25 March 2026

The Neurodegenerative Palliative Care and Rare Diseases Advisory Group (NPRAG) met online on Wednesday, 25 March 2026.

Focus of the meeting

The focus of the February meeting was:

- Support needs assessment targeted modules
- Impairments and flexible budgets
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) consultation on NDIS rules.

Support needs assessments targeted modules

Support needs assessments will be part of the new way of planning for NDIS participants.

The support needs assessment works for people with different disabilities because it focuses on the supports a person needs to live their life and participate in the community, not their impairment.

The support needs assessment will include targeted modules to assess more complex support needs.

Targeted assessment modules for complex support needs may include:

- assistive technology.
- home and vehicle modifications.
- disability related health supports.
- accommodation supports.
- behaviour supports.

The need for targeted assessments will be identified by the NDIA assessor. Participants may be asked to answer additional questions and provide evidence from treating health professionals.

The NDIA is testing the support needs assessment process directly with participants. Further information on engagement opportunities for the new way of planning is available on the NDIS Engage website.

Member feedback included:

- Every person’s situation is different and can change. A support needs assessment should be able to include future support needs to stop the need for repeat assessments.
- There is an opportunity for services to work together to address current challenges.

- Clear templates and processes are needed to help health professionals give the right information.
- NDIA should support professionals to attend meetings to help build understanding.
- Testing the process for neurodegenerative, palliative care and rare diseases to make sure it works for the cohorts and does not cause short term and long-term disadvantage is vital.
- Members offered to support the NDIA in testing the process for neurodegenerative, palliative care and rare diseases cohorts.

Impairments and flexible budgets

The NDIA talked to members about how impairment information and flexible budgets will work in the new approach to planning.

Participant plans under the new way of planning will include 2 parts:

- A flexible budget. Participants can choose which flexible supports they want to buy.
- Stated supports. Funding for specific supports that must be used on that support.

Once a participant receives their plan, the legislation says there are 2 rules for how they must spend their NDIS funding:

- The funding must be used on NDIS supports.
- It must be spent in line with the NDIS plan.

NDIS participants can use the flexible budget for any NDIS support in the flexible budget category that works for them, as long as it is in line with the plan.

The NDIS support lists can help work out if something is a NDIS support or not.

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) consultation on NDIS rules

DHDA gave an update on the public consultation on the NDIS rules that will outline how the new way of planning will work, including:

1. Preparing for a support needs assessment.

2. The support needs assessment.

3. Building a plan.

4. Using a plan.

Most of the rules are part of stage 3, Building a plan.

The consultation closed 6 March. DHDA are now reviewing responses.

You can read more about the new way of planning and the consultation on the New framework planning page on the DHDA website.

Next meeting

The next NPRAG meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 27 May 2026.

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