

Guide to Reasonable and Necessary (R & N) decisions

Larger bed sizes

Case example

Due to his disability, Ivan needs a medical or specialised bed. He also wants to get the bed upsized to a queen so that he can continue to sleep in the same bed as his partner.

Would we fund this?

No, we would not typically fund an upgrade to a queen size bed as it's not related to Ivan's disability support needs. However, we might fund a medical or specialised bed.

If we approve funding for a medical or specialised bed, we would typically fund a king single sized bed. This is because this is considered a sufficient size bed for an adult participant.

In some situations, we may also fund a standard, non-adjustable single companion bed that can be positioned next to Ivan's specialised bed. This would allow Ivan's partner to continue to sleep alongside him and provide informal overnight support to Ivan.

Why wouldn't we fund this?

NDIS laws determine what we can and can't fund. Things we can fund are called NDIS supports. You can only use the funding in your plan to buy NDIS supports if they are related to your disability and are in-line with your plan.¹

A bed is a piece of standard household furniture that's found in most Australian homes. Standard household items are considered a day-to-day living cost and not an NDIS support. Unless the need for the furniture is due to your disability support needs, we can't fund it.

To work out whether upsizing to a larger bed is an NDIS support, we consider the information you've given us against our [NDIS funding criteria](#).

We look at whether:

- the need for a type of bed is entirely because of your disability
- there's enough justification for why a king single sized bed isn't suitable for your disability needs
- there's evidence of how the larger bed or mattress will potentially reduce the long-term cost of your other supports, for example you may need less home care support hours

¹ NDIS Act s 34(1)(f).

- it's reasonable to expect families to fund the cost of upsizing the bed for preference or non-disability related reasons.

What else do we think about?

We won't fund extra items that don't relate to your disability. However, you may choose to pay extra from your own money if you would like to have:

- a larger bed, for example upsizing from the king single to a queen sized Hi Lo bed with the same specifications
- a particular brand, model or design of bed that otherwise has the same purpose
- add-on special features not related to your disability support needs (e.g. hypoallergenic).

Case example

Vidisha has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. She has reduced bed mobility, which means she often needs help to get in and out of bed. Due to discomfort, she finds it easier to breathe if she sleeps with her upper body at an angle rather than flat. Vidisha is married and lives with her partner. They currently share a queen sized bed together.

Vidisha applies for funding of a queen size Hi Lo bed. She supports her funding request with a letter from her therapist. The therapist recommends a Hi Lo bed to ease Vidisha's sleeping problems and minimise risk when she's getting in and out of bed with help.

When working out whether the queen size Hi Lo bed is an NDIS support, the planner looks at the information Vidisha has given against the [NDIS funding criteria](#).

The planner considers whether the queen size bed:

- is required for Vidisha's disability
- will reduce her need for disability supports or additional supports
- is a day-to-day living cost that is due to, or caused by, Vidisha's disability support needs
- is something that is reasonable to expect the family to fund.

The planner also looks at factors such as:

- whether the requested bed will achieve what the therapist suggests, and whether there should be a trial of the bed to find out
- the cost of the queen size compared to the king single bed and if other options, such as leasing the bed and mattress, are better value for money
- whether other support options such as customised foam wedges to prop her up during sleep, could have the same effect
- whether the features of the requested bed are better than the base model for Vidisha's disability support needs

- whether they have considered a standard, non-adjustable companion bed to allow Vidisha to continue co-sleeping with her husband
- whether the queen size bed would pose a manual handling risk to carers if she needs assistance with her bed mobility should her condition progress
- whether her husband would be able to tolerate Vidisha's bed adjustments in a shared electric queen bed.

In Vidisha's case, the planner assessed that:

- a Hi Lo bed to let Vidisha sleep in a semi-reclined position to help her breathing, is solely and directly as a result of her disability support needs
- a Hi Lo bed is effective and beneficial for Vidisha's disability support needs, and value for money over other supports
- a king single Hi Lo bed is suitable for her disability support needs, is more cost effective, and will get the same result as a queen size Hi Lo bed
- as the purpose of upgrading to a queen size Hi Lo bed was to share the bed with her partner, the cost of the queen size bed is a day-to-day living cost that isn't caused by Vidisha's disability support needs. However, we could explore funding a standard, single companion bed that can be positioned next to Vidisha's Hi Lo bed. This would allow Vidisha's husband to co-sleep with Vidisha and provide informal overnight support to her
- funding the king single Hi Lo bed considers what is reasonable to expect the NDIS to provide, while funding the queen bed is not.

Vidisha's request for a queen size Hi Lo bed didn't meet the reasonable and necessary requirements, including being value for money. Instead, a single Hi Lo bed with static companion bed was considered a reasonable and necessary support and would be funded by the NDIS.

For more information, go to:

- [Our Guideline - Reasonable and necessary supports](#)
- [Our Guideline - Assistive Technology](#).