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.

However, 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.

People with mental illness

A person with mental illness will be eligible for the NDIS if they meet the age and residence requirements and either of the disability or early intervention criteria:

Disability

The person has a disability that is likely to be permanent (including psychiatric disability), and:

► cannot take part effectively in activities of daily living without the assistance of other people

► is likely to require support from the NDIS over their lifetime.

Early intervention

The person has a disability that is likely to be permanent and evidence shows that early support will reduce how much help they need to do things in the future.
Support provided by the NDIS
Not all elements of a person’s support needs will be met by funded support. Some will be met through mainstream support services, family and friends. The NDIS will fund reasonable and necessary non-clinical support that focus on a person’s functional ability.

The ongoing role of NSW Health
NSW Health will continue to be responsible for the diagnosis of people with mental illness and provide clinical treatment of health conditions. NSW Health will also provide support in residential care where the service primarily employs clinical staff.

NSW Health will continue to be responsible for:
- assessment, diagnosis and referral for people entering or exiting the NSW Health system
- clinical care related to physical and mental health
- care in clinical residential settings managed by NSW Health, including non-clinical support
- planning of transfer of care to home or other facility and follow up
- community-based services for people with mental illness, including the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI).

Referrals to the NDIS and other support services
NSW Health will refer a person to the NDIA where the individual has mental illness and is:
- currently in residential care and would be able to live in the community with additional non-clinical support
- living in the community, comes to the attention of a health service and would benefit from additional non-clinical support
- in circumstances or crisis where they urgently require non clinical support.

NSW Health will also refer individuals with mental illness to other services based on their needs including:
- community mental health services – clinical and non-clinical services such as HASI, Partners in Recovery and Personal Helpers and Mentors Program
- drug and alcohol treatment services
- housing services where the person has difficulties with housing or is homeless (in line with the Housing and Mental Health Agreement)
- Community Services where a child and/or young person is at risk of significant harm
- Office of the Public Guardian where a person has difficulties with decision-making
- other Commonwealth funded health services, such as general practitioners or Medicare Locals/Primary Health Networks.

Further information:
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.