### What is the objective of the Independent Assessment Pilot?

The objective of the pilot is to better understand and assess the impact of disability for people accessing the NDIS, to enable more consistent decision making. The pilot aims to achieve this by using functional capacity assessments undertaken by independent health professionals.

### Why should I volunteer?

### Assessments are offered free of charge and will help the NDIA to better support you to design a plan that is best suited to you and your goals. Feedback from the pilot will help shape how the NDIS supports people with disability.

### What is a functional capacity assessment?

A functional capacity assessment is an evaluation of a person's ability to manage tasks and activities of daily life. It entails a set of questions that are used to determine capacity in a variety of circumstances.

### If the initial Pilot was successful, why are you piloting it again?

The first pilot was for people aged 7 to 64 years with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability and psychosocial disability only.

The NDIA plans to continue testing functional capacity assessments to ensure that the assessment process and tools are right for participants of all disabilities, ages, cultural backgrounds and circumstances.

### What assessment tools will be used in the new pilot?

The NDIA has determined that one assessment tool alone cannot provide a complete picture of a person’s functional abilities across all areas of their life and meet the requirements of the NDIS Act 2013.

The NDIA is looking to trial multiple assessments to see which tools successfully measure how a person’s disability impacts their functional capacity. These tools will measure functional capacity across all the activities listed in the NDIS Act 2013:

* communication
* social interaction
* learning
* mobility
* self-care, and
* self-management

We will be trialling existing tools, like the PEDI-CAT, Vineland-3 and LSP-16 used in the initial pilot, and adding other tools during the pilot that allow us to gather a complete picture of a person’s functional abilities across all areas of their life.

### How has the NDIA chosen the assessment tools?

When deciding which assessment tools to use the NDIA considers a number of factors, including their reliability, validity, ease of use and administration, and how fit for purpose they are for NDIS use.

The assessment tools consider:

* what the person’s strengths are
* what the person can do with or without support
* what environmental factors may exist that make it easier or harder for the person to achieve their outcomes.

### How will the NDIA choose which assessments I need to complete?

Depending on your age, you will complete a combination of assessment tools to capture a complete picture of your functional abilities across all areas of your life.

**What is involved in an assessment appointment?**

An independent assessor will call you and set up an assessment appointment. This will be before your scheduled plan review meeting with your NDIS Planner or Local Area Coordinator.

The independent assessor will help you complete a set of functional capacity assessments and will make observations during the appointment to gain a first-hand understanding of the impact of your disability.

**Who can be at the assessment appointment?**

Some assessments you can complete yourself. Other assessments may need someone who knows you well (for example, a carer, parent, or relative) to completed them on your behalf.

The independent assessor will discuss this with you when booking your assessment appointment.

**How long will it take to complete the assessment appointment?**

The assessment appointment will take approximately 2 – 3 hours depending on which assessments you will be asked to complete.

**Where can I have my assessment appointment?**

The independent assessor will try to set up an appointment at a convenient time and suitable location for you and your parent/legal guardian or representative. This may be at your home or at one of the assessor’s local offices.

**Does my Local Area Coordinator or NDIS planner conduct the assessments?**

No, the assessors are qualified health professionals experienced in disability, independent to the NDIA.

### Will my plan review take longer as part of this pilot?

There will be no delays to your plan review due to the assessment process. The timeframes remain the same, whether you choose to participate in the pilot or not.

### What happens after I complete the assessment?

The NDIA will use the assessment results to help develop your next plan. Functional capacity assessments are just one piece in a collection of supporting evidence that the NDIA considers when making its decisions.

There will be an opportunity to provide feedback to the NDIA after you have completed your assessment appointment. Providing feedback to the NDIA is not compulsory, but it very valuable in helping shape the future of the Scheme for people with disability. Any feedback you choose to give will remain anonymous, and not impact any planning decisions.

### Can I get a copy of my assessment results?

If you would like a copy of your assessment results, please contact the NDIA at: assessments@ndis.gov.au.

The NDIA recommends that you speak with your treating health professional when reading the assessment results.

### Can I opt-out if I don't like the assessment process?

This pilot is voluntary and you have the option to opt-out at any time.

If you or your parent/legal guardian or representative are not happy with your experience during the pilot process, please contact the NDIA at assessments@ndis.gov.au and we will look to resolve the issue.

### What do I do if I do not agree with the assessment results?

### If you or your parent/legal guardian or representative are not happy with your assessment results during the pilot, please contact the NDIA at assessments@ndis.gov.au.

### We will review your assessment results to determine if your assessment has been administered correctly.

### What will be the impact of not completing this assessment?

### The pilot is voluntary and there will be no impact if you decide not to participate.

### Why can't I use my own treating health professional to conduct the assessment?

By having one organisation administer these assessments, instead of each participant’s treating health professional, the NDIA hopes to gather more consistent and robust data to better understand how it can support participants.

### Who is the independent assessor and how were they chosen?

The NDIA has engaged APM through a limited tender process to conduct the assessments for the Independent Assessment Pilot.

A human services organisation with more than 25 years of experience supporting people with disability, injury or illness, APM is committed to helping people access the services they need to live better lives.

APM employs qualified health professionals experienced in disability to undertake the assessments using standardised assessment tools.

### W**ill my access be withdrawn as part of the pilot?**

If you choose to volunteer, you will not have your access withdrawn for any reason as a result of the assessments completed in this pilot. The assessment results will only be used to better understand your needs and to ensure you have the most appropriate supports in your plan.

### Will my plan be reduced as part of the pilot?

The independent assessment pilot is not designed to take away funding or support from people who need it. The assessments will help us to better understand your needs.

Over time your needs may fluctuate and the reasonable and necessary supports in your plan may change. These changes may reflect your progress, or be directed to help you achieve new or revised goals.

People who have an episodic disability (a disability where the impact on your day-to-day life fluctuates) may also see their funding change over time, as their disability changes over time.

### What support is available if the funding in my plan is reduced?

If a service, early intervention support or assistive technology has increased your independence and decreased your need for additional support, you may no longer need as much funding in your NDIS plan. You can contact the NDIA again in the future if your circumstances or support needs change.

Your Local Area Coordinator or NDIS Planner will discuss any plan changes with you, and is the first point of contact for any questions you have. Where possible, they will connect you with mainstream community supports.

### I’m a participant who transferred from a State / Territory or Commonwealth program, why should I participate?

For participants who have transitioned from State/Territory and Commonwealth programs who are approaching their plan review, the pilot provides the opportunity to complete a free assessment.

The assessment provides the NDIA with the best possible information about how your disability affects your daily life. By gaining a more accurate picture of your situation, the NDIA can deliver more consistent and equitable plan outcomes that are better matched to your goals.