

5. Tips from carers on the NDIS

Information for carers in NSW

This fact sheet is written for the family members and friends (**carers**) supporting people with disability living in New South Wales (**NSW**). It provides tips about the NDIS based on advice from carers who have been through it.

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.

- 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.

1. Start early

It's never too early to get ready for the NDIS. You can start getting ready even if it hasn't reached your area yet. The fact sheet [How can I prepare for the NDIS?](#) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS offers some ideas for how to start. You can call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy.

2. Learn the language

The NDIS uses a lot of new words that may be hard to understand. You can get used to these words and learn what they mean by reading the fact sheet [What does that word mean?](#) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS or call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy. All of the Carers NSW NDIS fact sheets, including this one, also have their own section called *What does that word mean?*

3. Dream big

The NDIS is an opportunity for you and the **participant** to improve your lives. Things don't have to stay the way they are! For example, you don't have to stick with the same service provider. You can try someone new!

Spend time talking with the participant about what could be possible. Your ideas are important, but the NDIS cares most about what the participant thinks. Do your best to find out what *they* want, even if that is different to what *you* want for them. The participant may also need your help to work out what they want, or to explain it to the **planner**.

- The fact sheet [How can I prepare for the NDIS?](http://www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS has some helpful ideas and resources. You can call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy.

4. Remember: you're an expert

You may not be an NDIS expert, but you *are* an expert in caring for the participant. You probably know a lot about their disability and their day to day life. If you are involved in their **planning session**, it is important to share what you know and how you feel with the planner. Sometimes you may disagree with the participant, but your views still matter.

- For more information, read the fact sheet [Where do carers fit in the NDIS?](http://www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS or call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy.

5. Stand up for yourself

The NDIS focuses on the participant, not the carer. Some planners are very good at listening to carers and respecting their views. Others may not be as good at this. It is important to understand your rights and what you need. If you are not happy with something, say so! If there is something you need, speak up!

- For more information, read the fact sheets [Where do carers fit in the NDIS?](http://www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS) and [NDIS checklist for carers in NSW](http://www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS) at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS or call 1800 242 636 for printed copies.

6. Take your time

If you feel pressured or rushed at any stage, ask for more time. For example, if the planner calls to arrange a meeting and doesn't give you enough notice, say that you can't make it and suggest another time that is better for you. If you are given a form to sign but you don't feel ready, ask to take it home with you and read over it again.

7. Keep an open mind

While it is important to stand up for yourself and take your time, try not to be angry or defensive. The best way to get a good result is to be polite, patient and respectful. When sharing your opinion, be firm but calm, and willing to listen and negotiate. Remember that the goal of the NDIS is to make life easier, not harder, for you and the participant.

8. Be organised

Keep a record of all your dealings with the NDIS. Write notes where you record the date so you can easily look back and find any information you need. Check what you have written with the planner to make sure you have understood. Keep copies of all important documents.

9. If in doubt, ask

If there is something that you don't understand, or something that you need to change, call the **NDIA**. If you have a planner, you can also talk to them. They can be busy and difficult to get a hold of sometimes, but responding to your questions and concerns is part of their job. Don't give up if they don't get back to you straight away. Try again! In an emergency, you can also contact your service provider.

10. Never give up

If you're not happy with the way things are going, try to work it out with the people involved. If you still can't get a solution, don't give up. There are several ways you can complain and appeal. Visit the NDIS website www.ndis.gov.au or call 1800 800 110 for more information on their complaints and appeals processes.

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 or call 1800 242 636 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?

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

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.

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

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 making the participant's plan.

- For a full list of key NDIS words, read the [What does that word mean](#) fact sheet at www.carersnsw.org.au/NDIS or call 1800 242 636 for a printed copy.

A special thank you to the carers from the trial site who provided the ideas for this fact sheet!