

Support coordination factsheet

Support coordination is an NDIS funded support, to help participants use their NDIS plan. This service includes connecting NDIS participants to community and mainstream supports, and strengthening informal networks.

Like many NDIS supports, support coordination focuses on capacity building. A support coordinator should strengthen the participant's ability to exercise choice and control, and to coordinate their life and supports independently.

The types of support coordination

There are three levels of support coordination that can be funded in NDIS plans:

 <p>Level 1: Support connection</p> <p>Support connection helps participants to understand and implement their NDIS plan. It builds the participants skills to connect with supports and services. This includes NDIS providers, as well as community, mainstream and informal supports.</p>	 <p>Level 2: Coordination of supports</p> <p>Coordination of supports helps a participant design and build their supports. It is normally for participants who have complex circumstances or multiple service systems to navigate. It is about building a participants abilities to direct their lives, as well as their supports and services.</p>	 <p>Level 3: Specialist support coordination</p> <p>Specialist support coordination is a usually short-term, intensive support for participants who have extremely complex support needs or are in high risk, complex environments e.g. participants leaving the justice system or mental health facility. Specialist support coordination is provided by a relevant and qualified expert, such a psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker or mental health nurse.</p>
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The amount of funding a person has for support coordination will vary, depending on their circumstances and needs. Generally, the role is more intensive at the beginning and end of a plan cycle.



What activities might a support coordinator complete?

The activities completed by a support coordinator vary based on the participant's individual needs, but also the level of support coordination funding. Typically, support coordinators help participants to:

- understand their plan
- determine their service needs and connect with supports and services
- set up supports and services, service agreements and service bookings
- identify and manage potential points of crisis or barriers to service engagement
- manage their supports and services throughout the plan cycle
- plan and prepare for their plan review.

Importantly, a support coordinator should focus on building a participant's capacity to complete these tasks more independently in the future.

The [NDIS price guide](#) has more information on the three levels of support coordination and associated activities.

What makes a good support coordinator?

The role of a support coordinator is diverse, requiring a specific set of skills. A support coordinator should:

- have an in-depth knowledge of the NDIS and how it works (especially the NDIS price guide)
- keep their knowledge up to date by attending training and signing up for email alerts from the NDIA and other trusted advisors
- be person-centred and support participants to exercise choice and control, direct their own supports and help them develop wraparound systems of support
- recognise the value of informal networks by working alongside and building the capacity of carers and other informal supports
- understand the responsibilities of the mainstream and community systems and know what options are available for people with psychosocial disability
- be creative and resourceful: they should know what supports, services or equipment can be accessed in the community (including free services) to maximise NDIS funding for supports that can only be provided by the NDIS
- know the local providers, what they do and what their strengths are
- have strong professional relationships and always be on the look out to build new ones
- be organised with an eye for detail
- know what they can charge for and track their time accurately for billing purposes
- be recovery oriented – working from a recovery approach means:
 - doing things with, not for, the participant
 - identifying and building on strengths
 - building skills and independence
 - employing creative ideas
- understanding the needs of people with psychosocial disability.

It is also important to be mindful of the scope of the role. A support coordinator role can sometimes be viewed as a 'jack of all trades' type job, so it's important to know the boundaries and to avoid taking on tasks that are the responsibility of other roles and/or service providers.



Who is support coordination for?

Not all NDIS participants require funding for support coordination. Most NDIS participants are supported to implement their plan through an NDIS partner in the community ([Early Childhood Early Intervention \(ECEI\)](#) or [Local Area Coordinators \(LACs\)](#)). Support coordination is for NDIS participants who have support needs that exceed the role of an ECEI or LAC partner.

Individual circumstances are considered when determining whether funding for support coordination is necessary, such as informal support networks, disability support needs and any other service systems involved e.g. justice, housing.

Demonstrating the need for support coordination

Funding for support coordination is subject to the same reasonable and necessary criteria as all other NDIS funded supports. The NDIA needs to be satisfied the person's support needs exceed what an ECEI or LAC partner can offer.

When demonstrating the need for support coordination, think about what a support coordinator is funded to do. Then gather evidence to show why the person would need this level of support. Some ways to show this include:

- documenting the number of supports a person accesses now, and/or will need to access in the future (include both mainstream services and potential NDIS supports)
- describing the person's capacity to understand and implement their plan: do any of their disability-related impairments make it particularly challenging for them to engage with services independently or to understand their plan?
- describing how person's informal support network may struggle to assist the person to understand and implement their plan

The [NDIS planning booklet](#) and [reimagine my life booklet](#) are fantastic resources to gather the information required at planning or review meetings. The Transition Support Project have a [planning training module](#) and factsheet to provide you with more information.

Conflict of interest and support coordination

Support coordinators need to be particularly mindful of conflict of interest when making recommendations to NDIS participants. Organisations providing multiple NDIS services (e.g. support coordination and core supports) need to have robust policies to manage conflict of interest, and to ensure participants have choice and control.

The Transition Support Project has a suite of conflict of interest templates, [including a sample policy and procedure](#), which provide detailed information on conflict of interest, and how providers, including those working in rural and remote areas, can structure their support coordination services to effectively manage conflict of interest.



The role of a support coordinator during plan reviews

Support coordinators should support participants to prepare for their plan review by reflecting on the person's current services and goals, and what they need for their next plan.

Support coordinators are generally required to submit a report to the NDIA 2-3 months before the person's plan review meeting. Even if the NDIA does not require a report, it is good practice to keep a record of activities and progress throughout the plan, as this will help during the plan review process. Where possible, the report should be completed with the person, to ensure it captures their views on current supports and goals, and how they want to shape their next plan.

The types of things to think about when preparing for plan review include:

Current goals and supports

For each goal in a person's plan, identify the supports that the person has accessed to help them progress toward achieving this goal. Make a note of any barriers that are making it difficult for the person to move toward their goals e.g. difficulties accessing appropriate services.

Goals for the next plan

How does the participant feel about their current goals? Are there any existing goals the participant wants to remove or change, and do they want to add new ones? For each new goal consider what strategies/services/supports will be needed to achieve them.

If new services are needed to help the participant achieve a goal, first consider, is the support best funded by the NDIS? If yes, what support category (or categories) is it funded under? If the support is not best funded by the NDIS, who else might be able to help the person work toward their goal? This is where knowledge of informal supports and mainstream services comes in.

Update informal and mainstream supports

Each new plan will include a summary of the person's informal and mainstream support systems, so it is good to review these and make sure they are up to date.

Risks

Note any risks that were identified while working with the person over the past year. Risks might include instability with informal care arrangements or housing, problems managing finances, problems maintaining employment.

Ongoing support coordination

It is important to document all support coordination activities during a plan cycle including the activities completed and how you built, or tried to build, the person's capacity to manage these activities independently in the future.

If support coordination needs to be included in their next plan, demonstrate:

- why the person still need supports to manage their services
- whether the person needs significant support implementing their new plan
- if the person's goals changing e.g. perhaps they need support to progress some long-term goals like independent living or employment.



As you can see, goals are crucial at plan review as the NDIA needs to know how supports align with goal progression. Keep this in mind and track progress throughout the plan lifecycle to prevent getting caught out at review time.

Summary and where to go for further information

Throughout this document we have provided you with an overview of support coordination, the role of a support coordinator and tips for planning and review meetings. Here are some further training modules, factsheets, and resources which you may find helpful when learning more about support coordination and the NDIS more broadly:

External resources

NDIS website

- [Support coordination page](#)
- [NDIS price guide](#)
- [LAC partners in the community](#)
- [ECEI partners in the community](#)
- [NDIS participant booklets](#)

[Reimagine my life workbook](#)

Transition Support Project website

Training modules

- [Support coordination in the NDIS](#)
- [Understanding NDIS plans](#)
- [Preparing for NDIS planning meetings](#)
- [NDIS plan reviews](#)
- [NDIS plan activation](#)

Factsheets and articles

- [Service agreement article](#)
- [Conflict of interest article](#)
- [NDIS planning factsheet](#)

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