

National Disability Insurance Scheme

and what it means to you



The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is now available in the Logan and surrounding area. Read this information sheet for advice on becoming a participant of the scheme.

Becoming an NDIS participant

You can use the [NDIS Access Checklist](http://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist) (www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist) to see if you meet the access requirements.

In a nutshell, you must:

1. have a permanent impairment that significantly affects your ability to take part in everyday activities, or have a developmental delay
2. be aged less than 65 when you first apply
3. live in Australia in an NDIS area
4. be an Australian citizen or hold a permanent visa or a protected special category visa.

Helpful tips

NDIS support is available to people with a permanent, significant disability.

This does not include health or medical conditions. When mental health is classified as a psycho-social disability, the NDIS will not fund medications or surgery.

Lists of conditions covered by the NDIS are available:

- [conditions likely to meet the disability requirements](http://www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-a.html) (www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-a.html)
- [permanent conditions with variable functional capacity, which are likely to require further assessment](http://www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-b.html) (www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-b.html)
- [conditions with permanent impairment or requiring early intervention for children aged under 7 years](http://www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-d.html) (www.ndis.gov.au/operational-guideline/access/list-d.html) – these don't require further assessment.

Your gateways to the NDIS

For people aged 7 to 64 years

When you first contact the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), they will put you in touch with Local Area Coordinators (LACs) in the Logan area. LACs can support and connect you to relevant services. They are not responsible for advocating on your behalf.

Initially, their role is to help you with planning. They will assess you and collect information about you. But they won't create or sign off on your NDIS plan. That's the job of the NDIA.

For children aged less than 7 years

[The Benevolent Society](http://www.benevolent.org.au) (www.benevolent.org.au) is the Logan Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) partner.

Generally speaking, ECEI partners undertake a similar role to LACs. They assess children and link eligible children with appropriate services. Also, they can help you understand and access the most appropriate support for your child.

Like LACs, ECEI partners are not responsible for advocating on your child's behalf.



Becoming a participant is a two-step process

Step 1: Access

Before you do anything, review all the information available on the NDIS website's [Participants section](http://www.ndis.gov.au/participants.html) (www.ndis.gov.au/participants.html) and contact an LAC (or an ECEI partner for children aged less than 7 years) for additional advice. If you know what you are doing before you contact the NDIA, you will be better positioned to maximise the support you receive.

Then, telephone the NDIA (1800 800 110) or use the [online contact form](http://www.ndis.gov.au/form/contact-form.html) (www.ndis.gov.au/form/contact-form.html) to request access. You will need to complete the official NDIS Access Request Form.

You may be required to submit proof of your disability from a GP or medical specialist. If you have a significant disability that meets certain criteria, you will not need to provide a functional assessment. These disabilities include Autism Spectrum Disorder level 2 or 3 and intellectual impairment with an IQ of less than 50.

Once you have access to the NDIS, you won't initially know how much funding you will receive. That's determined by your NDIS plan.

Helpful tips

- You can apply to access the NDIS at any time.
- In your NDIS access form, reflect at least two of the NDIS' life domains that you need help with. There are eight domains in total: daily living, social and community participation, relationships, lifelong learning, home, health and wellbeing, work, and choice and control.
- A GP or specialist needs to sign your NDIS Access Request Form. However, someone who knows you well (such as a support worker or special education teacher) can fill out the functional impact section.
- Before you fill out the access form, undertake an assessment that provides a simple score, such as WHODAS, DSMV, Vinelands or Pedicat.
- WHODAS, for example, is cost effective and quick. It's ideal for adults with altered functioning. People aged less than 18 years can undertake the [Pedi-CAT test](http://www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h64/heb/8807287390238/Pedi-CAT-FAQ.pdf) (www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h64/heb/8807287390238/Pedi-CAT-FAQ.pdf) instead.
- If your disability assessment is three or four years old, the NDIA will say it's out of date. To make it current, ask your GP to provide a summary update.
- Keep it simple! Correctly fill out your access form and attach a functional assessment completed that provides a numerical score.



Step 2: Planning

If your access to the NDIS is accepted, you will be contacted by a representative of the NDIS to have a planning conversation. You can choose to have this meeting face-to-face or over the phone.

If you are supporting a child under 7 years of age, the NDIA will put you in touch with the Logan ECEI partner, The Benevolent Society. Not all children will need NDIS plans.

The planning conversation is between you (and/or your nominee, such as your advocate) and an NDIS representative. During the conversation, you will talk about your existing support and your needs and goals for the coming 12 months.

If you are currently receiving Queensland Government funding, take a list of this funding to your planning meeting. Your list will prove the level of funding you are presently receiving.

During your planning conversation, you and your NDIS representative will identify your goals and the 'reasonable and necessary supports' you require to meet your immediate needs.

At the end of your planning conversation, you will be asked to identify how you would like your plan to be managed. There are three options:

- **NDIS-managed**, where you get support from registered NDIA service providers; this is the easiest way to manage your NDIS plan, but it's the least flexible
- **plan-managed**, where the NDIS organises someone of your choice to liaise with and pay service providers on your behalf; this a very flexible option that allows you greater choice
- **self-managed**, where you pay all service providers direct; this is the most flexible option, but it requires a bit more work on your behalf.

For most people, we recommend the plan-managed option initially. Work towards self-management further down the track.

Helpful tips

- Before you have your conversation, make sure you understand the three NDIS management options, so you can make an informed decision.
- Print out the NDIS' [Getting Ready for the Planning Conversation fact sheet](https://ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h1e/h67/8800549863454/Checklist-planning-conversation.pdf) (https://ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h1e/h67/8800549863454/Checklist-planning-conversation.pdf). Read it through and jot down (or ask your advocate to jot down) what you'd like to say during your planning conversation.
- When creating goals, think about the everyday activities that you'd like to undertake but, because of your disability, require support.
- Make sure your goals relate to the eight NDIS life domains. These are outlined on the previous page.
- Review each of your goals and ask yourself, 'How does that goal help me work towards my outcomes?' For example, learning to prepare healthy meals (a goal) builds your independence (an outcome).
- When reading your notes, ask yourself, 'How does this relate to my disability'. If it's not clear, reword.
- Know the number of hours of support you currently receive. This includes services with co-contributions such as Queensland Community Care support.
- Don't seek support for everything in your first year. Take your time and ensure what you are asking for is manageable. There is always next year.
- Cautiously use layperson's terms when talking to the NDIS representative. For example, they might interpret 'I would, but I get too tired' as meaning you need to get more sleep. It would be better to say 'I want to, but due to MS, I cannot participate without assistance'.
- Take someone who knows your needs with you to your planning conversation.

What happens next?

Implementing your plan

Once your initial plan is created, an NDIS representative will contact you to discuss ways of putting your plan into action.

The NDIA will work with you. LACs, ECEI partners, plan support coordinators, and your own personal advocate may help you connect with community, mainstream and NDIS-funded supports.

As an NDIS participant, you can contact your NDIS representative at any stage. Your NDIS representative will check-in with you to discuss ways of helping you achieve your goals and connect you to community activities and mainstream support.

If your circumstances or needs change at any time, you can ask the NDIA to review your plan.

Please use all of your allocated funding each year. Otherwise, the NDIA may think you don't require the same funding level and may reduce your entitlement.

Continuing to access the NDIS

Each year, the NDIA reviews everyone's plans. This is when you can discuss what you have achieved, what you are still working on, and what your new goals are.

Cost effectiveness is of paramount concern to the NDIA. You can expect resistance for anything that unreasonably causes costs to go up.

In states where the NDIS has been operating, people have experienced a reduction in the value of their plans of up to 70% after three years. The NDIA says these people can now be independent with the support of their communities. So it's a good idea to identify and submit new goals each year.

Once you have achieved what the NDIS says is an 'ordinary life', you might be exited from the NDIS. If you have high needs, you will likely receive funded support throughout your life.

Frequently asked questions

What won't the NDIS fund?

The NDIS will not fund support for conditions that are the responsibility of the medical system.

The NDIS doesn't class some health conditions as disabilities, despite these conditions being classed as disabilities by the Department of Communities. These include mental health (unless it's classed as a psycho-social disability), age-related arthritis, emphysema, obesity, ADD, ADHD, and speech and language delays.

While the NDIS funds therapies, it takes into account sessions available to you through Medicare and will only fund best practices. For example, the NDIA does not consider daily therapy over a number of years as best practice.

The NDIS will not fund school-related support available through the education system. That's why speech therapy to assist children with their education is not funded by the NDIS, while speech therapy to assist children with socialising outside of school might be.

What if I already receive support from the Queensland Government?

To develop your plan, the NDIA will use information about your existing support. During your planning conversation, an NDIS representative will review any gaps or unmet needs with your current support. Be very clear about all the support hours currently available to you, whether you use them or not.

Can I appeal an NDIA decision?

Yes. But before you do, seek support from one of your advocates. To date, many appeals to NDIA decisions that were not reviewed by advocates resulted in less NDIS support.

Find out more

Contact the NDIA

Call 1800 800 110 or visit www.ndis.gov.au

Contact an LAC

www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html#qld_ecei

Contact an ECEI partner

www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/locations.html#qld_ecei