


# National Disability Insurance Scheme

**Your guide to  
spinal cord injury  
and the **NDIS****



This guide  
has been  
designed to help  
you understand  
how to access the  
NDIS, whether  
you are still in  
hospital or  
already at home.

SHPN: (GR) 190248

ISBN: 978-1-76081-132-7

Version 1.0

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# How to use this resource

## Who is this workbook for?

This workbook is for people with a newly acquired spinal cord injury (SCI) requiring support from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and their carers and families.

## What is it for?

This book brings together the information available to people with newly acquired SCI about:

- What is the NDIS?
- Can I access the NDIS?
- Pre-planning and creating my plan
- Starting my plan
- Reviewing my plan

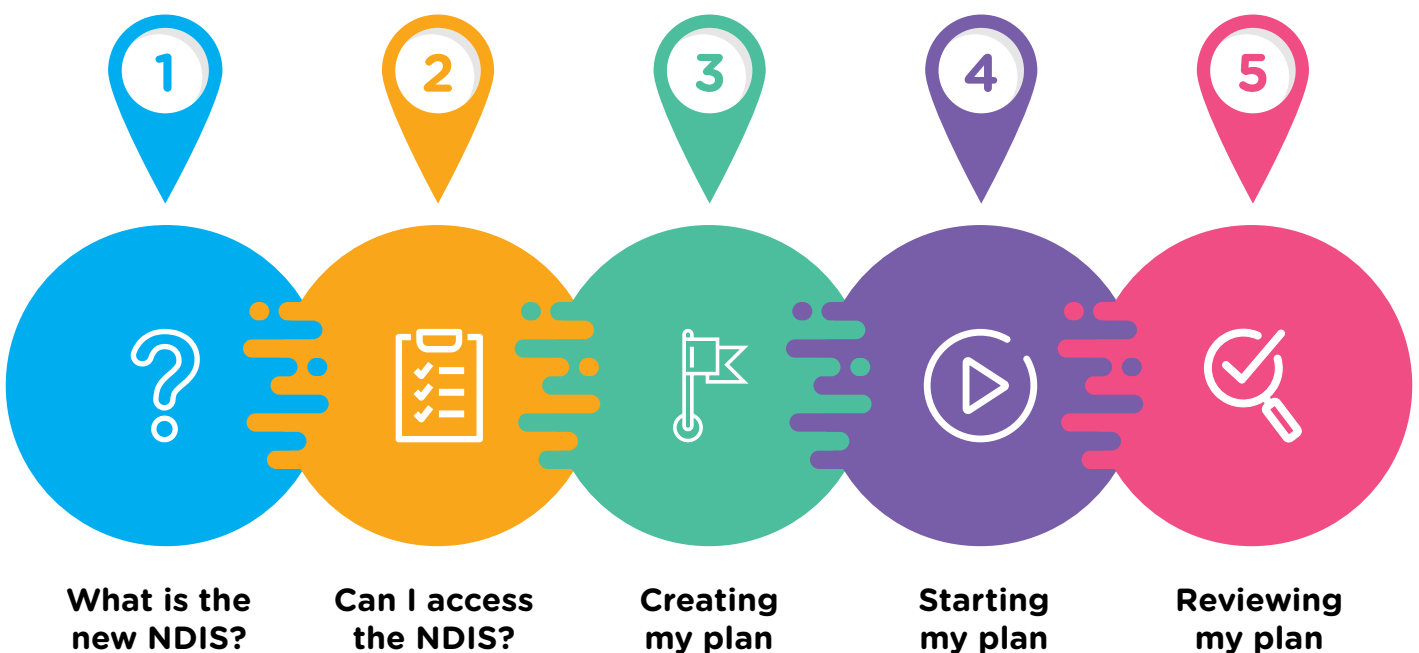
## How will this book help?

From the guidance in this workbook, we hope you will benefit from:

- More understanding
- More confidence
- An NDIS plan suited to your needs

## How do I use this book?

If you are new to the NDIS, there is a lot of new information to take in. We recommend you work through one step at a time.



## Key

People learn in different ways so we have provided information in different formats. These icons will help you identify the type of resource:



### **Written information**

Available in hard copy, please ask staff



### **Website**



### **Video or webcast on a website**



### **Something to listen to**



### **Tools: resources for you to use**

For example, a workbook to help you prepare for your planning meeting



## Tick the box

This book uses a 'tick box' system to help you stay on track with the NDIS process. Once you have completed a step, simply tick the box provided.

## Key words

The NDIS uses words you may not have seen before. You can find out what they mean in the [NDIS Glossary](#) at the end of the book. There is a longer version available on the NDIS website <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/glossary>.

CLICK HERE



## Link to websites

This workbook has links to more information on the internet. If you are reading this book on a smart device or computer, click on the document title and it will hyperlink you directly to the website.

If you are reading this book in paper form, type the document title into a search engine and click on the link.



# 1

## Step 1:

### What is the NDIS?



The NDIS is available to Australians with a permanent disability and aged under 65 years. This includes people with a newly acquired disability.

#### What is the NDIS for me?

NDIS is a way of providing funding and support to eligible people, based on their individual needs. Funding for supports can help you achieve goals in different areas of life including independence, community involvement, education, employment, and health and wellbeing.

As an NDIS participant, you decide who provides the help and supports that will help you meet your goals. The NDIS can connect you to informal and community supports too.

#### About the NDIS - what you need to know

Click on the title of the link or enter title into a search engine.



[What is the NDIS? - YouTube](#)

CLICK HERE



[Understanding the NDIS Booklet 1 \(NDIS\)](#)

#### About the NDIS - more detail



[NDIS Living My Plan - Part 1 YouTube \(NDIS\)](#)



[Reasonable and Necessary Podcast Series - Summer Foundation](#)



# 2

## Step 2:



### Can I access the NDIS?

First, you need to check whether you meet the eligibility criteria for funding with the NDIS. If a person meets the eligibility criteria they will need to apply for the NDIS by completing an [Access Request Form \(ARF\)](#). You can appoint a [Nominee](#) to help you with this process. The health care staff will also provide information about your condition on this form. A successful NDIS application is called 'Access'.

#### About accessing the NDIS - what you need to know

Click on the title of the link or enter title into a search engine.



[Can I access the NDIS? - YouTube](#)

★ Tip: watch from 1:04



[Access Request Form - National Disability Insurance Scheme \(NDIS\)](#)

★ Tip: click on link Evidence of your disability at the bottom of the page for more information.

#### About accessing the NDIS - more detail for people with a spinal cord injury



[Summer Foundation - STEP BY STEP: How to fill out the NDIS Access Request Form](#)



[Spinal Cord Injuries Australia - Accessing the NDIS](#)



[Registering for the NDIS - ParaQuad](#)



## Accessing the NDIS - your checklist

1 Have you received information about the NDIS?



2 Ask the [NDIA Planner](#) for an [Access Request Form \(ARF\)](#).  
Sometimes Health staff can do this for you, please ask if this is possible or not.



3 Complete the Personal Details of the Access Request Form (ARF)



4 Ask Health staff to complete the Disability Details part of the Access Request Form (ARF)



5 Email the completed form to the NDIA [nat@ndis.gov.au](mailto:nat@ndis.gov.au)



You will be notified by the NDIA if your plan has been approved.

### Key people you will meet at this stage

The health care team treating you in hospital and at rehabilitation including:

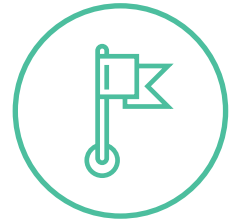
- the medical and nursing staff
- social worker
- physiotherapist
- occupational therapist
- dietitian
- speech pathologist.



# 3

## Step 3:

### Creating my plan



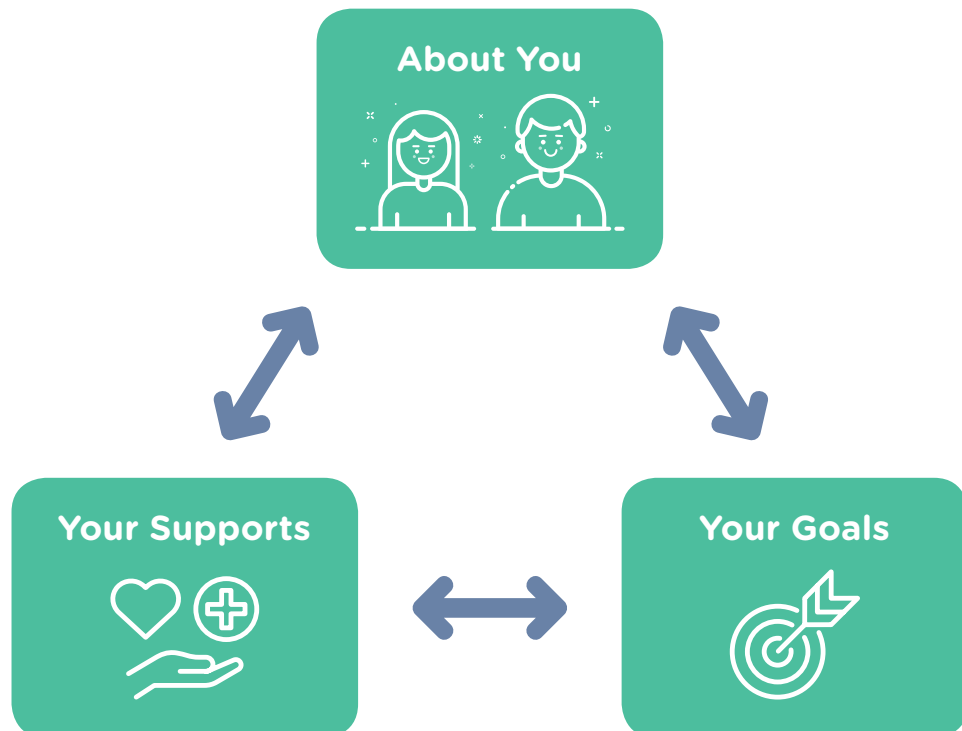
#### Part 1: Pre-planning

The pre-planning phase of the NDIS is about getting ready for your Planning meeting. The Planning meeting is to decide on the help you need and what funding you can receive in your [NDIS Plan](#).

The pre-planning phase of the NDIS is broken down into three categories:

- About you
- Your supports
- Your goals

It is important to be prepared for this meeting by gathering information. We recommend you use a pre-planning booklet to help you prepare for your Planning Meeting.



## Pre-planning: About You

In the planning meeting, the [NDIA planner](#) will ask you information about your day-to-day life. This is known as your [Participant Statement](#).

You will need to provide information about:

- where you live
- the people who support you
- your daily life.

About You	
<b>Where I live:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Including suburb, type of home, access and stairs</li></ul>
<b>Who supports me:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Informal (family and friends), formal (paid by self or by government services) and community options (voluntary organisations)</li></ul>
<b>My daily life (example):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Morning routine: get up, toilet, shower, get dressed, make breakfast, eat, clean up</li><li>• Go out (where, when, how long, way of travel?), eat lunch, toilet</li><li>• Evening routine: make dinner, eat, clean up, shower, get ready for bed, toilet, sleep</li><li>• Household chores: cleaning, washing clothes, house maintenance, mowing lawn, gardening, washing car</li><li>• On the weekends I enjoy reading and going for walks with my family.</li><li>• I go to the local gym three times per week.</li><li>• Driving/vehicle modifications</li><li>• Activities when on holiday/special occasions/festivities</li><li>• Leisure activities</li><li>• Work/education activities or interests</li></ul>



## Pre-planning: Your Goals

The **goals** in your NDIS plan should be focused on functional skill, independence and participating in the community. Your goals will be discussed at the planning meeting so you can receive funding to achieve them.

These goals are different from SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and timely) goals. SMART goals are regularly used in health care and in rehab.

NDIS goals are broader, more overarching goals.

Examples of goals supported by the NDIS include:

- going out to see friends
- going to study
- going to work.

To achieve these larger goals, you need to set a series of small goals: getting out of bed, getting dressed, preparing and eating a meal before you go, cleaning up, transport and support while doing the activity in the community.

Your **Local Area Coordinator (LAC)**, **NDIA Planner** or volunteers from other agencies will talk through your goals and aspirations with you before and/or during the planning meeting.

### For example:



I would like to go to watch the football/cricket on the weekend.

**What are some of your goals or aspirations? Write some ideas below.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



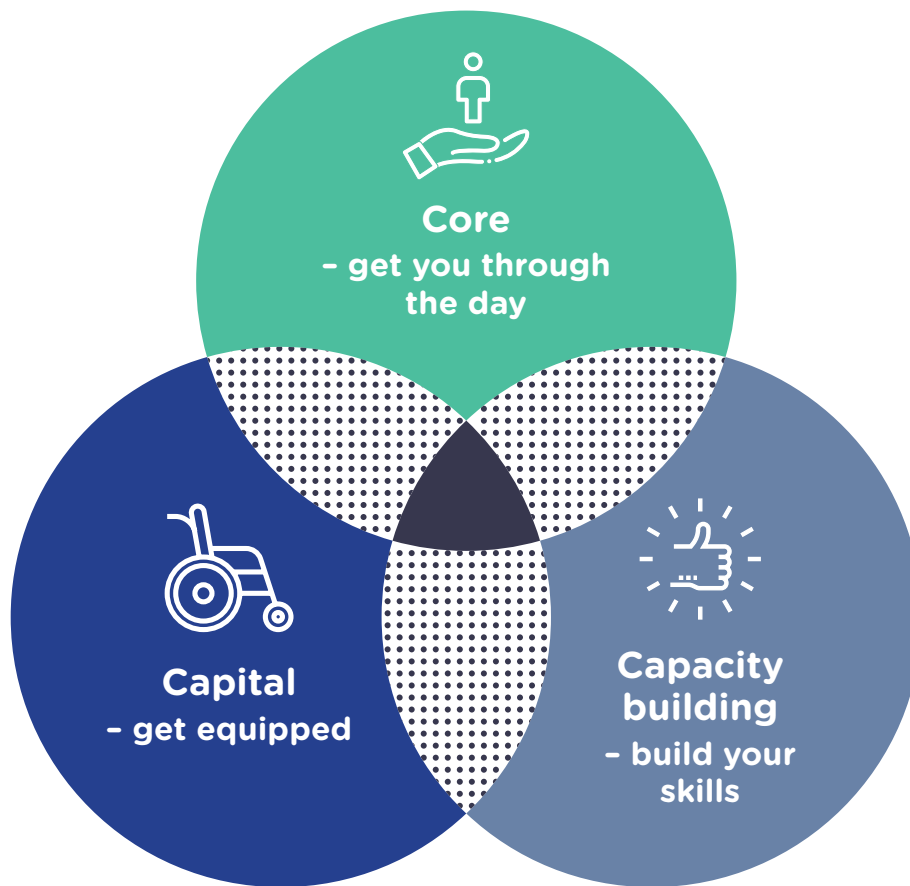
## Pre-planning: Your Supports

Once you have determined your goals, you need to think about what people or items will help you achieve your goal. These are called [Supports](#). Supports can include equipment or people to help you.

- **Informal supports** – family, friends and unpaid carers who can help you when you need it. If you have people around you that are limited in their ability to support you (for example, they are ageing or have a disability), please make this very clear to the NDIS
- **Community and mainstream supports** – services available from government services (e.g. council transport, education or healthcare)
- **Formal supports** – services or equipment using NDIS funding

The NDIS uses the term ‘support categories’ in your [Plan](#). The plan has three groups of funded supports - **Core, Capital, and Capacity Building**. Your plan will have these categories but there is limited control over how the funds are allocated. These categories are important in preparing for your Plan Review in 12 months’ time.





### Core - get you through the day

- everyday supports (e.g. personal care, house cleaning, shopping, transport)
- consumables (e.g. parts of continence products)

### Capacity building - build your skills

- short term services to help you build your independence
- includes support co-ordination, support to access social groups or education

### Capital - get equipped

- significant equipment or modifications
- includes power wheelchair, pressure care bed, home & vehicle modification



The NDIS will fund the supports they consider to be *'reasonable and necessary'*.

## About reasonable and necessary supports



[NDIS reasonable and necessary supports video - YouTube](#)



[NDIS reasonable and necessary supports](#)

### For example:



Equipment - wheelchair, bed, commode

Support worker to assist with personal care, domestic tasks, assisting you to do activities in the community (that are linked to your goals)



## Part 2: The planning meeting

### At the planning meeting

The NDIA representative will gather all the information they need to make an assessment of your needs for the next 6-12 months. They will then take this to an NDIA Planner, who is responsible for creating the NDIS Plan.

A planning meeting could look like this:

1. An NDIS Representative will start the conversation and ask a few questions focusing on:
  - your personal details
  - community and mainstream supports you do or will receive
  - your safety at home and in the community
  - your goals and starting your plan.
2. The representative will talk about how the NDIS funds supports. The supports will relate to your day to day living as well as your goals to live an ordinary life.
3. The representative will ask you how you want to manage the funds in your NDIS plan - self-managed, NDIA-managed, or having a Plan Manager.

### Options for plan management

Plan management option	How it works
<b>Plan Manager</b>	If you would like some help when you first get your plan, you can choose to pay for a Plan Manager out of your funding and they can pay your providers for you. Your plan manager cannot pay more than the NDIA set price limit for specific supports.
<b>Self-management</b>	The NDIA provides you with funding to choose your own supports to help you meet your plan goals. This gives you control and flexibility over who provides your supports and when.
<b>NDIA managed</b>	The NDIA pays your providers on your behalf. They can only pay providers who are registered with the NDIS. They cannot pay more than the NDIA set price limits.



## After the planning meeting

The time from your planning meeting to receiving your plan can vary. You can contact the NDIA to follow up on the progress of your plan.

### About planning - what you need to know



[Planning Book 2 - National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)  
(choose from pdf, Word document or Easy English)



[Developing your first NDIS plan - YouTube](#)



[What can I get in an NDIS Plan? - Summer Foundation](#)

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### About planning - more detail



[NDIS Pathway Support - ParaQuad](#)



[Reasonable and necessary supports - YouTube](#)

★ Tip: start watching at 0:56 seconds





[NDIS Planning Workbook - Every Australian Counts](#)



[Preparing for your first NDIS planning meeting - Spinal Cord Injuries Australia](#)



## Key people you will meet in the Planning phase

<b>Local Area Coordinator (LAC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From local organisations working in partnership with the NDIA.</li><li>• Provides general information about your NDIS plan.</li><li>• Links you with support and services in the community.</li></ul>
	<a href="#"><u>What is a Local Area Coordinator? - NDIS</u></a>
<b>Volunteers/visitors /peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports participants to implement and review their plans.</li><li>• Can provide information specific to SCI.</li><li>• Ask staff for more details.</li></ul>
	<a href="#"><u>Peer support - Spinal Cord Injuries Australia</u></a>
<b>NDIA Planner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).</li><li>• Puts together a plan, makes reasonable and necessary decisions in accordance with the <a href="#"><u>NDIS Act</u></a>.</li></ul>



## Planning - your checklist

1 **Select and print a Planning workbook to help you collect information for your Planning meeting.**



2 **Confirm your NDIS meeting time and date with the NDIA.**



3 **A Local Area Coordinator (LAC) or NDIA Planner will contact you to arrange a time to meet and discuss your disability support needs. You can request information from them to help with the planning meeting.**



4 **Start preparing for your meeting.**



a) **Part 1 - About me**

Where I live, who supports me and my daily life



b) **Part 2 - My goals**

Think about what community activities you want to do when you leave hospital.



c) **Part 3 - My supports**

Reasonable and Necessary Supports  
(Core, Capital, Capacity)



5 **Gather information and reports for your meeting.**  
★ (Tip: use a checklist in the resources listed below).



6 **Decide who you like to attend your planning meeting with you (for example, family members, a friend or a carer).**



7 **Write down any questions you have.**



# 4

## Step 4:

### Starting my plan



There are two parts to starting your plan:

**Part 1:** Receiving and understanding my NDIS plan

**Part 2:** Using my plan

#### Part 1: Receiving and understanding my NDIS plan

After your planning meeting the NDIA will review the information from the planning meeting and any other necessary documentation. Sometimes you may be asked for further information.

The time from your planning meeting to receiving your plan can vary. If you would like to follow up on the progress of your plan, you can contact the NDIA.

Once the plan has been approved you should receive a notification from the NDIA. You will receive some information and a code to access the [myplace](#) participant portal, through your [mygov](#) online account.

The *myplace portal* is where you can:

- find your NDIS plan and available funding
- find providers
- make payment requests (if you are self-managing your child's NDIS plan).

You should now have a plan implementation meeting with your Local Area Coordinator or Support Coordinator to discuss the plan and how to implement it.



## Part 2: Using my plan

### Choosing service providers

Once you have received your NDIS plan and you understand what's in it, you can start choosing [service providers](#). It's important to find a service provider who is right for you.

#### Questions to ask a service provider/agency before starting a service agreement:

- What experience do you have in working with clients with a spinal cord injury?
- Are your support workers trained in the needs of a person with a disability?
- Can they work with complex care needs or challenging behaviours?
- What support services do you provide? Is your service flexible?
- How does your service provide 'person-centred' care and supports?
- What if I am not happy with my care worker or support person, or the services provided?
- Does your service monitor the quality of care it provides?

If you have been funded for [support coordination](#) in your plan, find a suitable service that understands your disability and your needs. Your Support Coordinator will coordinate services according to your plan. They are your 'go to' person to link you with the most appropriate providers for your daily/weekly care, goals and accessing mainstream services.



## Service bookings and service agreements

You will normally need to make a written agreement with your provider, called a **service agreement**. Each provider will have their own service agreement. Carefully look at the terms and conditions, and make sure you understand all the details before you sign anything.

**Service bookings** are different to service agreements. In a service booking, you and your chosen provider agree on how much of your budget can be 'reserved' in your plan for that provider. Service bookings are usually written for the whole duration of the NDIS plan. They are documented in the *myplace* participant portal.

### About starting my plan - what you need to know



[NDIS: Starting my plan](#)



[NDIS: \*myplace\* participant portal user guide](#)



[NDIS: Find Registered Service Providers](#)





# 5

## Step 5:

### Reviewing my plan



In the few months before your NDIS Plan ends, it's time to start collecting information and thinking about goals for your next plan. What has worked well in your current plan? What would you like to change?

#### What to think about for your plan review

- 1. Progress towards your goals** – ask for reports from your current service providers about how NDIS supports have contributed to working towards your goals, and what supports you may need for your next NDIS plan. Any new assessments should provide evidence of what you need in your next NDIS plan. When you have made limited progress in your goals, explain why, for example, because of illness or a lack of funding.
- 2. Your goals for the next 6-12 months** – what supports do you need to reach them?
- 3. When you have not used all the funds in your current plan** – explain why. Any unspent funds will not roll over into your next plan.
- 4. Going through major life changes** – for example, starting or finishing study, moving house, planned surgeries, or requiring modified or new equipment.
- 5. Managing your funding** – did the current option work for you? Would you like to change options?

If your plan is due to finish soon but you have not yet been contacted by an NDIA representative to organise a preplanning meeting, you can contact the NDIA.

# Support for carers

This information guide is for consumers, their families and carers. If you would like your carer to view this information guide, please provide them with the link to the website.

## More information for carers



[Support for families and carers - Carers Australia](#)



[Carer Checklist - Carers Australia](#)

# Useful contacts

## Key organisations

Organisation	Role	Contact details
ParaQuad	Product provider	Phone: (02) 9132 4260 Email: <a href="mailto:paraquad@paraquad.org.au">paraquad@paraquad.org.au</a>
Spinal Cord Injuries Australia	Service provider	Phone: 1800 819 775 Email: <a href="mailto:info@scia.org.au">info@scia.org.au</a>
Carers Australia (NSW)	Carer Line - Freecall	Phone: 1800 242 636 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@carersnsw.org.au">contact@carersnsw.org.au</a>

## Who do I contact if I have any questions or need support?

- Before getting access to the NDIS: your Health Care team
- After getting access to the NDIS: your Local Area Coordinator (or Support Coordinator if you have one)



[Where should I go if I have questions about the NDIS or disability services in NSW? - NDIS NSW](#)

# Key people

Organisation they work for	Name	Contact details
NDIS Planner		Phone:  Address:
My Local Area Coordinator and partner organisation, for example, Uniting		Phone:  Address:
Peer support coordinator		Phone:  Address:

## Other contacts

Name	Relationship to me	Organisation they work for and contact details

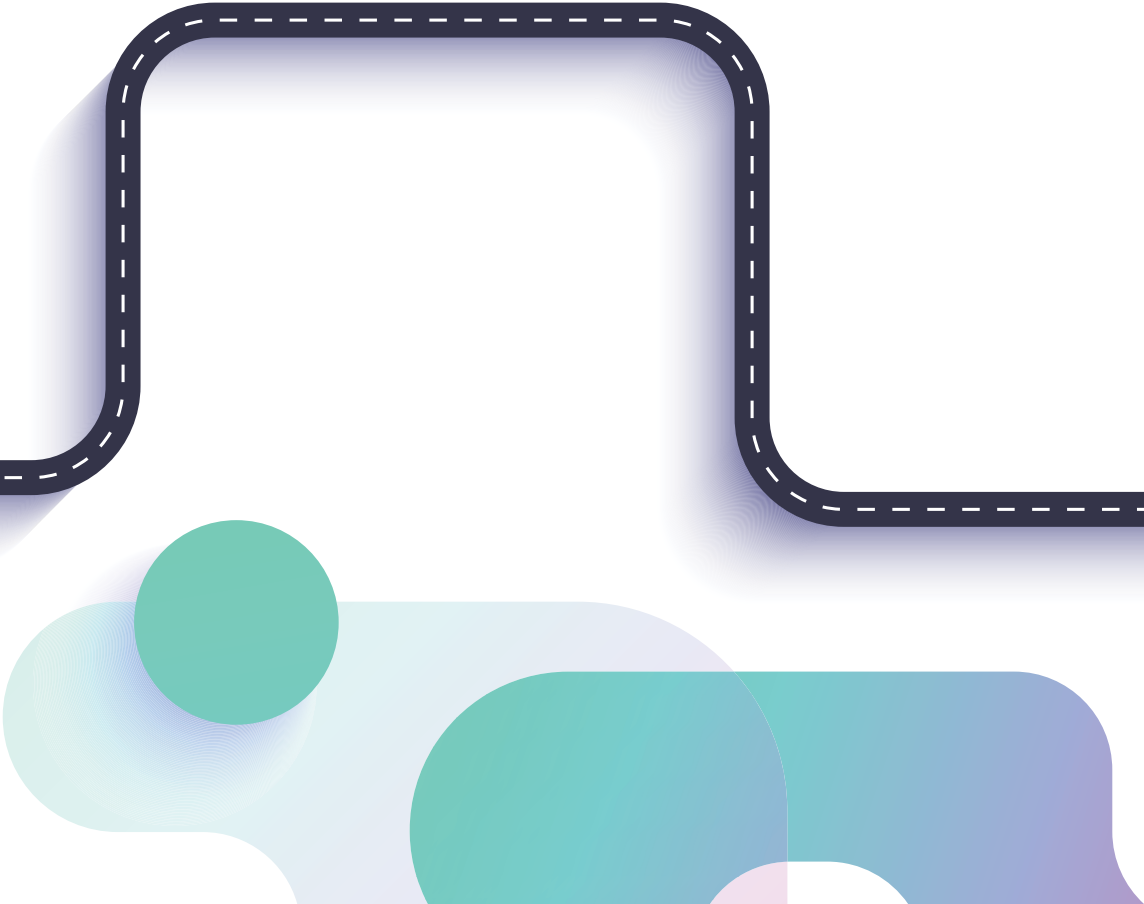
# NDIS glossary (adapted from NDIS website)

<b>Access Request Form (ARF)</b>	The form people fill out to help the NDIA identify if a person is eligible to become a participant.	
<b>Carer</b>	A family member or friend who provides personal care, support and help to a person with disability and is not contracted as a paid or voluntary worker.	
<b>Consumables</b>	Consumables are a support category available to assist participants with purchasing everyday use items. Supports such as continence and home enteral nutrition (HEN) products are included in this category.	
<b>Goals</b>	Things a participant wishes they could do or achieve in the future, with the help of the NDIS.	
<b>Local Area Coordinators (LAC)</b>	Local organisations working in partnership with the NDIA, to help participants, their families and carers access the NDIS. LACs will help participants write and manage their plans and also connect participants to mainstream services and local and community-based supports.	<a href="#">Click here to return to <u>What is the NDIS?</u></a>
<b>Manage</b>	How you organise support, for example finding service providers, keeping records and receipts or paying support workers. For information regarding different plan management options, please refer to National Disability Insurance Scheme: Plan Management.	<a href="#">Click here to return to <u>Can I access the NDIS?</u></a>
<b>National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)</b>	The agency set up and funded by the Australian Government to implement and run the Scheme.	<a href="#">Click here to return to <u>Planning</u></a>  <a href="#">Click here to return to <u>Starting my plan</u></a>

<b>Nominee</b>	A person who has permission to act or make decisions on behalf of the participant.	<a href="#">Click here to return to Reviewing my plan</a>
<b>Participant</b>	A person who meets the NDIS access requirements and is approved to receive funded supports via an NDIS plan.	
<b>Participant Statement</b>	Information setting out a participant's living arrangements, relationships, supports, description of day to day life, and their short and longer term goals.	
<b>Plan</b>	Each participant has their own individual plan. This is a written agreement stating their goals and needs, what supports they already have, and the reasonable and necessary supports the NDIS will fund. Plans are sometimes referred to as individual funding packages.	
<b>Reasonable and necessary</b>	Reasonable means something fair and necessary means something you must have. The NDIS funds reasonable and necessary supports relating to a person's disability to help them live an ordinary life and achieve their goals. These supports take into account any informal supports you already have (for example, family and community services).	
<b>Service provider</b>	A service provider is a person or agency who provides a service or a product under the NDIS. Service providers include support workers, therapists, support coordinators, and providers of equipment and consumables.	



<b>Supports</b>	<p>Things to help a person undertake daily life activities and enable them to participate in the community and reach their goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Formal supports</b> – supports participants have to book and pay for.</li><li>• <b>Funded supports</b> – supports the NDIS pays for through a participant’s plan. These supports must be reasonable and necessary.</li><li>• <b>Informal supports</b> – the supports participants get from the people around them, for example family, friends or neighbours.</li></ul>	
<b>Support coordination</b>	<p>Support coordination is available to help you implement and review your plan. This includes connecting you with all the supports in your plan including formal, mainstream, community and funded supports. Support coordination is funded separately in your plan and will not reduce the amount you receive for other funded supports.</p>	<p><a href="#">Click here to return to What is the NDIS?</a></p> <p><a href="#">Click here to return to Can I access the NDIS?</a></p> <p><a href="#">Click to here to return to Planning</a></p>





## **Acknowledgements**

The NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity project (2018) would like to acknowledge the following organisations for their contribution to this resource.

### **Northern Sydney Local Health District**

<http://www.nslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/>

### **Spinal Cord Injury Australia (SCIA)**

<https://scia.org.au/>

### **ParaQuad NSW**

<https://www.paraquad.org.au/>

### **Carers Australia**

<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/>

### **Uniting Care Australia**

<https://www.unitingcare.org.au/>

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To find out about support for  
adults with a disability, go to  
[www.health.nsw.gov/ndis](http://www.health.nsw.gov/ndis)

