



Information for providers

Mental Health Respite: Carer Support

August 2016

Transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme

The gradual introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has begun, and will continue from 1 July 2016.

The transition to the NDIS will occur over a number of years. People will gain access to the scheme at different times, depending on where they live and how old they are.

For information on the start dates in each state and territory visit the NDIS website at www.ndis.gov.au

Changes to disability programs

Over the next three years, funding for a range of Commonwealth funded disability programs will transition to the NDIS. Mental Health Respite: Carer Support (MHR:CS) is one of the impacted programs.

For providers, this will mean a gradual reduction in program funding as more care recipients become participants in the scheme.

Providers are encouraged to register to deliver services under the NDIS as it commences in their areas. Find out more at www.ndis.gov.au/providers.

There will be significant opportunities for providers under the NDIS. In exercising choice and control, NDIS participants will be looking for quality providers that deliver the services they want, and in a format that best meets their needs. Providers delivering MHR:CS are well placed to become providers of choice under the NDIS.

Gradual transition of funding

The Department is finalising longer-term funding offers for MHR:CS, which will run for up to three years. The funding offers will incorporate staggered reductions in funding, in line with the number of care recipients who are expected to leave the program as the people they care for become NDIS participants.

The funding calculations will take into account the NDIS start dates for service locations to allow time for care recipients to gain access to the NDIS and have a funded support plan in place.

By 2019-20, all care recipients will have transitioned to the NDIS or continuity of support arrangements, and MHR:CS will be closed.

MHR:CS and the NDIS

Client eligibility for the NDIS

People with persistent psychosocial conditions who meet the NDIS access requirements will be able to become participants in the same way as people with other severe and permanent disabilities.

The majority of MHR:CS clients care for people with psychosocial disability, an autism disorder or an intellectual disability.

Care recipients will need to meet the access requirements of the NDIS in order to participate in the scheme, once it is available in their areas. This includes disability, age and residence requirements.

The supporting documentation listed below will help care recipients demonstrate that they meet the disability access requirements. This can be in the form of existing reports/ letters/ assessments or it can be provided on the [NDIS Access Request Form](#).

1. Confirmation from GP or psychiatrist of diagnosis of a mental health condition.
2. Statement from the GP or psychiatrist that the condition is 'likely' to be permanent and the person is likely to need support throughout their lifetime.
3. Information about treatment the person has received for their mental health condition and if further treatment would be likely to resolve/ improve the condition and/or the impact of the condition.
4. Information about the impact of the condition on the person's everyday living skills (mobility, communication, social interaction, learning, self-care, self-management) and impact on their community and economic participation, and social life.

A note about 'permanent'

Recovery for people with psychosocial disability is consistent with the principles of the NDIS. Recovery approaches acknowledge that the effects of illness and subsequent psychosocial disability may or may not diminish over time. This means that while some people may recover to the point that they do not require any mental health or disability supports, others will always require supports to assist and maintain their recovery, ongoing community participation and social inclusion.

Recovery is about achieving an optimal state of personal, social and emotional wellbeing, as defined by each individual, whilst living with or recovering from a mental health condition.

Types of support

The NDIS acknowledges and respects the role of families and carers, and carer needs may be considered as part of the care recipients' access request and NDIS planning process.

A participant's plan may include reasonable and necessary supports to help, directly or indirectly, sustain the carer in his/her caring role or strengthen the caring environment.

The NDIS is responsible for non-clinical supports that focus on a person's functional ability, including those that enable people with mental illness to undertake daily living activities and participate in the social and economic life of their community.

The mental health system will continue to provide treatment for the person's mental health condition. NDIS-funded supports will complement treatment provided through the mental health system, and will address the functional impact of a person's psychosocial disability.

Potential role for MHR:CS providers

Supports currently provided under the MHR:CS program will not necessarily be directly replicated by the NDIS. They may take the form of different supports or services, depending on the needs and decisions of each NDIS participant.

The following services form part of the NDIS product catalogue and may be of interest to MHR:CS providers:

- assistance in coordinating or managing life stages, transitions and supports, including Specialist Support Coordination
- assistance with daily-life tasks in a group or shared living arrangement
- development of daily-living and life skills
- participation in community, social and civic activities.

The NDIA determines whether or not to include Support Coordination in a participant's plan.

A note about 'Support Coordination'

The provision of Support Coordination within a specialist framework necessitated by specific high level risks in the participant's situation. This support is time limited and focuses on addressing barriers and reducing complexity in the support environment, while assisting the participant to connect with supports and build capacity and resilience. It may also involve development of an intervention plan which will be put in place by disability support workers.

Advising your clients

Clients and care recipients can check their expected access online via the NDIS Access Checklist at www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist.

The NDIS website contains advice, information and resources to help people get started on their NDIS journey. See www.ndis.gov.au.

This includes a [fact sheet](#) to help participants develop their plan.

As a provider, you will have an interest in guiding your clients through the transition.

This is also a requirement of your funding agreement.

You must encourage your clients to seek access for their care recipients to the NDIS once it becomes available in their areas. You will be funded to maintain current services while access requests are processed and while individual support plans are developed.

Continuity of support

For existing clients of Commonwealth programs, for whom the NDIS cannot provide support, the Commonwealth has committed to providing continuity of support. This will include assistance for MHR:CS clients caring for care recipients who are aged 65 or over when the NDIS begins in their areas, and care recipients who do not meet the citizenship requirements of the NDIS. Continuity of support means clients who are found to not meet the NDIS access requirements will be supported to achieve similar outcomes, even if the arrangements for doing that change over time.

In the short term, continuity of support will be provided through your existing program funding. You will be notified once long-term arrangements for providing continuity of support have been finalised.

Resources

NDIS website

The provider section of the NDIS website has information, advice and links for providers who want to work under the scheme.

Visit <http://www.ndis.gov.au/providers>

The NDIS website also contains resources for families and carers, recognising them as important partners in the support of people with disability. You may wish to refer your clients to this section of the NDIS website.

Visit www.ndis.gov.au/families-carers

NDIS Ready communication toolkit

The 'NDIS Ready' section of the NDIS website includes a communication toolkit which provides individuals and organisations with communication materials that can help spread the word about the NDIS across a range of communications channels, including websites, intranets, social media platforms and electronic and printed newsletters.

These resources may help you communicate with your clients about the scheme.

Visit www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-ready

NDIS Information Sessions

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is running information sessions across the country for providers and participants.

These information sessions provide the opportunity to learn more about the NDIS, including the ways that your clients can apply to and access the scheme, and what other supports will be available.

For upcoming information sessions in your area visit www.ndis.gov.au/news/events

NDIS Provider Portal

Providers who work under the NDIS need to register on the NDIS Provider Portal. A new version of the NDIS Provider Portal **myplace** was launched on 1 July 2016.

Access to myplace is via PRODA, an online authentication system designed to provide secure access to specific government services and is required to access the new Provider Portal. This replaces the previously used authentication process, AUSkey.

Whether you are new to the NDIS, or already registered to do business, you will need to sign up to **myplace**.

Visit www.ndis.gov.au/providers/registering-provider/accessing-new-provider-portal

NDIS Provider Toolkit

This practical self-assessment tool helps providers check their readiness for the NDIS, and work out where they may need to enhance their capabilities.

The toolkit is free for providers to use. It has been developed by National Disability Services (NDS) with funding from the Australian Government Sector Development Fund.

Visit <https://www.nds.org.au/resources/ndis-provider-toolkit>

Sector Development Fund projects

Through the Commonwealth's Sector Development Fund, a number of not for profit organisations have been funded to help the disability services sector get ready for the NDIS. The projects focus on developing the sector as a whole, including people with disability, their families, carers and providers.

Information about completed projects is available on the NDIS web site. The resources include practice change and service delivery resources, operational tools, workforce planning resources and change management resources.

Visit www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/sector-development-fund/sdf-projects

Costing and Pricing advice

Organisations will need to establish, and operate under, a market based, competitive, fee-for-service model prior to the NDIS commencing in their region.

This practical Costing and Pricing Learning Program aims to increase costing and pricing skills for disability service providers across Australia. It has been developed by NDS and the Curtin University Not-for-profit Initiative.

Visit www.nds.org.au/resources/costing-pricing-learning-program