

Now (People with) Disabilities Individualise Supports: Understanding the NDIS

October 6, 2015

You've heard about it on the news and think that it may affect your child, but do you really understand what the NDIS means for your family?

What is the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was created to help individuals who have permanent, significant disabilities, their families and carers to receive personalised supports and improved access to the community. The NDIS was designed to give you (the participant) choice and control over who you go to for support services (providers). Importantly, the law says that the NDIS must provide support over the participant's lifetime, not just until the government changes.

See if your child is eligible: <http://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-access-checklist>

If your child is aged 0-6 years, she or he may be able to access Early Childhood Intervention supports to improve daily functioning or prevent worsening of the disability.

Scroll down to 'Early Intervention Requirements': <http://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/access-requirements>

The independent National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is in charge of running the NDIS, and one of their Planners will meet with you to make a Plan based your family's goals. In these conversations, you will discuss supports needed for *learning and applying knowledge, communication, interpersonal interactions and relationships, self-care* (including eating/drinking) and others.

When does the NDIS start in my area?

It will be rolled out in Inner Eastern Melbourne (Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse) from 1 November 2017. Once roll out begins in an area, it is anticipated that it will take up to 12 months for eligible people to enter the scheme.

See <http://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/our-sites/vic> for roll out dates in other areas.

What happens if my child already receives disability support?

Your current disability support provider will give you an information pack, which will ask your permission to be contacted by the NDIA. If you are happy with your child's current supports and these are "reasonable and necessary" according to the NDIA, you can continue to access these. If you are interested in changing your supports, you can discuss this during your conversation with a NDIA Planner. If you receive support now but are not eligible for the NDIS, governments have promised that you will continue to receive support consistent with your current arrangements.

For further information on continuity of support: <http://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/continuity-support>

For further information on what 'reasonable and necessary' covers: <http://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/reasonable-and-necessary-supports>

What role do speech pathologists play?

Speech pathologists can be involved in:

- Specialised assessment of skills, abilities and needs
- Early intervention supports for early childhood
- Therapeutic supports
- Assistive technology specialist assessment, set up and training
- Communication and information equipment

Which speech pathology services can my child access under the NDIS?

Speech Pathology Australia states that if you are self-managing your child's plan, you can access speech pathology services from providers who are not registered with NDIS. If a plan management support provider or the NDIS is managing your child's plan, the speech pathologist must be a registered NDIS provider.

To learn about managing your child's plan:

<http://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/understanding-your-plan-and-supports>

What if my child needs more than one Provider?

All children under 6 years will be provided a transdisciplinary package, which means that a team of early childhood professionals work together to support your child. Team members share responsibility for planning, taking action and evaluating the effectiveness of supports. You will choose one professional to be your child's main service Provider. This key worker develops knowledge, skills and experience outside his or her own profession by learning intervention techniques from the other professionals in the team. He or she will report back to the team frequently and will receive support and supervision from the whole team to deliver services.

To find out more about the transdisciplinary model:

http://www.ndis.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/transdisciplinary_approach_to_service_provisionmay2014.pdf

Will the NDIS pay for my child's medical bills?

The NDIS can fund supports such as speech pathology, audiology and occupational therapy, as these help develop your child's functional abilities. Other systems, including the health system, are responsible for treating health conditions, providing clinical or medical supports, and offering care for general health and wellbeing.

See <http://www.ndis.gov.au/document/factsheet-supports-ndis-will-fund-i> for information about which supports will be funded by the NDIS versus the health system.

What resources are available?

Parents of children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition can meet to support each other and socialise in MyTime groups. Support groups are facilitated by a qualified person with relevant qualifications and knowledge, and play helpers keep children occupied. <http://www.mytime.net.au/>

An Easy English guide (with pictures) to the NDIS:
<http://www.ndis.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/Easy-English/NDIA-FAQ-VictoriaEE.pdf>

Links to resources to help you choose Providers:
<http://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/making-decisions-about-support>



www.nbnnews.com.au

References:

<http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/library/NDIS/Guide%20for%20SPs%20-%20NDIS%20March%202014.pdf>

<http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/library/NDIS/NDIS%20FAQs%20March%202014.pdf>

<http://www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au/faqs/is-it-really-here-to-stay/>

http://www.ndis.gov.au/sites/default/files/ndia_provider_registration_guide_to_suitability_requirements.pdf

[Vicky Andrews](#) and [Emma Lorenzin](#) have a special interest in child speech and language development for children with special needs. Book an appointment with Vicky at Box Hill Speech Pathology Clinic on (03) 9899 2898 or direct your child speech therapy questions to enquiries@speech-therapy.com.au

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