

2. Where do carers fit in the NDIS?

Information for carers in NSW

This fact sheet is written for the family members and friends (**carers**) of people with disability living in New South Wales (**NSW**). It explains what carers can and cannot expect from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (**NDIS**).

Words in **bold** are explained at the end of this fact sheet.

What is the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a new system of disability support that is being introduced across Australia. The NDIS aims to give people with disability and their carers more choice and control over the support they have.

The NDIS will change the way most disability support works. This will take some time for everybody to get used to. It is very important that carers of people with disability understand and prepare for the NDIS.

- For more information, read the fact sheet [What is the NDIS?](#) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS or call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy.

What can carers expect from the NDIS?

The focus of the NDIS is **eligible** people with disability, called **participants**. Carers cannot get a **plan** or **funded supports** from the NDIS for themselves. However, many carers will benefit from the plan and funded supports of the person they care for. For example, a carer may get a break while the participant enjoys an activity they have chosen to do, or while a **support worker** helps them with **personal care**.

A participant's plan can also include reasonable and necessary supports to help strengthen the carer in their caring role. For example, training about the person's disability or family counselling to deal with challenging behaviours.

Whether or not the person they care for is an NDIS participant, a carer can also get support from a **Local Area Coordinator (LAC)**, who will give them information and help link them to services and **capacity building** opportunities in their area.

What rights do carers have in the NDIS?

The [National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013](#) says that carers should:

- Have peace of mind that the participant will get the support they need for the rest of their life
- Be acknowledged and respected for their role in the life of the participant
- Have what they do considered by the **National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)**, including what type and amount of support is reasonable for them to provide
- Have opportunities, if appropriate, to improve their ability to support the participant

What role will carers have in the NDIS?

Different carers will have different roles. A carer's role will depend on what the participant wants, what the NDIA thinks is reasonable, and what the carer feels they can manage. Some of the main ways a carer might be involved in the NDIS include:

- Being listed in the participant's plan as an **informal support**
- Supporting the participant to prepare for and access the NDIS
- Going along to the **planning session** with the participant
- Helping the participant to manage their funded supports
- Making decisions with or on behalf of the participant if necessary

Do carers have a say in what support they provide?

In the planning session carers can make a **carer statement** about the support they provide, if the participant agrees. In some cases carers can speak with the **planner** separately.

The participant's plan lists any supports or services they have, including any informal support provided by family and friends. For example, support making decisions or help with daily personal care. This helps the planner work out what funded supports they need.

Just because a carer already does something to support the participant for does not mean they have to keep doing it. If it is too much for the carer, they should tell the planner.

Planners have to follow **operational guidelines** which tell them to think about:

- Whether the carer is the right person to provide that type of support (e.g. because of their age, sex, health or ability)
- Any risks to the carer of providing that support

- Whether the carer can continue providing that support in the future
- Whether the carer needs any support to help them in their caring role

Can carers go to the planning session?

Participants can bring anyone they like to the planning session. If a carer is a parent of a child or young person under the age of 18, they can be involved. If the participant is an adult, the carer can be involved with the participant's permission.

What if the participant needs help making decisions?

Because the NDIS aims to increase choice and control for people with disability, it assumes that people with disability can make decisions about their own lives. However, it recognises that some people will need another person to act or make decisions on their behalf. This person is called a **nominee** in the NDIS.

A **nominee** may be appointed if the participant asks for one, or if the NDIA decides that they need one. Who the nominee is, and what they will be able to do, will depend on the participant's situation. If there is already a legal **guardian**, it is most likely that this person will be appointed as the nominee. In choosing someone else to be a nominee, the planner has to consider the views of the participant and their carer(s).

Nominees have to:

- Involve the participant in decision making as much as possible
- Help the participant increase their decision making skills
- Make any decisions in the participant's best interest, in line with what they want

For more information about nominees, visit www.ndis.gov.au or call 1800 800 110.

What can carers do to prepare for the NDIS?

There is a lot carers can do to prepare. The earlier you start, the better. You can start by reading the fact sheet [How can I prepare for the NDIS?](#) and filling in the [NDIS checklist for carers in NSW](#) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS. Call 1800 242 636 for printed copies.

Where can I find out more?

You can find this fact sheet and other NDIS information for carers on the Carers NSW website: www.carersnsw.org.au/ndis for printed copies.

For more information on the NDIS in NSW and how it works, visit www.ndis.nsw.gov.au or www.ndis.gov.au or call 1800 800 110. To speak to someone about the NDIS in a different language call the Translating and Interpretation Service (TIS) on 131 450.

What does that word mean?

capacity building – increasing the skills and confidence of people with disability and carers.

carers – family members or friends who provide support to a person with disability.

carer statement – an opportunity for carers to talk about the support they provide. Carers can give this to the planner in writing if they want.

eligible – ticking all the boxes needed to get support. Not all people with disability will be eligible. Visit www.ndis.gov.au for more information.

funded supports – types of support that cost money and that the NDIS agrees to pay for.

guardian – someone who has been given the legal responsibility to make decisions for a person who is not able to make their own decisions.

informal support – any support that is provided by a family member or friend, NOT a paid service or formal volunteer.

Local Area Coordinators (LACs) – workers who give people with disability and carers information and help link them to services and capacity building opportunities in their area. They support people with disability and carers even if they are not NDIS participants.

NDIA – the National Disability Insurance Agency, an agency set up and funded by the Australian Government to run the NDIS.

NDIS – the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a new system of disability support that is being introduced across Australia.

nominee – a person who has permission to act or make decisions on behalf of a participant. Visit www.ndis.gov.au for more information.

operational guidelines – important documents with rules for planners to follow.

participant – a person with disability who can get a NDIS plan and funded supports.

personal care – helping people care for themselves, for example help with bathing, going to the toilet or feeding.

plan – a document that lists what services and supports a participant has already, what their goals are, what supports they need and what funded supports they will get.

planner – the person from the NDIA who works with a participant to create their plan.

planning session – a meeting where the planner, the participant and any other person the participant chooses talk about creating the participant's plan.

support worker – a paid worker who provides care and support to a person with disability.