25 September 2025

We are partnering with the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Disability Studies to develop a support needs assessment.

Supports needs assessments will be part of our new way of planning. We will introduce them from mid-2026.

About support needs assessments

The assessments will collect information from participants, families and carers about participants' disability support needs to create fairer budgets in plans.

They will remove some of the burden participants experience when getting supporting evidence as part of the planning process.

The assessments will provide a more consistent and reliable way for us to get the information we need.

Developing the assessment

We have consulted with the disability community to understand and agree on what should be included in the support needs assessment.

The consultation will inform our work with the University of Melbourne and the Centre for Disability Studies.

The work will include our use of the Instrument for the Classification and Assessment of Support Needs (I-CAN) version 6 which was developed by the Centre for Disability Studies as the basis for the new support needs assessment.

The I-CAN is the gold standard of available, validated needs assessment tools. It has been developed over more than 20 years in the Australian context and tested through multiple research studies across a range of disability groups. It is strengths-based and built on the globally recognised International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health.

A customised version of the I-CAN has already been in use as part of the Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA) program for over 4 years.

More information

We will share more information before we start using our new assessments.

We will let participants, families and carers know when it is time for their support needs assessment and provide support with this step.

Learn more about this improvement to the NDIS.

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