuse and neglect of NDIS participants
- promoting the NDIS principles of choice and control, and working to empower participants to exercise their rights to access quality services as informed, protected consumers
- requiring NDIS providers to uphold participants' rights to be free from harm
- registering and regulating NDIS providers and overseeing the NDIS Code of Conduct and NDIS Practice Standards
- providing guidance and best practice information to NDIS providers and workers on how to comply with their registration responsibilities
- monitoring compliance against the NDIS Code of Conduct and NDIS Practice Standards, including undertaking investigations and taking enforcement action
- monitoring the use of restrictive practices within the NDIS with the aim of reducing and eliminating such practices
- maintaining the Worker Screening Database for the state and territory worker screening programs to ensure workers do not pose a risk to participants
- focusing on education, capacity building and development for people with disability, NDIS providers and workers

- conducting market oversight and research to support market development and diversification and the adequacy, safety and quality of NDIS supports and services
- facilitating information sharing with the NDIA, state and territory authorities and other Commonwealth regulatory bodies.

MPs, senators and their staff are encouraged to direct NDIS participants wanting to raise concerns or make a complaint about the quality or safety of NDIS services and supports to contact the NDIS Commission on **1800 035 544** or at:



contactcentre@
ndiscommission.gov.au

The NDIS Commission does not regulate the NDIA and complaints about it and participant plans should continue to be referred to the NDIA.

Resources for providers, practitioners, workers and participants are available at the NDIS Commission website.

These include:

- fact sheets
- printable collateral
- Easy Read guides
- Auslan versions
- practice alerts: comprehensive, quick reference and animations
- free e-learning modules.

For more information about the NDIS Commission, visit [ndiscommission.gov.au](https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au).

Frequently asked questions

What does the NDIS fund?

The NDIS would typically fund a requested support if it is related to a participant's disability needs and meets all the NDIS funding criteria. The NDIA has developed a ['Would we fund it' guide](#), which tells participants how NDIA planners make decisions about what the NDIS will and won't fund.

The guide lets participants browse through commonly requested NDIS support items that the NDIA find cause the most confusion. For each support item, the guide explains how the NDIA typically makes 'reasonable and necessary' decisions about them.

For a support or service to be considered reasonable and necessary, it:

- must be related to a participant's disability
- must not include day-to-day living costs not related to the participant's disability support needs, such as groceries
- should represent value for money
- must be likely to be effective and work for the participant, and
- should take into account support given to the participant by other government services, their family, carers, networks and the community.

How does the NDIA review decisions?

Participants can request an [internal review](#) if they disagree with a decision that the NDIA has made, such as a decision about their access to the NDIS, or their NDIS plan. Requests must be made within three months from the day participants receive their decision in writing.

When a participant requests an internal review of a decision, they should let the NDIA know:

- what decision they were expecting
- why they think the NDIA should make a different decision
- if there is any information they've already given that they would like the NDIA to reconsider
- if they have any new evidence, such as medical or therapy reports, that they would like the NDIA to consider.

The NDIA aims to complete all internal reviews within 60 days from the day after a participant's request is received. Once the internal review decision is made, the NDIA cannot do another internal review on the same decision. If a participant is not happy with the internal review decision, they can also ask the [Administrative Appeals Tribunal \(AAT\)](#) to review it. This is called an external review.

How does the NDIA work alongside government?

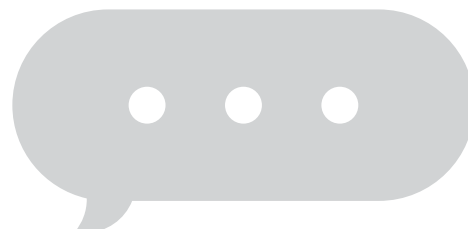
Many government services provide supports to people with disability. This includes the NDIS, as well as state, territory and commonwealth government services like health, education, justice and transport.

All areas work together so people with disability receive support to meet their individual needs. Access to mainstream services, community-based activities and other government programs is a shared responsibility across many services.

The NDIA and governments work together through the [Disability Reform Ministerial Council](#) to resolve any issues where their services interact.

A key tool is the [Applied Principles and Tables of Support \(APTOS\)](#). APTOS outlines the roles and responsibilities of different sectors that deliver supports to people with disability.

Planners and partners escalate urgent issues raised by participants, carers or providers relating to accessing immediate and vital supports. In response, the NDIA and state and territory governments work together to resolve any issues on a case-by-case basis.



Connecting people with the NDIS

You can help people make the most of the NDIS and other supports in their community by promoting them.

Contact the NDIA

If your constituents have any questions in relation to the NDIS, you can direct them to the NDIS website ([ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)) or phone 1800 800 110.

For people who need translation or interpretation



Phone: 131 450

For people who have hearing or speech loss



TTY: 1800 555 677



Voice Relay: 1800 555 727

For people who want to meet in person

People can find their nearest NDIS office by visiting [ndis.gov.au/locations](https://www.ndis.gov.au/locations).

Share good news stories

If you hear a good news story relating to the NDIS in your electorate, you can notify the NDIA media team by emailing:



xxxxx@xxxx.xxv .au

Share on social media

You can follow the NDIS social media pages to like and share their stories with your community.



Facebook: @NDISAus



Twitter: @NDIS



Instagram: @NDIS_Australia





Read the latest
NDIS news



Find upcoming
NDIS events and
information sessions

Make your office accessible to people with disability

The Australian Human Rights Commission's IncludeAbility website has developed a thorough resource on [creating an accessible and inclusive workplace](#) in relation to:

- the physical workplace
- workplace attitudes
- workplace technology
- reasonable adjustments.

Their guide will provide you with practical steps on how you can ensure your electoral office is accessible and inclusive for your staff and constituents. You can find the guide at includeability.gov.au.

Use accessible and inclusive language

Disability does not define people. When talking about people with disability, you should use inclusive language that respects diversity.

The Australian Government Style Manual has an entire section on [accessible and inclusive content](#), which includes a page dedicated to the language which should be used when talking about [people with disability](#).

Respectful language

Respectful language acknowledges peoples' preference to identify with a particular community or characteristic. Terms should not identify people without an understanding of personal preference. You should use person-first language when you don't understand individual or community preferences.

You can cause offence when you do not use respectful language, even if it is well intentioned.

- Don't say a person is inspirational only because of their disability.
- Don't write about people as if they are heroes or victims.
- Avoid euphemisms and made-up terms, such as 'differently abled' and 'handicapable'.

People with disability could consider these types of terms condescending.

When you are making comparisons, write:

- 'person without disability' rather than 'able-bodied'
- 'sighted person' for someone who is not blind
- 'hearing person' for someone who is not deaf
- 'neurotypical' for someone who is not autistic.

ndis

ndis.gov.au

National Disability Insurance Agency



Telephone 1800 800 110



Webchat [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)

Follow us on our social channels



For people who need help with English



TIS: 131 450

For people who are deaf or hard of hearing



TTY: 1800 555 677



Voice relay: 1800 555 727



National Relay Service: relayservice.gov.au