## National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) fact sheet

## NDIS key terms

A list of key terms used when discussing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

| **Term** | **Meaning** |
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| Access request | A person, or someone who is able to act on their behalf, may make a request under section 18 of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* to become a participant in the NDIS. |
| Advocates | Disability advocates are a crucial part of the NDIS landscape.  There are some advocacy organisations (including CLCs) that are specifically funded to assist with NDIS appeals. |
| Child representatives | Generally the person or people with parental responsibility for the child. The child representative is responsible for undertaking acts and making decisions on behalf of a child participant. |
| Complex Support Needs Pathway | The [Complex Support Needs Pathway](https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/1002-improved-ndis-planning-people-complex-support-needs) is designed to provide a higher level of specialised support for NDIS participants living with disability who are also experiencing other challenges that may impact on their lives such as mental health issues, incarceration or homelessness. This support is largely provided through dedicated NDIA Complex Support Needs planning teams and a network of specialised planners. |
| DHHS | The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) lists providing support for the implementation of the NDIS and to Victorians with disability transitioning to the NDIS as a key priority. |
| Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) | The ECEI approach is the pathway for 0–6-year-old children. |
| Early Childhood Partner | Early Childhood Partners are engaged by the NDIS as part of the ECEI approach. Early Childhood Partners provide assistance, advice and access to early intervention and support, which may include an NDIS plan, depending on the child’s needs. |
| Intensive Support Team, DHHS (IST) | The IST is a key escalation pathway, funded by the Victorian Government to manage complex cases (eg people with intersecting issues with the disability, prison, child protection or mental health systems, delays, ‘market failure’). |
| Internal review | The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* sets out the decisions by the NDIA that are subject to internal review. Any person directly affected by a decision contained within section 99 of the Act can request an internal review within three months of receiving notice of the decision by submitting a written request, or by speaking to someone at an NDIA office over the phone or by email.  The process mirrors the Centrelink administrative review process: internal review, then external (AAT). |
| Local area coordinator (LAC) | Local organisations working in partnership with the NDIA to help participants, their families and carers to access the NDIS. LACs conduct planning meetings, which result in NDIS plans and connect participants to mainstream services and local and community-based supports. |
| NDIA | The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is the agency that runs the NDIS. |
| NDIA planner | An NDIA employee who works with NDIS participants to facilitate the completion of their first plan and reviews of subsequent plans. An NDIA planner works with participants and planning partners to determine current and future supports that will enable participants to achieve their goals and enable better outcomes. (Practice note – we understand there is limited availability of planners and LACs are being relied on in many cases). |
| NDIS | The NDIS is a national scheme designed to help improve disability services and provide greater control and decision making to people with disabilities in Australia. The NDIS supports people with a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities. |
| NDIS plan | An official document from the NDIA that states the goals, individual circumstances, and approved funding the participant will have access to. |
| NDIS price guide | A document produced by the NDIS detailing the maximum price the NDIS will pay for a given, defined support. |
| Participant | A person with disability who has been approved to receive support from the NDIS. |
| PWD | Person with disability. |
| Plan manager | There are three ways funding can be managed:   * Agency managed * Plan managed * Self managed.   A ‘plan manager’ is an NDIS registered provider who assists NDIS participants who elect to be plan-managed by paying service providers on their behalf, helping them to keep track of their funds, taking care of their financial reporting obligations and, in some circumstances, by assisting them with choosing providers. |
| Plan nominee | Someone appointed by the NDIA to act on behalf of a participant. |
| Plan review | A plan review is an opportunity to assess how funded supports are working for participants. Scheduled plan reviews are the annual review built into the plan. Participants can also request an unscheduled plan review when there is a change of circumstances. The NDIA have the choice as to whether to conduct an unscheduled review or not. |
| Portal | The NDIS participant portal is called myplace. It is a secure website portal on the Australian Government’s myGov website where participants or a person they trust can access their NDIS information. The myplace portal can be used to view current and previous plans, check contact details, view messages from the NDIA, find service providers, create and view payment requests, manage service bookings, upload documents, including assessments or service agreements, and share plans with service providers. |
| Psychosocial disability | Psychosocial disability is a term used to describe a disability that may arise from a mental health issue. Not everyone who has a mental health condition will have a psychosocial disability, but for people who do, it can be severe, longstanding and impact on their recovery. People with a disability as a result of their mental health condition may qualify for the NDIS. |
| Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) | The Victorian Office of the Public Advocate provides guardianship and advocacy services to people with disability (specifically intellectual impairment, mental illness, brain injury, physical disability or dementia) living in Victoria. |
| Service agreement | A contract between the NDIS participant and the service provider they have chosen to deliver the supports in their plan. |
| Service providers | A service provider is someone who has products or services to help NDIS participants achieve the goals in their plan. Participants can choose their providers and change providers at any time. |
| Specialist support coordinator | Undertakes the activities done by a [support coordinator](#supportcoordinator) but by a person with specific skills and expertise for participants identified as having specific high-level risk factors. |
| Support coordinator | Support coordinators work with NDIS participants to build the skills required to understand, implement and use their plan. This includes ensuring that a mix of supports are used to increase a participant’s capacity to maintain relationships, manage service delivery tasks, live more independently and be included in their community. |
| Support worker | A person who provides support to an individual with disability. This may include personal assistance in the home (dressing, organising, cooking), accessing the community (accompanying to activities, appointments). The assistance is directed by the individual based on their specific needs. |
| Therapists | This generally refers to two things: therapies funded under a person’s plan, and assessments and recommendations by a suitably qualified person regarding reasonable and necessary supports. |

This resource was developed as part of a co-designed training module for community legal centres in partnership between AMIDA (Action for More Independence & Dignity in Accommodation), the Consumer Action Law Centre, Mental Health Legal Centre, Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service and Victoria Legal Aid.