

NDIS AND CHILDREN: EARLY INTERVENTION & THERAPY



Health

About the NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a national system of support focused on the needs and choices of people with disability, including mental illness. It is a new way of providing individualised support for people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers.

This new scheme will provide disability support funding directly to eligible participants enabling them to purchase the services they need.

A National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has been established to implement the Scheme. The NDIA is responsible for assessing eligibility and working with participants to develop support plans to meet their needs.

NSW Health is working closely with the NDIA to ensure that our patients, their families and carers can make the most of the opportunities and services available through the NDIS.

On 1 July 2013, a trial of the NDIS commenced in the Hunter region and by 1 July 2018, the NDIS will be fully rolled out across NSW.

NDIS and NSW Health

The Scheme is not intended to replace mainstream health services. NSW Health will continue to provide emergency and routine clinical services such as surgery, dental care and palliative care to all NSW residents, including those with a disability.

The implementation of the NDIS may result in some variations to the way services are delivered in NSW Health.

The Hunter trial will help identify how local health districts can best support the implementation of the NDIS in their local area, including how to support patients and their families and carers while keeping NSW Health staff, the community and industrial associations informed on progress.

Eligibility criteria

General

To be eligible to become a participant of the NDIS an individual must satisfy the age requirements (ie be under 65 years at time of request) and residence requirements (ie be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or a New Zealand citizen who is a Protected Special Category Visa holder). During the trial period (1 July 2013 to 30 June 2016), there are additional residency requirements related to living in the Hunter trial area.

In addition, an individual must satisfy one of the disability or early intervention requirements set out in the NDIS Act 2013. More detail on each requirement is set out in the [NDIS \(Becoming a Participant\) Rules 2013](#).

Children with disability

A child with permanent and significant disability will be eligible for the NDIS if they meet either the disability or early intervention criteria, and age and residence requirements.

Disability:

- ▶ the child has a disability that is likely to be permanent, and
- ▶ cannot take part effectively in the activities of daily living without assistive technology, equipment or home modifications, or
- ▶ requires assistance from other people, and
- ▶ the child is likely to require supports from the NDIS over their lifetime.

Early Intervention:

- ▶ the child has a significant or permanent disability or developmental delay
- ▶ there is evidence showing early support will reduce the impact of their disability
- ▶ the child has a condition for which the provision of early intervention supports will benefit the child.

Children under seven years of age will need to meet the NDIS early intervention requirements prior to any assessment of the disability requirements unless they have a certain diagnosed condition named at List A of the [Operational Guideline – Access – Disability Requirements](#).

Supports provided by the NDIS

The NDIS will fund early intervention and other supports that improve a child's functional capacity, or prevent deterioration of functioning.

This may include services delivered or supervised by clinically trained or qualified health practitioners that enable the child to live in the community and participate in education and employment.

The NDIS will also provide support for children, families and carers required as a direct result of the child's disability. These supports will enable families and carers to maintain their caring role, community participation, therapeutic and behavioural supports, additional respite, aids and equipment.

The ongoing role of health services in NSW

NSW Health will continue to be responsible for the diagnosis of children with disability and developmental delay and provide clinical treatment of health conditions.

NSW Health will also maintain leadership in clinical expertise in child development and disability.

Where a child is supported by the NDIS, the child can still access health services provided by NSW Health, private health providers or Commonwealth-funded health services such as general practitioners and Medicare Locals/Primary Health Network.

NSW Health will continue to provide health assessments to children in out-of-home care.

NSW Health will provide supports which are clinical in nature such as acute, ambulatory, continuing care and newborn follow-up.

The health system remains responsible for the diagnosis and clinical treatment of all health conditions as well as other activities aimed at improving the health status of all children such as:

- ▶ general practitioner services
- ▶ medical specialist services
- ▶ dental care
- ▶ nursing

- ▶ allied health services (including acute/post-acute)
- ▶ preventive health
- ▶ care in public and private hospitals
- ▶ pharmaceuticals

NSW Health is also responsible for any time-limited and goal-oriented services and therapies for children with acute health needs, where the predominant purpose is treatment directly related to the child's health status or after a recent medical or surgical event. The Hunter trial should assist in providing further clarification on such things as referral pathways.

Referrals to NDIS and other support services

Regardless of the referral pathway, NSW Health will refer any child to the NDIA if the child has a significant and permanent disability, developmental delay or meets the early intervention criteria.

NSW Health will also refer to other disability support services required for the ongoing support of the child's disability, including:

- ▶ non-government organisations and private providers registered with the NDIA
- ▶ Community Services (part of the Department of Family and Community Services) when children and/or young people are at risk of significant harm.

Until the NDIS transition is finalised in each area, referrals will be made to Ageing Disability and Homecare (ADHC) or ADHC funded providers. ADHC's Information and Pathways teams will continue to receive referrals for children with complex needs and direct them to appropriate therapy supports in the non government organisation sector specific to each child.

Further information:

Plans to implement changes to supports for children with disability, are detailed in ADHC's position paper *Strengthening Supports for Children and Families 0-8 years*, available from the [ADHC website](#).

For further information on the NDIS visit www.ndis.gov.au

To find out if a person with disability is eligible for the NDIS use [My Access Checker](#) available on the NDIS website.