



A letter from our CEO about independent assessments

For participants, families and carers

Easy Read



ndis

[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)

How to use this letter



The CEO of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) wrote this letter. When you see the word 'we', it means the NDIA.



We have written this letter in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

We have written some words in **bold**.

Not bold

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 26.



This Easy Read letter is a summary of another letter.



You can find the other letter on **our website**.



You can ask for help to read this letter.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What is the letter about?

Our CEO Martin Hoffman wrote a letter to:



- **NDIS participants**



- families and carers.



Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.



This letter is about **independent assessments**.

We explain independent assessments in detail on page 8.



Some people have told us they're not sure if independent assessments will work well for participants.

We wrote this letter because we want everyone to know:



- how we will make the NDIS work better



- why we will use independent assessments



- how independent assessments will make the NDIS work better



- how we will give you more information.

How are we making the NDIS work better?



Over the past few months, we have shared our plans about how we will make the NDIS work better.

We've done this because people told us the NDIS needs to be:



- simpler



- faster



- fairer.



We wrote 2 documents about what we're going to do.

They are called the:



- Participant Service Charter



- Participant Service Improvement Plan.

These documents explain how we are going to make the NDIS better for you, such as:



- making our rules clear so we do things the same way every time



- explaining our decisions



- getting participants their supports faster.



You can find Easy Read versions of these documents on **our website**.



We have also shared our plans to use independent assessments.

How will independent assessments work?

We do **assessments** to work out:



- how your disability affects your life



- what supports you need from the NDIS.

An assessment is **independent** when it is done by someone who:



- doesn't already know you
- isn't the healthcare professional you usually see.

We explain what a healthcare professional is on page 13.



Independent assessments will be free.



We made independent assessments free because people told us that assessments can be expensive.



You can find more Easy Read information about independent assessments on the independent assessments page of [our website](#).

When will we use independent assessments?



If you are older than 7 years old, we will start using independent assessments when you apply for the NDIS.



We want to do this in early 2021.



We will also start using independent assessments when we review NDIS plans.



We want to do this from the middle of 2021.

You won't need an independent assessment:



- every year
- at every plan review.

We will only ask you to have an independent assessment at important points in your life, such as when:



- you want to start working



- something big in your life changes



- you ask for a plan review



- you have good supports and want to keep using them in a longer plan.

Who will do independent assessments?



We will choose a group of people who can do independent assessments.

We call them **independent assessors**.

Independent assessors:

NDIA
✘



- don't work for the NDIA



- understand the needs of people with disability



- do your independent assessment with you.

Independent assessors will all be qualified healthcare professionals such as:



- occupational therapists – people who help you move and use your body



- physiotherapists – people who help you with ways to move your body



- speech pathologists – people who help you with talking and communicating



- psychologists – people who help you with the way you think and feel.



Your assessment can help us work out what supports you might need from the NDIS.



All independent assessors will use the same tools.



These tools have been used around the world for many years.

These tools will make sure independent assessments are:



- fair



- done the same way every time.



We will teach independent assessors how to use these tools.



You can find out more about these tools on [our website](#).

How will independent assessments work for you?



You can choose how you do your independent assessment.

You can tell us:



- when you want to do your independent assessment



- where you want to do your independent assessment.

You can also tell us if you want:



- to do your independent assessment over the phone or in person



- to do your independent assessment over a few days



- to bring a support person with you



- a woman or a man to do your independent assessment.

Can you keep using your current doctor or therapist?



You can keep using your current doctor or therapist when you:

- apply for the NDIS
- have a plan review.



They know you best and can tell us important information about you.



You can still give us extra information you think is important.

And you can still talk to someone in your planning meeting about:



- your goals



- your home life



- what's important to you



- who supports you.

Why are we talking about independent assessments now?



We will start using independent assessments in 2021.



We want to talk to you about these changes now.



That way, you know what we plan to do.



We also want to understand what people think about how independent assessments should work.

This includes:



- people with disability



- organisations that speak up for people with disability.



We will keep sharing new information about how independent assessments will work on **our website.**



We will also keep testing independent assessments to make sure they work well.



We might ask you to take part in an independent assessment **pilot**.



A pilot is a test run to work out what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



The pilot will help us test how we do independent assessments.



We will test independent assessments all across Australia.



We will share more information soon about our plan to:

- test independent assessments
- find out what people think about independent assessments.

We want to know what you think



We know people might have more questions.



We also want to know what people think about independent assessments.



We will share answers to people's questions on **our website.**



You can ask us questions or tell us what you think by sending an email to **feedback@ndis.gov.au**

More information



You can find out more about independent assessments on our website.

www.ndis.gov.au



If you would like more information about what is in this letter, you can contact us.



www.ndis.gov.au



1800 800 110



Follow us on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/NDISAus



Follow us on Twitter.

[@NDIS](https://twitter.com/NDIS)

Support to talk to us



You can talk to us online using our webchat feature.

www.ndis.gov.au/webchat/start

If you speak a language other than English, you can call:



Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)

131 450

If you have a speech or hearing impairment, you can call:



TTY

1800 555 677



Speak and Listen

1800 555 727



National Relay Service

133 677

www.relayservice.gov.au

Word list

Assessments



We do assessments to work out:

- how your disability affects your life
- what supports you need from the NDIS.

Independent

An assessment is independent when it is done by someone who:



- doesn't already know you
- isn't the healthcare professional you usually see.

Independent assessors



We have chosen a group of people who can do independent assessments.

We call them independent assessors.

Pilot



Pilots are a test run to work out what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



Participants

Participants are people with disability who take part in the NDIS.

Review



When you review something, you check to see what:

- works well
- needs to be better.



The Information Access Group created this Easy Read document using stock photography and custom images.

The images may not be reused without permission.

For any enquiries about the images, please visit

www.informationaccessgroup.com. Quote job number 3760.

ndis

[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)