# Purple cover of document, Disability-related health supports - information for NDIS participants, Version 2, June 2020. Disability-related health supports Information for NDIS participants

## Version 2 – June 2020

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**Please note:** this information pack does not include changes to the Scheme made as part of the NDIA’s response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

## What has changed?

Since 1 October 2019, additional disability-related health supports have been available for participants to purchase using NDIS funding. To access these supports:

* a person must meet the NDIS eligibility requirements and be an NDIS participant
* the need for these supports must directly relate to an NDIS participant’s functional impairment, where the support need is ongoing and is and most appropriately funded or provided by the NDIS.

The NDIS will fund specific disability-related health supports for participants who need help to manage a range of needs, including those associated with continence, diabetes, dysphagia, epilepsy, nutrition, podiatry, respiratory care, and wound and pressure care.

Disability-related health supports can be delivered by suitably qualified and competent workers, which may include nurses and/or allied health practitioners.

The health system will continue to be responsible for the diagnosis, early intervention and clinical treatment of health conditions, ongoing and chronic health conditions not related to a participant’s disability, time limited (non-ongoing) and palliative conditions, rehabilitation, convalescent care and acute/post-acute care (e.g. hospital and Hospital in the Home).

The NDIA is working closely with the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to ensure participants who may be eligible for these supports have them included in their NDIS plan.

This approach is good news for NDIS participants relying on disability-related health supports in their daily life, and reflects our commitment to putting you and your disability support needs at the centre of all our decisions.

## What is a reasonable and necessary support?

The NDIS funds a range of supports and services. In order to be considered reasonable and necessary, a support or service:

* must be related to a participant’s disability
* must not include day-to-day living costs not related to a participant’s disability support needs
* should represent value for money
* must be likely to be effective and work for the participant
* should take into account support given to a participant by other government services, family, carers, networks and the community
* is most appropriately funded by the NDIS.

A participant’s reasonable and necessary supports take into account any informal supports already available (informal arrangements that are part of family life or natural connections with friends and community services) as well as other formal supports, such as health.

These supports will help participants to:

* pursue their goals, objectives and aspirations
* increase their independence
* increase community and workplace participation, and
* develop their capacity to actively take part in the community.

## What are disability-related health supports?

The NDIS will fund specific disability-related health supports where the supports are a regular part of the participant’s daily life, and the need for the support results from the participant’s disability.

The typical types of support available can be grouped into eight ‘support type’ categories.

The following list of fundable supports is not exhaustive, and supports may be delivered in a range of ways. **Note:** this list was updated in June 2020:

### Continence supports

* + An NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to undertake insertion, removal or change of indwelling urethral catheter, suprapubic catheter and/or clean intermittent catheter.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to provide catheter maintenance and care.
  + Provision of daily catheter maintenance and care by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + All continence consumables (for example catheter, bags, pads, bottles, straps.)
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to provide assistance to manage bowel care where needed.
  + An NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to provide stoma management and care.

### Diabetic management supports

* + Development of a specific diabetes management plan where the participant’s disability complicates the management and care of their diabetes. This would build on the clinical plan developed by the General Practitioner.
  + Implementation of a diabetic management plan and daily maintenance and care by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to implement a diabetic management plan.

### Dysphagia supports

* + Development and periodic review of a meal time management plan by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Implementation of a meal time management plan by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Development, implementation and periodic review of an oral eating and drinking care plan (OEDCP) by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Implementation of an OEDCP by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to implement the meal time management plan and OEDCP.
  + Swallowing therapy associated with dysphagia provided by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Consumables such as thickeners to enable a participant to swallow more easily and reduce their risk of aspiration/choking, if not available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

### Epilepsy supports

* + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to implement the participant’s Epilepsy Management Plan (EMP) and/or Emergency Medication Management Plan (EMMP).
  + Epilepsy seizure monitoring by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker including the application of assistive technology.

### Nutrition supports

* + Dietetic consultations and the development and periodic review of a nutritional meal plan by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Implementation of a nutritional meal plan by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to implement the nutritional meal plan.
  + Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) Stoma Changes (to assist feeding) by a suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Provision of PEG maintenance and care by a suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to provide PEG maintenance and care.
  + Home Enteral Nutrition (HEN) and (PEG) and equipment and consumables excluding food.
  + HEN formula/nutritional supplements (to meet participant’s nutritional needs) if cost is in excess of PBS funding.

### Podiatry supports

* + Assessment, development, implementation and periodic review of a podiatry care plan by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to implement the podiatry care plan and perform any required daily maintenance and care related to the plan.

### Respiratory supports

* + Development and periodic review of a care plan for the daily maintenance of tracheostomy (insertion, removal and change) by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Implementation of daily maintenance of tracheostomy (insertion, removal and change) by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to provide tracheostomy maintenance and care.
  + Provision of tracheostomy equipment and consumables.
  + Provision of a Constant Positive Airway Pressure machine (CPAP) machine and consumables.
  + Provision of a Bi-level Positive Airway Pressure (BIPAP) machine and consumables.
  + Provision of a ventilator, air humidifier, portable suction machine and/or cough assist machine and consumables.
  + Assistance with the use of all respiratory medical equipment as well as the training of a suitably qualified and competent worker to use the equipment.

**Note:** the necessary standards and safeguards for provision of respiratory supports is the subject of consideration by the Intergovernmental Clinical Governance Working group. Any requests to the NDIS are being considered on a case-by-case basis in discussion with local health services.

### Wound and pressure care supports

* + Development of a care plan by a suitably qualified and competent clinician.
  + Wound care and pressure care (including pressure injury management) by an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker.
  + Training of support workers/families in prevention of pressure areas and wounds.
  + Wound care and pressure care consumables (e.g. dressings, gauze, bandages, tape, lymphoedema garments and pressure wraps).
  + Provision of Assistive Technology as required due to a participant’s disability, to prevent pressure areas/wounds occurring.
  + Lymphoedema machines as well as assistance with the use of the equipment and the training of an NDIS-funded suitably qualified and competent worker to use the machine.

## How will the transition work?

The NDIA is working closely with the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to ensure participants who may be eligible for these supports have them included in their plan.

Most participants will get disability-related health supports included in their NDIS plan at the next plan review.

The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have committed to ensuring NDIS participants continue to receive disability-related health supports while the funding responsibility and arrangements transfer to the NDIS.

Access to disability-related health supports will not stop during this period.

## How will people access disability-related health supports?

Depending on your situation, the way you can access disability-related health supports may be different.

If a participant already has disability-related health supports included in their NDIS plan there is no change – they will continue to purchase theses supports as usual.

If you have recently become eligible for the NDIS, or if your plan is being reviewed, additional disability-related health supports can now be included in your plan, if deemed reasonable and necessary.

Existing NDIS participants who need to add these supports into their plan do not need to request an unscheduled plan review to begin accessing disability-related health supports.

If you already have a NDIS plan, you have two options:

1. You can use your unspent core supports budget in your NDIS plan to flexibly purchase disability-related health supports, with the exception of Assistive Technology valued over $1500. Supports can only be purchased this way until you have a plan review. At your plan review, you will discuss your needs and if reasonable and necessary, funds for disability-related health supports will be included in your plan.
2. Continue to receive support from your State and Territory health service and inform them you are an NDIS participant. Your health service will offer support to escalate your needs with the NDIA or support you to seek a plan review. This will help you get supports included in your plan quicker and allow you to choose the providers you want to deliver these services.

When it is time for your plan review, you can discuss your need for these supports and they will be included in your plan if they are reasonable and necessary.

**Remember:**

* People with disability must meet the NDIS eligibility requirements to access disability-health related supports through the NDIS. If someone is not an NDIS participant, they can check if they are likely to be eligible for the NDIS by using the [eligibility checklist](https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible) or calling 1800 800 110.
* Many State and Territory health services are already registered NDIS providers and some are considering becoming registered providers. This means that you may be able to purchase your supports from your existing provider from your NDIS plan.
* If you are self-managing your NDIS plan, you will continue to have the flexibility to use your funds to achieve your NDIS goals.

## How will the NDIA fund disability-related health supports?

The disability-related health supports funded by the NDIS can be can be grouped into three main categories:

### 1. Consumables

* Consumables consist of supports that are meant to be consumed through eating, drinking or using. Examples of consumable disability-related health supports are items such as thickeners, wound care dressings, and catheter bags.
* Consumables for disability-related health supports can immediately be paid for out of any unspent funds from existing core supports category in an NDIS plan, without the need for a plan review. Funding for these supports will be included at the next scheduled plan review if reasonable and necessary.
* In most instances, there is no need to ask for an unscheduled review to purchase disability-related health supports consumables. However if you do not have enough unspent funds in your core supports, you will need to request a plan review through the NDIS contact centre, your Local Area Coordinator or NDIA planner.

### Assistance

* Assistance consists of supports provided by another human being.
* Assistance is when a suitably qualified and competent worker, nurse or allied health professional is required to assist in the provision of a support that the participant is unable to administer themselves. For example, when a participant requires a suitably qualified and competent worker to operate a ventilator.
* If a support worker, nurse or allied health professional is needed, their services can be paid for out of any unspent funds from existing core supports budget in an NDIS plan, without the need for a plan review.
* When it is time for your next plan review, you can then discuss your need for these supports and they will be included in your plan if they are reasonable and necessary.
* If you are using your plan flexibly prior to a plan review and still have unspent funds, you need to initially pay for a registered nurse through your core support budget until your next plan review. After your plan review, these assistance supports will be funded through the capacity building budget in your plan.
* In most instances, there’s no need to ask for an unscheduled plan review. However if you don’t have enough unspent funds in your core supports category, you will need a plan review.

### Assistive Technology

* Assistive Technology (AT) is 'any device or system that allows individuals to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do or increases the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed'. Examples of AT includes equipment such as a ventilator, and epilepsy monitoring devices such as seizure monitoring alarm systems.
* The NDIA has made changes to deliver better AT experiences and outcomes for participants and providers, including improvements to the planning process and quoting requirements.
* For AT purchases over $1500, you will need to have a plan review to add funding to your capital supports budget in your NDIS plan.
* For further information on Assistive Technology, visit the [NDIS website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/home-equipment-and-supports/assistive-technology-explained).

## For more information

* Visit the [NDIS website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports) for disability-related health supports information, including:
* [health sector pack](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports/disability-related-health-supports-health-sector)
* [participant information pack](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports/disability-related-health-supports-participants)
* [provider information pack](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports/disability-related-health-supports-providers)
* [case studies](https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/1669/download)
* [Easy Read translations](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports/disability-related-health-supports-participants)
* [understanding the Price Guide](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/using-your-plan/managing-your-plan/understanding-price-guide)
* Phone the NDIS National Contact Centre on **1800 800 110**
* Email [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au)
* Contact one of our NDIA offices or contacts in your area ([search your area here](https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact/locations)):
  + Local Area Coordinator (LAC)
  + Early Childhood, Early Intervention (ECEI) for children aged 0-6 years
  + Local NDIS offices

## Frequently asked questions

### Am I eligible?

* People with disability must meet the NDIS eligibility requirements to access disability-health related supports through the NDIS. If someone is not an NDIS participant, they can check if they are likely to be eligible for the NDIS by using the [eligibility checklist](https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible) or calling 1800 800 110.
* At your plan review you will discuss your need for these supports to be included in your plan if they are reasonable and necessary.
* If you are an NDIS participant and think you may be eligible for disability-related health supports, speak to your Local Area Coordinator or NDIA Planner. You can also check with your health service about what type of supports you receive on a regular and ongoing basis and record them for your plan review discussion.

### What to expect

**Do I have to wait until I have a plan review to get these supports?**

* If you wish to purchase disability-related health supports, you have the flexibility to use unspent funds from your current plan to do this. You can find out more about how to buy these supports on the [NDIS website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/supports-funded-ndis/disability-related-health-supports/disability-related-health-supports-participants).
* You can continue to receive support from the State and Territory health service and inform them you are an NDIS participant. They will offer assistance to escalate your needs to the NDIA or support you to seek a plan review.
* If the health service is a registered NDIS provider they may offer you the opportunity to purchase these supports from them using your NDIS plan.

**I don’t have a scheduled review in the next three months. I’m unlikely to have enough funds in my budget to pay for my disability-related health supports.**

* The NDIS will contact you and you may receive top-up funding before your next scheduled plan review or you may have an early plan review.
* You can continue to receive support from the State and Territory health service. If you inform them that you are an NDIS participant, they will offer assistance to escalate your needs to the NDIA or support you to seek a plan review.
* Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have committed to ensuring NDIS participants continue to receive disability-related health supports while the funding arrangements transfer to the NDIS.
* Access to disability-related health supports will not stop during this period.
* In some situations, participants may choose to access these supports using their existing budget until their next scheduled review.
* Remember NDIS plans are designed to be flexible. Participants can begin to spend their unspent budget on disability-related health supports while they wait for a plan review.
* For expensive Assistive Technology equipment, you won’t be able to use your unspent funds. In this case, you will need to have them added specifically to your plan as part of your plan review.

**I need specialised equipment and supports**

* For Assistive Technology valued over $1500, this will need to be specifically included in a participant’s plan at their review.
* The NDIA is prioritising these cases to make sure participants needing such equipment get funding specifically added to their plans so they will get the supports on an ongoing basis. But you can purchase low cost Assistive Technology (things under $1500) through consumables in the Core Support Category.

**How do I purchase disability-related health supports?**

* Depending on your situation, the way you purchase disability-related health supports may be different.
* When disability-related health supports are included in your plan, you will be required to use specific line items in the NDIS Price Guide.
* Specific advice about using the [2020-21 Price Guide and Support Catalogue](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/using-your-plan/managing-your-plan/understanding-price-guide), including disability-related health supports, is available on the NDIS website.

**Where do I purchase these supports?**

* If you already receive disability-related health supports, you may be able to purchase these supports from your existing provider.
* Many State and Territory health services are already registered NDIS providers and some are considering becoming registered. This means you may be able to purchase these supports from the Health service using your NDIS plan.
* You’ll find a list of providers registered on the [NDIS website](https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/working-providers/find-registered-provider) or on the Provider Finder on the myplace portal.

**What can I do to prepare for my plan review?**

* To prepare for your scheduled plan review, start to think about and gather any information relating to your need for disability-related health supports. Bring any assessments, reports or care plans to your plan review which might assist your planner to understand your needs.