

NDIS FACT SHEET #2

CAN I ACCESS THE NDIS?

Over 4 million Australians have a disability or chronic illness of some kind. However, not everyone will be eligible to get an NDIS plan. Instead, it is estimated that 460,000 people will be accessing individualised support from the NDIS by 2019.

This number is much lower than the 4 million Australians who have any type of disability or illness. This is because individualised support in the NDIS is for people who need assistance with every day activities due to their significant and permanent disability. People may also be able to access the NDIS for early intervention.

Access criteria

People with disability need to go through a process called NDIS Access before they can get support from the NDIS. This means people with disability must meet some basic requirements to get into the NDIS. These are defined by the NDIS Act and include:

- Having a permanent and significant disability that affects your ability to take part in everyday activities
- Be aged less than 65 when you first access the scheme
- Be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident or a New Zealand citizen who holds a Protected Special Category Visa

At the moment, you must also be living in an area where the NDIS is available. The NDIS is coming to more and more areas over time, and you can see if it is available in your area by calling 1800 800 110 or going to www.ndis.gov.au

Defined Programs

People with disability who currently receive supports through certain state or territory government programs will access the NDIS easier. These are called Defined Programs. People in these programs will gradually enter the NDIS without needing to prove they meet the disability requirements.

Importantly, people with disability who receive supports through these Defined Programs do not need to contact the NDIS. Instead, the NDIS National Access Team will contact them when the NDIS is available in the area where they live. There is a list of these Defined Programs on the NDIS website Operational Guidelines page; the NDIS calls this List C.

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To contact the NDIS for more information:

www.ndis.gov.au

1800 800 110



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What if I am not in a Defined Program?

If the person with disability is not receiving support funded through a Defined Program, they will need to contact the NDIS and put in an access request if they want to access NDIS. The person with disability still needs to meet the access criteria we discussed earlier.

When making an access request, the person with disability needs to fill in an Access Request Form. To fill out this form properly, the person with disability may need help from one or more health professionals.

Can I get support from the NDIS if I don't meet the access criteria?

Yes! While the NDIS mainly provides support to people with disability eligible for NDIS plans (who get individualised funding), the NDIS is also able to support people who are not eligible. For example, Local Area Coordinators are organisations funded by the NDIS who can help you link up with services and supports in the community. They can provide ideas to help you become better connected.

Local Area Coordinators can also assist businesses and organisations to become more accessible, which helps people with disability benefit from a wider range of supports and services.

Does my income have an effect on the NDIS?

No, the NDIS is about providing support to people with disability who need help with everyday activities. The NDIS is different to income support (such as the disability support pension or youth allowance) because it is designed to pay for disability related costs, not normal everyday costs (such as food, rent, or entertainment). The NDIS is available to anyone who meets the access requirements, no matter if they are rich or poor.

The only exception is if you received a compensation payout specifically to help you with your disability related costs. In this case, the NDIS cannot pay for these costs because that would be doubling up and would not be fair on other people who need support.

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