

Navigating the transition of PIR to NDIS

Partners in Recovery (PIR)



phn
EASTERN MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative



Contents

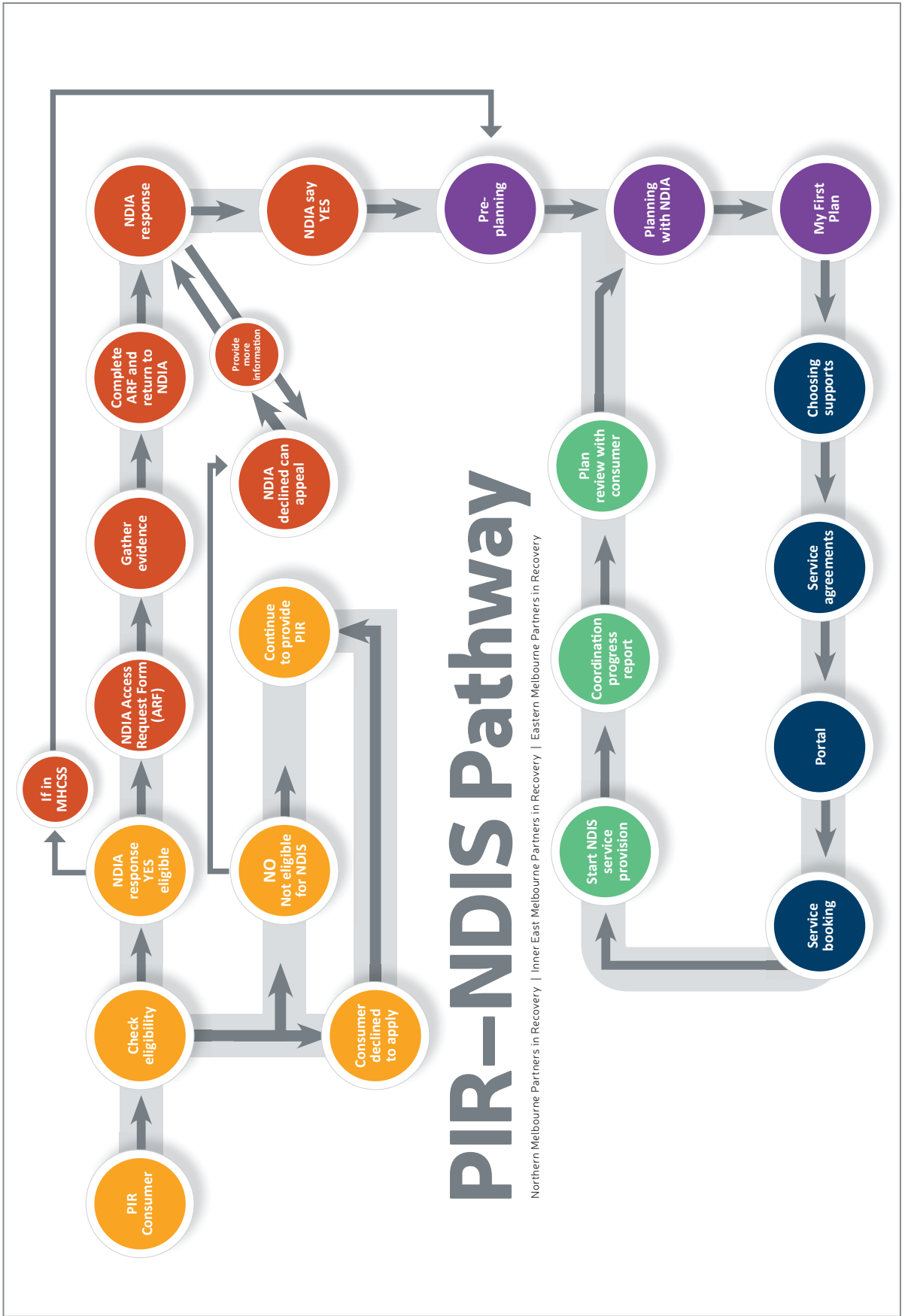
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Purpose

This booklet has been created as a resource to assist consumers and their carers understand the transition from Partners In Recovery (PIR) to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Information in this booklet reflects current knowledge of how PIR is transitioning into the NDIS and is intended to assist PIR consumers and carers to understand this process. The NDIS is a new way of providing support which means that processes may be adapted and altered by the NDIS. As PIR transitions eligible consumers to the NDIS, PIR processes will evolve to align with up-to-date NDIS developments as they affect the transition. Please note that the information in this document is correct at the time of publishing.

This booklet uses lots of abbreviations, so please see the end of booklet for explanations.

We would like to acknowledge the advice, lived experience and work of the Northern Melbourne PIR Consumer Carer Reference group in creating this booklet.



Section 1: Eligibility

What is the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a new way of providing support to people with a psychosocial disability and aims to have a positive impact on your everyday life. It will provide opportunities in the community, certainty of funding for supports, and give people more choice and control over how supports are provided. Psychosocial disability is the term used to describe disabilities that may arise from mental health issues. Many of the supports that used to be provided, like day programs and outreach mental health support workers, will now be part of the NDIS.

As there is a lot of information on the NDIS on the internet, fact sheets, and at the Local Area Coordinator office, this booklet will not aim to cover all information about the NDIS, but will aim to point consumers and carers in the right direction. You may also like to discuss the information with your Support Facilitator.

The most helpful sections of the NDIS website will be detailed throughout this booklet. For example, search “psychosocial fact sheet” on the NDIS website. For general information, search “my NDIS pathway”, go into the Local Area Coordinator area or call NDIA.

The role of Partners In Recovery in transition to the NDIS



Support Facilitators will continue to coordinate support for you, however, if you become a participant of the NDIS, the Support Facilitator may then become an NDIS Support Coordinator and their role may be different.

Prior to NDIS starting in an area, Partners In Recovery will:

- continue to provide services to PIR consumers;
- help PIR clients and their families to understand the NDIS; and
- assist with the process getting support from the NDIS for those people who meet the eligibility criteria.

Once NDIS starts in an area, Partners In Recovery will:

- provide support with the assessment and planning processes;
- provide services to eligible NDIS participants, called “Coordination of Supports”; and
- provide support for PIR consumers who are not eligible for the NDIS to find alternative services.

When will the NDIS start?

The NDIS began rolling out across Australia on 1 July, 2016 and will continue according to a staged approach. For more information, visit www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/our-sites/VIC

North eastern Melbourne

The NDIS became available in the north eastern Melbourne area from 1 July, 2016. The north eastern Melbourne area covers the local government areas of Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, and Yarra.

Outer eastern Melbourne

The NDIS will become available in the outer eastern Melbourne area from 1 November, 2017. The outer eastern Melbourne area covers the local government areas of Knox, Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges. People may be contacted before this by the NDIS in order to start the transition process.

Inner eastern Melbourne

The NDIS will become available in the inner eastern Melbourne area from 1 November, 2017. The inner eastern Melbourne area covers the local government areas of Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, and Whitehorse. People may be contacted by the NDIS before this in order to start the transition process.

Eligibility

Check eligibility

Am I able to access the NDIS?

First of all, you need to be eligible. You can check if you are eligible by meeting all three requirements below, going online to www.ndis.gov.au

[/ndis-access-checklist](http://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist), or by talking to your Support Facilitator.

The NDIS will support people who meet the following entry/eligibility requirements:

- have a permanent (or likely to be permanent) and significant disability that affects their ability to manage everyday activities;
- be aged less than 65 when they first access the scheme; and
- be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen who holds a Protected Special Category Visa.

NO
Not eligible
for NDIS

If you are not eligible

because you do not fit the criteria listed, you can continue to receive PIR support until there is more guidance from the Federal Government.

www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/continuity-support

NDIS
declined,
can appeal

If you are not eligible

because NDIA have declined your Access Request Form, you may appeal and may need to provide more information. You can continue to receive PIR support until there is more guidance from the Federal Government.

www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/feedback-complaints

Consumer
declined
to apply

If you have declined to apply,

you can continue to receive PIR support until the program has transitioned to NDIS and there is more guidance from the Federal Government.

Test your eligibility

Check eligibility

When you are first called by NDIA it is to 'test your eligibility' and gather some information for the next stage of the process. If you want a support person to help with this call, you may ask for the

call to be scheduled at a time that suits best. Some people may want to go into their Local Area Coordinator office and ask for the Access Request Form rather than being contacted by NDIA. Please note that going into the office may not necessarily make it a faster process.

NDIA
declined can
appeal

If the NDIA's decision is that you are not eligible, you can request to have the decision reviewed. You may have to provide further evidence for this and you will need to request the review within three months of receiving the NDIA's decision.

Section 2: Access

NDIA (or their representatives) may ask for consent to get information from other Government departments, like Centrelink. This may make the process simpler as it could mean you don't have to fill in all the paperwork. The NDIS does not affect your income supports, but if you receive travel allowance with your income supports it may be transferred to your NDIS plan, so make sure you tell the planner you receive this.

NDIA
response
YES
eligible

NDIA will inform you, generally by letter, that you are eligible and will be contacted by a planner.

Access

NDIA Access
Request Form
(ARF)

NDIS journey for PIR consumers

Like the public transport network, there are different ways and times for different people to get into the NDIS depending upon what programs you may already access and where you live.

If you are a PIR consumer, you will most likely be contacted by the NDIA or a representative organisation. The caller may know basic information about you as the scheme is allowed, by law, to gather information on consumers who access Government funded programs, like PIR.

If in
MHCSS

If you also access another program, like Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) or are on a wait list to access MHCSS, you may be contacted via that program.

Some people may need to fill out an Access Request Form while other people who are in programs like MHCSS will most likely not need to fill in an Access Request Form.

Over the page are some examples of PIR consumers getting into the NDIS because they are in other programs. Most of these consumers have multiple supports that could be a pathway. We have identified the likely program that transitioned them into NDIS. If you are not accessing these programs, you will still be able to test if you are eligible and get support to access the NDIS through the PIR program.

1. Linda (Carer of PIR consumer)

On Disability Support Register – early transition contact.

Contacted to complete Access Request Form over phone.

Letter to confirm eligible.

Background document prepared by carer and care team.

Face to face meeting with planner for carer, consumer and Support Facilitator.

At any stage, had lots of mini care team meetings as required.

Plan approved and notified in writing.

Starting to implement plan.

2. Debbie (PIR consumer)

MHCSS
Has PIR

NDIS phoned and asked about eligibility – did not fill in Access Request Form, but consumer gave consent to use info from Centrelink.

Letter to confirm eligible and that planner would contact consumer.

While waiting for planning doing pre-planning with outreach mental health worker.

Journey to be continued.

Tip – can ask for care team meeting to discuss pre-planning.

Journey to be continued.

3. Cameron (PIR consumer)

Waitlist for MHCSS
Has PIR

MHCSS waitlist organisation called and offered support to apply for NDIS – consumer decided to do the application themselves.

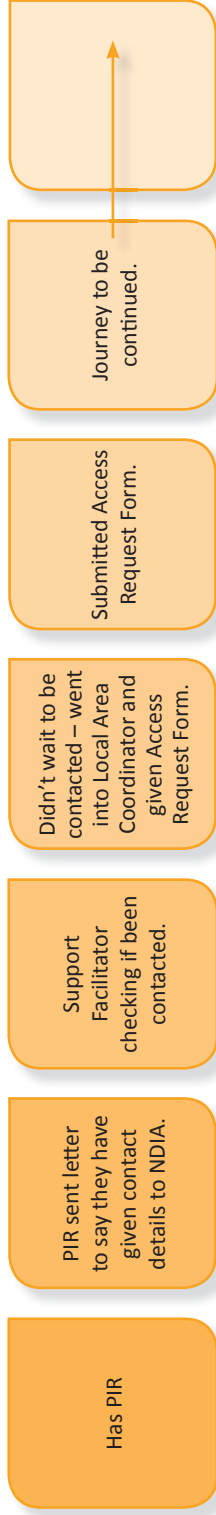
Phoned NDIS and got Access Request Form posted out.

Emailed Access Request Form to NDIS.

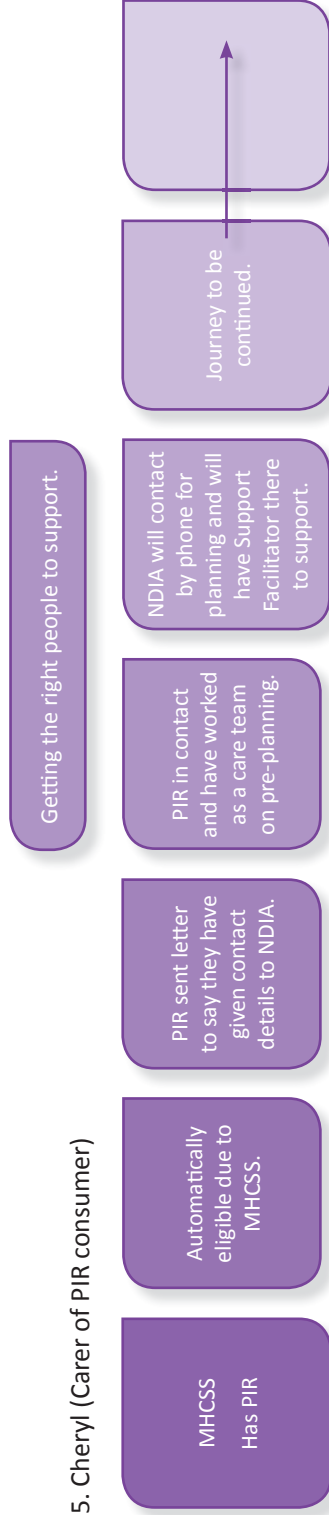
Called by NDJA to say eligible and would be contacted by planner.
Letter received confirming.

Wait for planner.
Getting prepared for planning meeting.

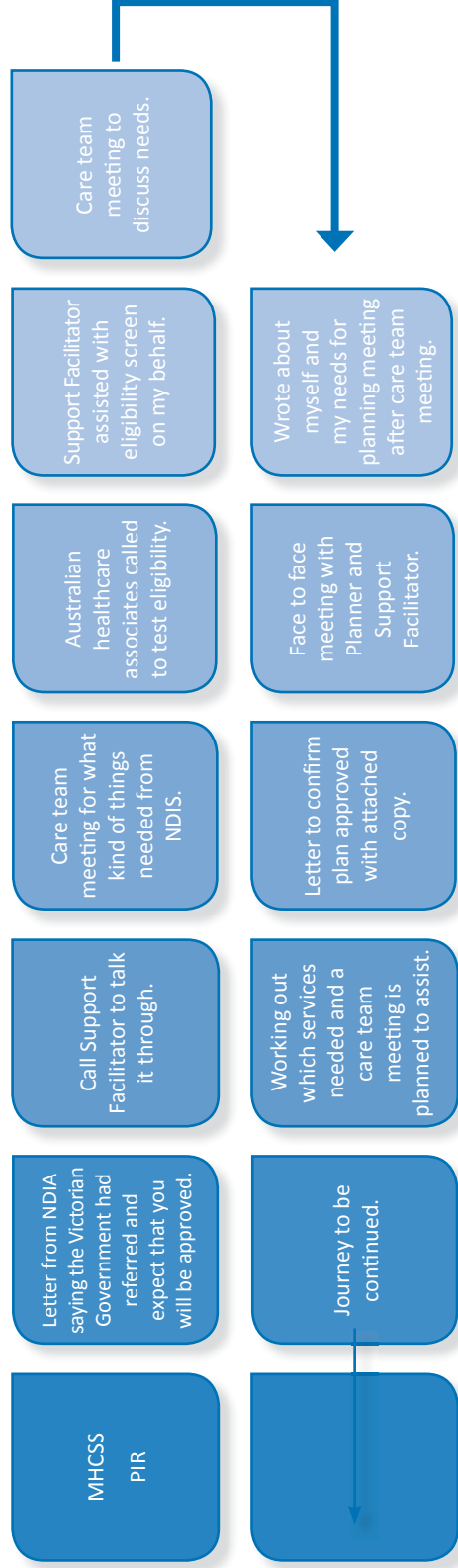
4. Sarah (PIR consumer)



5. Cheryl (Carer of PIR consumer)



6. Alicia (PIR consumer)



Access

NDIA Access Request Form (ARF)

Once you know you are eligible, the NDIA may send out an Access Request Form.

Gather evidence

This is when you gather evidence of the psychosocial disability and the impact it has on your life. You will need your health professionals to fill out parts of this form and provide

documents to say you have a mental health diagnosis. They will also need to document what impact the mental illness has on your life.

If in MHCSS

For some consumers who are in programs such as MHCSS, they will not need to fill out an Access Request Form but may need to provide some evidence. Once this is provided, the next stage will most

likely be pre-planning (can be done with your supports/care team).

For some disabilities there is no need to provide evidence (please refer to www.ndis.gov.au/people-with-disability/access-requirements/completing-your-access-request-form/evidence-of-disability).

Evidence

Gather evidence

What evidence do I need for my application?

www.ndis.gov.au/people-with-disability/access-requirements/completing-your-access-request-form/evidence-of-disability

There are two main elements to the Access Request Form that you may need to gather evidence on:

1) Diagnosis

Mostly, for people who are in PIR, you will need to provide NDIA with evidence of the diagnosis of your disability from your treating doctor or specialist.

Part F of the Access Request Form and the NDIS Supporting Evidence Form collects this information, or you can give NDIA other written evidence of your **diagnosis** from your treating doctor or specialist. This information needs to include information about any treatment/s you are receiving.

When providing a letter from your GP, it may be useful to include information such as:

- long term mental illness which is likely to be permanent;
- what the diagnosis is;
- when the condition was diagnosed and by whom;
- how long you have been receiving psychosocial support for; and
- that functional gains are not expected (that it is likely to be permanent).

It is important to note that in requesting a GP to write a letter such as this, it needs to be an accurate and true reflection of your diagnosis.

“I needed my NDIS folder to look that up – it’s good to have a folder to keep everything in.” – Alicia

2) Evidence of the impact of your condition

The type of evidence submitted with an NDIS application will vary from person to person but it needs to demonstrate that your disability is likely to be with you for life and that it impacts on one or more of these areas of your life:

- mobility;
- communication;
- social interaction;
- learning;
- self-care; or
- ability to self-manage.

The meaning of 'disability for life' acknowledges that a psychosocial disability can be episodic and that the level of support required changes.

The type of evidence can include, that you may find it difficult or not be able to use public transport due to anxiety; or you find it difficult to build and maintain relationships, friendships or participate in social groups and activities. Another example is being unable to maintain work in paid or voluntary positions.

Most of this evidence will be in the in the form of copies of reports, letters or assessments from your health professionals or other professionals detailing your disability and the impact it has on your daily life. You can also include letters from family, friends, and social and community workers as well as other support people in your life who can provide information about how your disability impacts on your life.

Complete
ARF and
return to
NDIA

Once the Access Request Form has been sent into NDIA and approved, NDIA will send a letter to confirm approval and provide you with a copy of their 'Access Pack'.

The Access Pack is to support you to pre-plan before the meeting with the Planner.

Often, PIR consumers and carers request a care team meeting at this point to assist with the pre-planning of what you may need.

Submit completed Access Request Form to NDIA.

Your current supports may continue until your Access Request is processed, so don't be concerned if the NDIA doesn't contact you straight away. There are a lot of people being transferred across to the NDIS and it's going to take some time to contact and process everyone.

NDIA say
YES

NDIA say 'yes' and inform you that a planner will be in contact soon. If the NDIS asks you to provide more information to support your application (often says within

28 days) try to 'keep calm and carry on' if this is challenging to get within this time frame. Have a chat with your Support Facilitator about this or let the NDIS know if there is going to be a delay.



Section 3: Planning

Pre-planning



After you have been told you are eligible you will be contacted by a planner, it is recommended to do pre-planning. This is when you spend some time working out what your current supports

are and what you need to achieve your goals. As a PIR consumer, you may be supported to do this through your Support Facilitator and care team (as appropriate). It is your choice how much support you want from them. Some people want to do it for themselves whilst others may need and want a care team meeting, support from a carer or friend and to use the pre-planning workbooks that are available. It is recommended to work together with your current supports, be they professional or personal, to work out what you currently receive help with and what you may need or what is possible to ask for in the NDIS plan.

Pre-planning is important to ensure you get the best from your NDIS plan. Pre-planning is about what services you currently receive and need to keep going and what you would like to happen in your life; your dreams and aspirations. Often it involves asking yourself questions like, “What is it I really want for the future?”, “What would make my life more meaningful?”.

There are good workbooks available online and some organisations are providing them for their consumers.

www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/NDIS-Planning-Workbook.pdf

“Preparation really helped as I had my goals ready and my story about myself when I went in (to planning).” – **Alicia**

“We needed to work out who is taking the lead in care teams and the role of each member in supporting the application to NDIS.” – **Linda**

Planning



The Planner will call you to work out what kind and how much support you need. You may want to have a support person during this phone call or you may be offered a face-to-face meeting.

This conversation will take a while and it is useful to have an idea of what you will say (often people write down what they want to cover in the conversation). The Planner will ask for a description about you which goes into your plan. This is to help the services to know a bit about you and your life.

Do you need your Support Facilitator or other supports to assist you to write this description before you speak with the planner? Do you need assistance to work out what you are going to say to the planner? The Planner will work out with you what ‘reasonable and necessary’ funded supports you may need from the NDIS in order to ‘live an ordinary life’. They will also talk with you about your informal supports; what you can already access in the community or from mainstream services like education.

When the NDIA have made a decision, they will send you a letter informing you of their decision. If you have a correspondence nominee they may also receive a copy of the letter. It says on the NDIS website that you should hear back within approximately 28 days, so if you have not heard back it may be good for you to contact the NDIA or your supports to follow up.

More information:

Developing your first NDIS plan and getting ready for you planning conversation.

www.ndis.gov.au/news/Developing%20your%20first%20NDIS%20plan.html

What the NDIS will fund in relation to mental health.

www.ndis.gov.au/document/supports-ndis-will-fund-relation-0

There are some really good videos and information on the NDIS website.

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/firstplan

Good information on developing your first NDIS plan.

www.ndis.gov.au/news/Developing%20your%20first%20NDIS%20plan.html

Carers

Carers can write a carer's statement to be included in your plan and can be involved in planning by being with you when talking to the planner or if needed, they can request a separate appointment.

www.ndis.gov.au/families-carers/support-carers

Guide for Mental Health Carers provides information for people who provide care and support for people with a psychosocial disability.

www.carersaustralia.com.au/storage/guide-for-mental-health-carers-on-the-ndis.pdf

Appeals

If the NDIA thinks that you are not eligible for NDIS funding, they will let you know why. You can request to have your application reviewed, this may involve providing more evidence to support your application or clarifying something in your application. You will need to make this request within three months of the decision being made.

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/reasonable-and-necessary-supports/decision-review

The Plan



After you have met with the Planner, the draft plan will be sent to the NDIA to be approved. This plan, called "My First Plan" will then be sent to you.

At this point, it is recommended to inform your PIR Support Facilitator or care team member. The Support Facilitator may now become the Coordinator of Supports.

Their job is to help you to get your plan started and coordinate along the way. They will discuss with you how their role will change.

The My First Plan maybe a continuation of your current supports. You may get additional support if you can demonstrate it is necessary or that receiving support now could reduce your need for future supports. The NDIS will not fund all your needs, some of your support needs may be in the plan but NDIS does not pay for them. For example, health; education; or welfare, like housing, or hardship funding.

What will my NDIS plan look like?

Your first plan may include:

- informal supports – the support you receive from family and friends;
- community supports – activities and services you receive from people or groups in your community;
- mainstream supports – the supports you receive from health care and education providers, for example; and
- reasonable and necessary funded supports – these are the support services that the NDIS can fund, they relate to your disability and are the things you need to live your life and increase your options for social and economic independence.

After your NDIS Plan has been developed with the planner this will go to the NDIA for approval. They may approve all the plan, part of it, or none at all. If the NDIA does not approve all of or part of your plan they will tell you why. If you disagree with the decision the NDIA makes you can ask to have the decision reviewed.

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/firstplan

Section 4: Putting the plan into action

Putting the plan into action

Choosing supports

Your NDIS Plan will list the funded supports that aim to help you work towards your plan goals. You will receive your plan in the mail. Putting the plan into action is when you and your

coordinator will select and engage the type of support providers you have identified in your NDIS Plan. This means that you will have most of the control over what, when, where and by whom your support is provided. For example, you may have identified that you need support with developing skills for getting to appointments and/or managing other important activities. You and your coordinator, and depending on a provider's availability, will be able to choose from providers of this type of support.

At the implementation stage you will work with your Support Facilitator who will then likely become your NDIS Coordinator of Supports to identify and purchase your supports.

Understanding your plan and supports

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/understanding-your-plan-and-supports.html

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/startingmyplan

www.ndis.gov.au/finding-and-engaging-providers

Service agreements

Service agreements

Once you have decided on your supports, you and your Coordinator will need to arrange service agreement(s). These are a written agreement between yourself and the provider(s) to provide the service(s) you require from

them. The service agreement is what services you would like them to provide, how much this will cost, how they get paid, and what you can expect from them. When making a service agreement with a provider, it is recommended you take a copy of your NDIS plan. Until the agreement is done, the provider cannot provide the service.

www.ndis.gov.au/document/service-agreements-providers

Participant portal

Portal

Once you become an NDIA participant, the participant portal on the NDIA website is the place you go to in relation to your plan. It is a bit like internet banking, as you can do things like create and

manage service bookings (a new way of linking to a provider), see the balance of your funding, see the providers you have made arrangements with, and view messages from NDIS. Sometimes it may be useful to have your support coordinator login on your behalf as not everyone will have access to technology and the internet.

“I’ve become aware of how many hours I can use for co-ordination and what my Support Coordinator does in that time.” – Alicia

There is a user guide on the NDIS website which goes through how to set up your access and how to use the portal.

www.ndis.gov.au/participant-portal-user-guide

In order to login to the portal, you will need to use your MyGov account, if you don't have one yet it is recommended to set one up. If you need support to do this, speak with your Support Coordinator or someone else who may be helpful. When you receive your NDIS plan, you will be given an access code and will need to login to the portal use a MyGov account. This code is time limited, so you need to use it within the given time frame to login to the participant portal.

Service booking



Service booking

After the service agreement has been done, you or the provider will create a service booking on the NDIS portal. The service booking sets aside an appropriate amount of your funding, it is not an

appointment. Participants are generally required to approve service bookings created by providers for them. However, providers can approve the service booking on the participant's behalf if this has been discussed with the participant and agreed.



Section 5: Start using NDIS

Start NDIS service provision

Start using your NDIS plan

Your NDIS plan is now being delivered by purchasing supports directly from the provider. As with all new things, it may take time to establish a routine or have the services as you want.

It may be that as you start using your NDIS plan you become aware that it could be different or you need flexibility. The Coordinator can talk with you about how things can be flexible within certain categories.

If the plan you receive does not seem adequate for your needs or does not seem to be covering the things you talked about in your Planning meeting, you can ask for a review about the support budget(s) in your plan. To find out more about requesting a review of your plan you can contact NDIS on 1800 800 110 or visit the internal review of a decision page on NDIS website.

Coordination of support progress report

Coordination progress report

After the plan has been started, the Coordinator will fill in a report to the NDIA to let them know how things are going. You don't have to wait until this review if you (or your carer/support team) do

not think the plan is adequate or working, so let your Support Coordinator know as issues arise.

Plan review

Plan review with consumer

After one year of the NDIS plan, there will generally be a review of your first plan. The Coordinator would have put in a report before this about how things have been going and will support you

to prepare for this planning conversation with the NDIA. If your personal circumstances change significantly and this affects the supports you need from the NDIS, you can request a plan review at any time by completing the change of circumstances form.

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/understanding-your-plan-and-supports/change-circumstances

Useful Information

Phone numbers and websites

1) NDIS

www.ndis.gov.au

Phone: 1800 800 110 8am to 5pm (local time)
Monday to Friday

For people with hearing or speech loss

TTY: 1800 555 677

Speak and listen: 1800 555 727

For people who need support with English

TIS 131 450

www.ndis.gov.au/lote

2) Local Area Coordinator (LAC)

The Local Area Coordinator helps prepare communities for the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), through outreach, workshops and community engagement.

They provide assistance with the planning process, and ensure plans are implemented effectively. For people who are not currently accessing services to support into the NDIS, Local Area Coordinators can help you start this journey. They also work with the community and service providers to build inclusion and awareness of the needs of people with disability.

www.ndis.gov.au/communities/local-area-coordination

In the northern suburbs the LAC is:
Brotherhood of St Laurence

Phone: 1300 275 634

Email: ndis.info@bsl.org.au

- Banyule and Nillumbik – 65 Main St, Greensborough
- Darebin – 293 High St, Preston
- Whittlesea – 1/1 Latitude Boulevard, Thomastown

In the eastern suburbs the LAC is:
Latrobe Community Health Service

Office details to be released check website for updates.

www.lchs.com.au/aged-disability-carers/national-disability-insurance-scheme-ndis

What do these abbreviations mean?

EMPHN – Eastern Melbourne PHN – lead agency of the PIR program

LAC – Local Area Coordinator. The role of an LAC is to help participants navigate through the NDIS.

MHCSS – Mental Health Community Support Services

NDIA – National Disability Insurance Agency

NDIS – National Disability Insurance Scheme

PIR – Partners In Recovery

Support Facilitator (SF) – Partners in Recovery worker who helps coordinate your services.

Provider – Providers are people or businesses that provide your disability supports – a service or product.

Worker – some people have a team of professionals to support them – it may not always be your PIR Support Facilitator who supports you about NDIS.

Resources

NDIS have produced a booklet “My NDIS pathway” available online or call NDIA

www.ndis.gov.au/participants/planning-process
www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability

Self-managing budgets in your plan

www.ndis.gov.au/participant/self-managing-budgets

List of registered service providers

www.ndis.gov.au/document/finding-and-engaging-providers/find-registered-service-providers

Consumer rights at:

www.accc.gov.au/about-us/information-for/consumers-with-disability provides information about your rights when purchasing goods and services.

Psychosocial disability fact sheet

Search NDIS website www.ndis.gov.au

Digital copy of this booklet visit Eastern Melbourne PHN website www.emphn.org.au

Notes





For more information

18-20 Prospect Street
(PO Box 610) Box Hill, Vic 3128

Phone 9046 0300
www.emphn.org.au