

NDIS Tip Sheet 4 - Implementing Your Plan

Tips for Getting your NDIA Plan into Action

This tip sheet is aimed at providing you some practical tips for how to get your funding package put into place or in the jargon 'implement your plan'.



1. Get a copy of your new Plan as soon as possible

- If you wait for a mailed copy, it will often be at least a week, which is time wasted that you could be using to check your plan &/or get services organised to provide support
- So it is good to ask your planner for a copy to be emailed to you (they will usually do this via 'secure DHS email' which you'll have to register for the first time you use it)

2. Check that the new Plan matches what is on the NDIS Portal

- If it is your first NDIS plan, then make sure that your planner gives you an access 'code' for getting on to the NDIS Portal. You will have to access the NDIS portal via 'MyGov', so either use your existing 'MyGov' account or set up a MyGov account.
- On the NDIS Portal click on the box called 'My Plan'. You will then be able to check that the goals etc match your copy of the plan. By clicking on 'My Plan' and then on the box called 'My Budget' you can check that the plan 'budgets' also match.
- Remember that the NDIS Portal is a useful way of monitoring what funds have come out of your NDIS package and how much you have left in each area.

3. Create a list of each type of support/service that are listed in the 'Funded Supports' section of your NDIS Plan

- Ideally you should create the list with someone who has good knowledge of the NDIS Price Guide and the jargon. If you have a Support Coordinator funded in your Plan, explaining the plan to you is part of their role.
- If you don't have a Support Coordinator (or you're waiting on one) then ask your planner/LAC to break down what supports have been funded in each budget #. Make sure you write this down and/or get them to give it to you in writing.
- If you are unsure about what items or categories of funding mean, then ask your Support Coordinator or planner to explain what it is aimed at.
- Some items funded will be clear and straightforward, but others may be part of one whole budget e.g. Core Supports, can often have one amount that includes Day Program, in-home support, community activities, household cleaning etc.

4. Make a budget or 'average hours per week' list for each type of support

- In Step 3 you should have worked out the total amount of funding you have for each type of support e.g. in-home support, community activities, attendant care etc.

Now, covert that to average hours per week.

e.g. if you have a total of \$65,112 for in-home support/attendant care, this divided into 52 weeks is an 'average per week' of 28 hours 1:1 support on weekdays.

- Your Support Coordinator may be able to help you with this or if you have Plan Management Plus, which is technically called '*financial & service intermediary*', they should be able to assist you to do a budget and to monitor the budget.

5. Confirming existing supports that you want to continue to purchase with your NDIS funding

- It is good to contact the organisations you are currently getting support from and talk to an Intake person or Coordinator about what type and amount of support you want to purchase from them with your NDIA package. This may be:
 - continuing to purchase the same type and amount of support you have now and/or
 - arranging a change of support e.g. more/less hours; different activities
- They will probably ask you sign a 'Service Agreement' so also read Tip 8 below

6. If you have new funding, then find new services/supports to purchase

- Again, if you have a Support Coordinator their role includes helping you with this
- If you don't have one, then you can search services on the NDIS portal or ask your planner/LAC for a list of agencies that provide what you want in your area.
- VALID has a Tip Sheet on things to think about when selecting services so use this to assist you with:
 - working out what you want from a service
 - what questions to ask services
- Be aware that if the budget for the support you're buying is 'NDIA managed' then you will have to select from *only* NDIS Registered services (list is on NDIS website)
- However, if the budget is Plan or Self Managed then you can select from either a Registered or Non-Registered service, but do ensure you get clear quotes on prices and advice on your responsibilities ## if you use a non-registered option.

7. Organise any assessments

- If you have a budget for Capacity Building (CB): Improved Daily Living, then make a list of the assessments you need and start to organise the most urgent one.

- If you don't already have therapists/professionals selected to undertake the assessments then follow the points in Step 6 for selecting services.
- Be mindful that some therapists will want to be paid prior to releasing their Report and recommendations, so if you are in a hurry, you should negotiate around this
- It is always a good idea to ask for an electronic copy of the Report to be sent to you, so that you have a copy in case it gets lost in the process or it is relevant for other purposes. e.g. a report on loading a wheelchair is required by every service whose workers take the wheelchair in their vehicles
- Assessment reports will go to the NDIS and progress through whatever processes are required by them e.g. SWEP (State Wide Equipment Program)
- If you have a Support Coordinator, they should assist you to manage and monitor this process. However, if you don't have a Support Coordinator, then you will need to keep track of reports and make sure that they are passed on to the correct people and then keep checking with Planner about where things are at.

8. Service Agreements

- The majority of services will want you sign a Service Agreement with them so that they can have security of funding for a period of time and also to provide clarity around the amount and type of support you are purchasing from them.
- Similarly, a Service Agreement is useful for you to make sure that what you want the service to provide you and how is outlined clearly, including how invoices are to be paid and any other charges you may have to pay.
- It is useful to note that if there are problems, having a Service Agreement can make it easier to hold a service to account if you don't get the support/service that was agreed on.
- Service Agreements are a good 'tool', as long as you make sure that you:
 - understand all of the Agreement (sometimes can be full of jargon)
 - ask questions and get explanations of anything that is unclear, and then get it changed into wording that you feel comfortable with
 - negotiate and change anything that you don't agree with
 - check that the way payment is described in the Agreement suits your Management Choice i.e. if using Plan Management, ensure the agreement states that invoices are to be sent directly to you, as this is quicker and you can also keep track easier
 - check that the cancellation of individual bookings time is reasonable, e.g. 1 or 2 business days' notice is the standard
 - check that the cancellation time for leaving the service suits your needs e.g. about one month is average, but be aware that if they are a NDIS Registered service they cannot charge you penalty amounts

9. If you are having difficulties

- If you have a Support Coordinator they will assist with resolving problems such as, finding and connecting with services, or funding problems.
- If you don't have a Support Coordinator then remember to go back to your planner/LAC for support with implementing your plan.
- If you have a complaint about a service you are dealing with, your planner or the funding in your Plan, then refer to *VALID NDIS Tip Sheet 3: Complaints related to the NDIS*.
- If you feel you need an advocate to assist you raise your concerns, ask for a review of an NDIA decision or make a complaint, a list of advocacy and complaints bodies is in *VALID Tip Sheet 6: Advocacy & Key Groups listing*.

GLOSSARY NOTES:

Budget - the NDIS Price Guide is broken up into 15 Support Categories and in your plan you will be allocated a 'budget' for each of the categories the NDIS has approved funding for you in. What Categories are funded will depend on your needs, goals and what the NDIS has agreed is reasonable & necessary for them to fund.

If you use a **non-registered service**, your responsibilities *include* ensuring that they have appropriate insurance to cover themselves for the type of work that they do; all workers have had a Police Check; they can provide you with a Tax Invoice (i.e. they have an ABN)

TIP The NDIS has a comprehensive Fact Sheet with a full Glossary of terms on their website. www.ndis.gov.au

ACRONYMS that may be in or are related to NDIS Plans

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| AAT | Administrative Appeals Tribunal |
| AT | Assistive Technology |
| CB | Capacity Building |
| ECEI | Early Childhood Early Intervention |
| LAC | Local Area Coordinator |
| NDIS | National Disability Insurance Scheme |
| PCP | Person-Centred Plan |
| PMP | Plan Management Provider |
| RORD | Review of a Reviewable Decision |
| SDA | Specialist Disability Accommodation |
| SIL | Supported Independent Living |
| SLES | School Leaver Employment Scheme |

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