

# NDIS Frequently Asked Questions

As the NDIS continues to roll out throughout Australia, people still have many questions and you will find the answer to many of them here and links to other helpful articles of ours and on other websites. If your question is not answered below, feel free to [contact us](#) and we will either have the answer or find it for you.

## What does the NDIS stand for?

The NDIS stands for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

## What is the NDIS?

As the name suggests, the NDIS is a national insurance scheme.

The NDIS is expected to provide approximately 475,000 Australians under the age of 65 with a permanent and significant disability with the reasonable and necessary support they need to live an ordinary life.

The NDIS is reported to cost approximately \$22 billion per year.

## Who is eligible for the NDIS?

To be eligible to be a NDIS participant (to be covered by the NDIS) a person must:

- have a permanent disability that significantly affects their ability to take part in everyday activities
- be aged less than 65 when they enter the NDIS - so you are able to be a NDIS participant after you are 65 as long as you entered before 65

- be an Australian citizen or hold a permanent visa or a protected special visa
- live in Australia where the NDIS is available

More in depth details can be found on the NDIS website -

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/access-requirements.html>

## **What is the NDIA?**

The NDIA is the National Disability Insurance Agency.

The agency is the organisational body which administers the scheme (NDIS).

The agency was established under Commonwealth legislation - the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013.

The agency holds and manages all the funds contributed by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, administers access to the scheme and approves payments of support packages.

Further information about the agency and its governance structure can be found here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/governance.html>

## **What is the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission?**

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is an independent Commonwealth body which was established in early 2018 to oversee the delivery of quality supports and services under the NDIS.

The commission commences operations in NSW and SA from July 2018, with all other states commencing by at least July 2020.

A little more information about the commission can be found here:

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programs-services/for-people-with-disability/ndis-quality-and-safeguards-commission>

## **How do I apply for access to the NDIS?**

If you are already receiving disability support services, you will be contacted by the NDIA when the NDIS is available in your area.

If you do not currently receive any supports but wish to join the scheme you will need to contact the NDIA. Contact details can be found here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/contact-us.html>

## **What is a NDIS planner?**

NDIS planner's are employed by the NDIA to support participants to build an individualised plan which consists of:

- statement of goals and aspirations
- statement of participant's supports

More information about the planning process can be found on the following page:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/planning-process>

## **What is a LAC?**

A LAC is a Local Area Coordinator.

Local area coordination is delivered by certain organisations in each state or territory.

The LAC's help link participants to the NDIS, to supports and services in the community and help their local community be more welcoming and inclusive for people living with a disability.

Arrangements for LAC provision are likely to vary in the future with funding confirmed to 30 June 2019.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/communities/local-area-coordination>

What is a NDIS service agreement

A service agreement is a written agreement with a person or business that you have chosen to provide a NDIS support to you.

Service agreements are different to your NDIS plan as the plan lists your supports whereas a service agreement is about delivering those supports.

When making a service agreement it is helpful to have your plan with you so you can discuss it with your service provider.

On the NDIS website you will find some resources about service agreements on the following page:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/document/service-agreements-providers>

## **What are NDIS core supports**

Core supports under the NDIS relate to supports that help you complete activities related to daily living and work towards your long term goals.

The core support budget is the most flexible part of the funding and includes:

- Consumables - which is for the purchase of everyday use items such as continence aids
- Daily Activities - which is for assistance with self care
- Assistance with Social and Community Participation - which is for enabling you to engage in social and recreation activities
- Transport - if you are unable to use public transport

Often you can generally use core budget funds allocated against one category for another category. Your NDIS plan will clarify this further.

## **What are capacity building supports**

The Capacity Building funding is allocated across eight support sub-categories and matched with the goals you've come up with in your plan.

Funds can only be spent on the category they are allocated to.

The Capacity Building support categories include:

1. Choice and Control e.g. training in planning and plan management
2. Daily Activity e.g. therapy aimed at building your capacity to participate
3. Employment e.g. employment related assessment and counselling
4. Health and Well Being e.g. exercise advice required due to impact of disability
5. Home Living e.g. support to obtain/retain appropriate accommodation
6. Lifelong Learning e.g. assistance moving from school to further education

7. Relationships e.g. positive behavioural support strategies to reduce behaviours of concern

8. Social and Community Participation e.g. Individual life skills development and training including public transport training and support, developing skills for community, social and recreational participation.

Support Coordination is included in the Capacity Building budget if it is required.

### **What is a Support Coordination**

Support coordination is a capacity building support to help participants implement their supports included in their NDIS plan.

Not all participants will have support coordination included in their NDIS plan.

Support coordinators will help participants with things such as:

- Preparing for plan review
- Identifying goals
- Accessing and choosing providers of supports
- Negotiating services
- Arranging assessments
- Liaise with plan managers

Support coordinators are not funded to:

- provide transport
- plan administration
- plan management
- support rostering
- advocacy
- disability supports

## **What is NDIS assistive technology**

According to the World Health Organisation, Assistive technology, often referred to as AT, is “any device or system that allows individuals to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do or increases the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed”.

The NDIS refers to assistive technology in the same way.

Within the NDIS there are four complexity levels for assistive technology in terms of price and risk.

Level 1 (basic) assistive technology are usually simple items such as non slip bath mats, grip equipment, simple cutlery, large print calendars and alert systems. Participants will usually not require an assessment to assist with the purchase of this assistive technology.

Level 2 (standard) assistive technology are low to medium cost and risk products or minor environmental modifications such as shower chairs, commode chairs, grab rails, threshold ramps, basic seating, slide sheets, transfer boards and foot wear. Participants will often require an assessment to assist with the purchase of this assistive technology.

Level 3 (specialised) assistive technology are similar to level 2 but require more customisation, have higher risk of use or the participant has more complex needs. Examples include, ramps, bathroom and kitchen fittings, bidets, stair lifts, low to medium pressure mattresses and cushions, bed stick/poles and power wheelchairs. Participants will require an assessment to assist with the purchase of this assistive technology.

Level 4 (complex) assistive technology are simply more complex and involve higher risk and costs. Examples include power wheelchairs with integrated controls, tilt in space power commodes, high level pressure cushions and

mattresses, bed rails, structural building modifications and environmental control units. Participants will require an assessment to assist with the purchase of this assistive technology.

### **What is plan management?**

Plan management refers to how the financial transactions within a participants NDIS plan are managed.

There are several ways in which budgets within a NDIS plan can be managed:

- Self Managed - this means the NDIS will pay the participant directly for the supports that they can claim. Self managing allows a participant to choose any service providers, whether they are registered with the NDIS or not.
- Agency managed - this means the NDIA manages the participants plan and the NDIS will pay the support providers directly. The participant must choose registered NDIS services providers if the agency manages their plan.
- Plan management - this means a plan management service provider will manage you plan and the NDIS will pay your plan manager who will then pay all of your support providers.
- Combination - a combination of the above methods may be included in a participants plan.