NDIS 101 for Frontline Staff

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## NDIS 101: An overview of key concepts, new processes, terminology and ways of working under the NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme, known as the NDIS, is a new way of funding supports for people with disability. The NDIS was piloted in Australia in 2013 and rolled out in parts of Victoria in 2016.

This PowerPoint has been developed to give an introduction of key concepts, processes, terminology that explain the new ways of working under NDIS. This tool has been created and produced by National Disability Services Sector Development Project, which has been funded by the Victorian State Government. National Disability Services, known as NDS, is the peak body for disability service providers.

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## What is the NDIS?

The NDIS came about following a Productivity Commission Report and the Every Australian Counts campaign, which highlighted the need for a national social insurance approach for funding supports for people with disability. It is a new way of providing supports for approximately 460,000 Australians with a disability, their families and carers. It is part-funded by Medicare and state and territory contribution. NDIS will reach 22 billion per annum in 2019-20 compared to the 9 billion that is the current annual average. It focuses on individualised support needs and a lifetime approach to a person’s need. NDIS uses early intervention ideals through capacity building and empowerment.

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## The NDIS is based on three pillars

The NDIS is based on the principles of:

* Individualised support – that is support is tailored for the individual and their needs
* Choice and control – a participant has choice and control over their life
* Early intervention
* Value for money
* Capacity building for independence
* Social participation – local communities should be inclusive and accessible to all, including people with disability
* Economic participation – people with disability are under-represented in employment and the scheme has a focus on improving employment outcomes
* A lifetime approach – investing in people with disability early to improve their outcomes later in life.

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## NDIS, NDIA, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is an Act of Commonwealth Parliament that was passed in 2013. There are two independent agencies who have oversight of the implementation of the Act. These agencies are the National Disability Insurance Agency, known as the NDIA. Their role is to administer access to the scheme and approve the payment of individualised support packages. The second is the NDIS Quality And Safeguards Commission, known as the NDIS Commission. This agency has oversight of quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. It will regulate the NDIS market, provide national consistency, promote safe and quality service delivery, resolve problems, and identify areas of improvement.

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## New terms and acronyms

Now let’s look at new terms and acronyms you may come across in the new world of NDIS.

### Participant:

A person who meets the NDIS access requirements. This is a new term that replaces terms like client and consumer.

### Local Area Coordinator known as LACs:

LACs are local organisations who work as NDIS partners in the community. They assist participants, their families and carers access the NDIS, facilitate planning meetings, and connect participants to mainstream services and local community-based supports.

### SLES:

School Leavers’ Employment Supports is a transition program for year 12 school leavers with an employment focus. It provides individualised capacity-building support, and services to achieve the participant’s employment goals over a two-year period.

### SIL:

Supported Independent Living (SIL) is assistance with and/or supervision of daily tasks to develop the skills of the individual to live as independently as possible. These are the supports provided to a participant in their home, regardless of property ownership, and can be shared or an individual arrangement.

### STA:

Short-Term Accommodation refers to supports previously known as respite. It describes supports provided for a limited period of time, typically delivered in a group-based facility.

### SDA:

Specialist Disability Accommodation refers to accommodation for participants who require specialist housing solutions to assist with the delivery of supports that cater for their extreme functional impairment and/or high support needs. SDA does not refer to the support services, but the homes in which they are delivered. SDA may include specialist design for people with very high needs, or may have a location or features that make it feasible to provide complex or costly supports for independent living. This will only comprise of approximately 6% of all housing needs for people with disability.

### Information Linkages and Capacity Building, known as ILC:

ILC provides grants to organisations to carry out activities in the community. ILC promotes collaboration and partnerships with local partnerships and other government services to create greater inclusion of people with disability.

### Early Childhood Early Intervention:

The ECEI approach supports families to help children develop the skills they need to take part in daily activities and achieve the best possible outcomes throughout their life.

For these terms and more, refer to the NDIA Glossary on the NDIA website.

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## NDIS core principles

NDIS is based on funding reasonable and necessary support for participants, and the participant has choice and control on how to implement these funded supports.

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## Reasonable and Necessary

What does “reasonable and necessary” mean? When NDIA delegates make the decision about which supports are reasonable and necessary for a particular participant, they refer to the Operational Guideline that relates to each specific support. In order to be considered reasonable and necessary, a support must meet all the below criteria:

* Value for money
* Most appropriately funded by the NDIS – that is, it’s not met by another sector such as health
* Reasonable expectation of informal networks, for example, what is reasonably expected of a parent
* Effective and beneficial for the client
* Assists to pursue goals and aspiration: Everything comes back to participant’s goals
* Facilitates social, community and economic participation: Supports participants engage in their local community.

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## Choice and control

A participant has the right to make their own decisions about what is important to them and decide how they would like to receive their supports and from whom. The funded supports in a participant’s plan is based on discussions and evidence presented at a planning meeting. The NDIA makes decisions based on reasonable and necessary criteria previously outlined.

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## NDIS participants booklets

As funded supports are based on information provided at the planning meeting, it is important for participants to be prepared for their planning meeting. Here are some resources available to be downloaded on the NDIS website that can provide assistance to participants preparing for their planning meeting.

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## Planning and plan implementation

NDIA and LAC staff both have initial planning conversations with participants. LAC will undertake about 70 to 80% of planning meetings. NDIA planners will complete about 20% of plans with people with greater complexity. The NDIA delegate will allocate funds based on reasonable and necessary criteria. ECEI partners will support planning and plan implementation for children aged 6 and under.

Now, once a participant has received their plan, they can implement their plan. A participant can go back to the LAC for some assistance in implementing their plan, such as understanding where to find providers. Support coordination, if deemed reasonable and necessary, may be allocated to assist people with complexity of needs, such as no next of kin, interface with other service sectors, such as health, justice, and family services.

Support coordination is not a case manager to help get supports. Instead, it’s about building capacity of the individual, to support the participant to manage their own plan.

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## What does NDIS fund?

Participant supports are divided into three areas. Think of the three Cs: Core, Capital and Capacity.

* Core budget includes support to help participants complete activities related to daily living and work towards their longer-term goals.
* Capacity-building budget: These are supports building participants’ independence and skills.
* Capital budget includes assistive technology, equipment, and home or vehicle modifications, and funding for capital costs a client may need.

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## Funding allocated to individual participants

Participants can manage the funding in their plan in one of three ways, or a combination of any of them.

### Agency-managed:

This means that the participant can only use NDIA-registered providers. The providers can only charge up to the maximum price set out in the Price Guide. The Price Guide is a document set out by NDIA which outlines the funding price for services under the NDIS. The Price Guide is available on the NDIA website.

### Plan-managed:

This is for a participant to purchase a financial intermediary who can support the participant manage the funding in their plan. Participants can use registered and non-registered providers, but are still bound by the maximum price set out in the Price Guide.

### Self-managed:

Participants can use any provider and negotiate any price. Participants can request self-management, however it still goes through a reasonable and necessary criteria assessment.

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## Scheduled plan reviews

Scheduled plan reviews should occur prior to the end plan date. Participants will usually be contacted 4 weeks prior to the end of their plan. Plan reviews are conducted by the LAC, ECEI partner, or the NDIA. They are intended to measure progress against personal goals, identify new goals, and make amendments to funding as required. If a participant has unspent funding in their plan, this does not roll over.

It is important for participants to prepare for planning meetings so they can report – they collect from providers will support how their funding has been supported towards their goals, and what new supports may be required.

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## Unscheduled plan reviews

There are two reviews that can be conducted out of the scheduled plan review cycle. These are called unscheduled plan reviews. It is important to note that participants have to initiate the request. They can be supported by informal or formal supports, or an advocate to initiate the request. Additional evidence needs to be provided to the NDIA, as they have made an assessment on the evidence already provided to them. Participants can request an unscheduled plan review by contacting the NDIA directly or sending an email. It is important to note that the whole plan gets reviewed against the reasonable and necessary criteria when undertaking an unscheduled plan review.

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This slide shows the way business worked before. That is, providers were paid from the government in advance and were told how to deliver services. The participant then accessed these services from providers. Now the funding is going directly to the participant. This means they have choice and control in how they want their services to be delivered.

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## NDIS – New processes – Payment is received in arrears

Now, looking at the change that NDIS has on an organisation highlights the need to change internal processes. Based on payments being received after the service means providers need to collect evidence on services. These changes impact on everyone’s role in the organisation. The customer journey of a participant needs to be reflected in implementing internal organisational processes. In other words, at every stage a participant engages in an organisation, from the initial phone call to delivery of services they will be developing their experience, which means they will continue to engage, or disengage from the organisation.

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## Resources

Here are the resources that have been referred to throughout the PowerPoint.

* [NDIS website](http://www.ndis.gov.au)
* [NDIS Provider Toolkit](http://www.providertoolkit.ndis.gov.au)
* [NDIS Commission website](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)

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This resource was created in March 2019 thanks to the Victorian Government’s NDIS Transition Support Package.

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# National Disability Services

NDS is the peak body for more than a thousand non-government disability service providers, and is the only organisation that represents the full spectrum of disability service providers across Australia.

NDS believes that the information contained in this video is correct at time of publishing, however NDS reserves the right to vary any of this video without further notice. The information provided in this video should not be relied on instead of legal, medical, financial or professional advice.

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