

FAQs GPs and other health professionals ask about eligibility and early intervention.

## Who can apply for NDIS support?

Before supporting a patient to complete an access request, we recommend using this 6-point checklist to check their suitability for the Scheme:

- [NDIS eligibility checklist \(PDF 133KB\)](#)
- [NDIS eligibility checklist \(DOCX 62KB\)](#)

Generally speaking, patients must meet three requirements:

1. AGE – be aged under 65 years
2. RESIDENCE – reside in Australia and be an Australian citizen, or hold a [Permanent or Protected Special Category Visa](#)
3. DISABILITY OR EARLY INTERVENTION – have a physical, intellectual, cognitive, neurological, visual, hearing or psychosocial impairment that meets either the disability or early intervention requirements.

## What are the disability requirements that make a person eligible for the NDIS?

Your patient must have a physical, intellectual, cognitive, neurological, visual, hearing or psychosocial impairment that:

- is (or is likely to be) permanent
- substantially reduces their 'functional capacity' in one or more of the following areas: mobility, communication, social interaction, self-management, learning and self-care
- restricts their ability to participate in work/study, engage with peers and/or interact with their wider community (i.e. has a clear social and/or economic impact)
- requires lifelong NDIS support.

Full guidance can be found in the [Access to the NDIS Operational Guideline](#).

## What does substantially reduced functional capacity mean?

For the purposes of the NDIS, 'substantially reduced functional capacity' means that on most days, a person's impairment significantly limits their ability to manage/perform ordinary activities of daily living across a range of tasks in one or more of the following areas: mobility, communication, social interaction, self-management, learning and self-care.

These six areas are referred to as functional domains.

Mobility and motor skills	e.g. moving about the home or community, getting in and out of bed or a chair, fine motor skills, gross motor skills.*
Learning	e.g. understanding and remembering information, learning new skills, practicing and using new skills.
Communication	e.g. being understood in spoken, written or sign language, understanding others and expressing needs and wants by gesture and speech (age-appropriate).
Self-care	e.g. showering/bathing, getting dressed, eating or preparing meals, caring for own health
Social interaction	e.g. making and keeping friends, interacting with peers or the wider community and coping with related feelings and emotions.
Self-management	e.g. doing daily jobs, making decisions, problem-solving and managing money

\*Only includes issues that cannot be solved by commonly used items such as glasses, walking sticks, non-slip bathmats, grab rails and hand-rails installed at stairs.

## What are the early intervention requirements that make a person eligible for the NDIS?

If an impairment is permanent but its functional impact fluctuates and/or is still in its early stages but expected to worsen over time (e.g. multiple sclerosis), your patient may not meet the disability requirement outlined above.

However, they may meet the Scheme's [early intervention requirements](#) instead. Children younger than 6, with developmental delay, may also meet the early intervention requirements.

The purpose of early intervention is to lessen the impact of a person's impairment upon their functional capacity by providing support at the earliest possible stage.

Early intervention support is also intended to benefit a person by reducing their future need for supports and by strengthening the sustainability of their informal supports, e.g. building the capacity of their carer.

### What if my patient is younger than 9?

Refer children younger than nine with developmental delay or disability to an NDIS early childhood partner.

[Find your local early childhood partner.](#)

Under the early childhood approach an early childhood partner provides timely support to ensure that the child and family are able to access the right level of supports they need .

This support may include:

- linking them to activities in their local community and mainstream supports
- information gathering to better understand the child's development and needs
- developing goals with the family about their child
- delivering short term early intervention, for children with developmental concerns.
- supporting the access request if the child is likely to meet the access requirements.

In areas where an early childhood partner is not available, contact the NDIS by phone on 1800 800 110, email [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au) or use webchat.

See also [Help for children younger than 9.](#)

### What if my patient is older than 65?

Refer patients 65 years and over who are looking for disability services and support for the first time to [My Aged Care](#) .

### Where can my patient go for information and support?

Local Area Coordinators (LACs) are local organisations that help deliver the NDIS in the community, for people aged over seven.

This includes assisting NDIS participants to create, implement and review their support plans.

Pre-access, LACs can provide patients with general information about the NDIS, so they can make an informed choice about whether or not to apply for NDIS funding and supports.

LACs can then guide the patient through the process of making an access request. LACs can also help identify whether the supports the patient requires are best provided by the NDIS or other mainstream providers.

Early childhood partners are local organisations that deliver the [early childhood approach](#) , supporting children younger than seven with developmental delay or disability.

Early childhood partners are well established in communities and have experience in working with families to connect them with available support. If the child is likely to meet the access requirements, the early childhood partner will assist the family to apply to the Scheme .

Refer all children younger than seven to an early childhood partner in the first instance.

If there is no early childhood partner in the area where the child lives, contact the NDIS by Phone on 1800 800 110.

See also [Help for children younger than 7](#).

To direct a patient to a LAC or early childhood partner in your local area, please refer to the partner map for your state:

- [NT](#)
- [ACT](#)
- [NSW](#)
- [QLD](#)
- [SA](#)
- [TAS](#)
- [VIC](#)
- [WA](#)

**Who can assist me when I'm helping patients navigate the access process?**

There are a number of other professionals – both within and beyond your practice environment and from both a health and non-health background – who can help you in your efforts to support patients as they navigate access to the NDIS.

Please see our ‘Who can help?’ brochure for more information:

- [Who can help? \(PDF 730KB\)](#)
- [Who can help? \(DOCX 67KB\)](#)

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