NDIS Terms Explained.

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This guide explains common terms used by the NDIS. If you have any questions about any word in the glossary of terms, we're happy to answer them or direct you to more information.

You can give our friendly team a call on 1800 999 333 or email enquiries@nibthrive.com.au

General NDIS terms

These are common terms that everyone using the NDIS will likely come across.

Term	Common name	Definition
Self-managed funding	Self-managed	The participant is the person responsible for managing all aspects of their own NDIS plan and budget.
Agency-managed funding	NDIA-managed	The NDIA manages funds and pays registered providers directly on behalf of the participant.
Plan managed funding	Plan-managed	A registered plan manager helps participants manage their NDIS budget, handles payments to providers and keeps financial records. Plan managers can process invoices for both registered and unregistered providers. Plan management is funded by the 'Improved Life Choices' category and can be added to a participant's plan any time.
National Disability Insurance Agency	NDIA or The Agency	The government organisation responsible for implementing and administering the NDIS. The NDIA is responsible for assessing eligibility to apply for the scheme, developing participant plans, and overseeing price controls and market stewardship in the NDIS provider market.
National Disability Insurance Scheme	NDIS	The Australian system responsible for providing funding and support to people with permanent and significant disabilities, along with their families and carers, to access services and actively engage in their communities.
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	NQSC or The Commission	An independent government regulator responsible for overseeing the quality and safety of NDIS services and supports. It was established to protect the rights, safety and wellbeing of NDIS participants.
Applicant	Applicant	A person who has applied to join the NDIS. If successful, they become a participant.
Participant	Participant	A person who has been assessed as eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and has an approved NDIS plan that provides funding for supports and services to help them achieve their goals.

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Term	Common name	Definition
NDIS plan	Plan	An NDIS plan is a personalised document that outlines a participant's goal, the supports they need and the funding allocated to help achieve those goals. Participants can use their funding amount to pay for NDIS supports related to their disability. It also outlines the community and mainstream supports participants can access to help them pursue their goals.
NDIS registration	Registration	The process through which providers become officially recognised by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission for providing safe, high quality supports that meet national standards. Not all NDIS providers need to be registered, but some providers are legally required to register with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission depending on the types of supports they deliver and the participants they support.
Budget / Funding	Funding	Refers to the funding allocated to a participant in their NDIS plan. It outlines how much funding is available to spend on supports and services that help them pursue their goals, meet their needs and increase their independence and participation in daily life.
Goals	Goals	What a participant wants to achieve with their NDIS supports. These goals are discussed during the NDIS planning stage and can include things like becoming more independent, learning a new skill or building social connections.
Supports	Supports	Any services, products, or assistance that help a participant work towards their goals, increase independence, and participate in daily life and the community.
Support category	Support category	NDIS funding is divided into support categories. Each category has specific guidelines about the types of supports participants can purchase to help achieve their goals. Because NDIS plans are built specifically for the participant's individual needs, they may only qualify for some support categories and not others. See the 'Technical' terms section (pages 5–8) for more details about support categories.
Informal supports	Informal supports	Supports that participants receive from friends, family and their community. (e.g. a friend picking them up to go to a movie). Informal supports can't be claimed for payment from the NDIS.

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Term	Common name	Definition
PACE	PACE	PACE is the NDIA's system used to store participant information and manage NDIS plans and funding. Participants use the my NDIS Portal, which is connected to PACE. Providers also use PACE to create service bookings for supports included in a participant's NDIS plan and funding.
Choice and control	Choice and control	The right for a participant to make their own decisions about their NDIS supports. This can involve choosing the NDIS supports they receive, including how and when they are provided; having a range of providers to work with; and having the option to manage their own plan funding.
Access request	Access request	The very first step in joining the NDIS. A person with disability submits an 'access request' to join the NDIS. The request should include information and documents about the person's disability and its impact on their life.
Eligibility Criteria	Eligibility Criteria	A set of guidelines for who can apply for an NDIS plan. NDIS participants must be: • under 65 years old, • an Australian citizen or permanent resident, and • meet the requirements for disability, early intervention, or both.
NDIS Worker screening	Worker screening	A national background check that people must complete before working in the NDIS. It helps make sure they are safe and suitable to work with participants.
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013	NDIS Act	The law passed in the Australian Federal Parliament in 2013 that established the NDIS and guides how it operates. Any major changes to the NDIS must be made by amending this Act. For the latest updates to the legislation, please refer to the official **NDIS website**.
Total Funding Amount	Total funding amount	Plans now include a total funding amount. This shows the total amount of funds allocated to all reasonable and necessary supports for the length of a participant's plan.
Funding periods	Funding periods	A funding period is the timeframe during which a portion of a participant's funding is available for, and how long it needs to last. Participants can spend up to the allocated amount of funding available within this period. Funding periods can apply to either the total amount of funding in participant's plan, or funding component amounts.

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Term	Common name	Definition
Funding component	Funding component	Funding components are the different types of supports funded in a participant's NDIS plan. Each one relates to a specific purpose and helps the participant work towards their goals. The NDIS sets aside a certain amount of money for each component, depending on the participant's needs. These components match the support categories in a plan, as Core Supports, Capacity Building, and Capital Supports.

Technical

These are specific terms related to operating within the NDIS. They are useful for all providers and support coordinators and include important topics to discuss with participants to help them better understand their plans and how to use their funding.

Term	Common name	Definition
Service agreement	Service agreement	A contract/document agreed to by both the participant and the provider. The agreement helps make sure the participant and provider have the same expectations about what NDIS supports will be delivered, how they will be delivered and at what cost. Service agreements aren't required, but they are helpful and recommended.
Australian Business Number	ABN	An 11-digit number used to register and identify a business in Australia. All NDIS providers are required to have and use an ABN to be paid.
Invoice	Invoice	An essential document that providers use to ask for payment for a support provided to the participant. Invoices need to meet NDIS rules and guidelines.
Reasonable and necessary supports	Reasonable and necessary or Section 34	Reasonable and necessary supports are the foundation of what the NDIS will fund for participants. Section 34 of the NDIS Act defines the rules that supports must meet to be included in a participant's plan. The guidelines from the NDIS state that supports must: • Be related to the participant's disability, • Not include day-to-day costs that are not related to disability support needs, • Provide good value for money, • Help the participant achieve their goals or improve their life, and • Take into account other supports the participant receives (e.g. a support worker cleaning a participant's bedroom might not be 'reasonable or necessary' if the participant's family member already helps with cleaning on weekends).

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Term	Common name	Definition
Assistive Technology	Assistive technology	Equipment or devices that help people do things they can't because of their disability. For example, someone might use assistive technology like a motorised wheelchair to travel more easily or safely. Assistive Technology (AT) has three main categories, divided by price. Each category includes a list of approved supports that participants can use their capital support funding to purchase: • Low-cost AT: under $1,500 per item • Mid-cost AT: between $1,500-15,000 per item • High-cost AT: over $15,000 per item Each category has different processes and requirements that must be met before the equipment purchase can be approved. Providing evidence or consulting with an AT assessor or adviser is required for most AT requests.
NDIS price limit	Price cap	The maximum amount that a provider can claim for a support or service according to the **NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits**.
Support / Line Item number	Line Item	A unique number or code used to identify each support or service listed in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits. This number tells the NDIS which support category in a participant's plan the cost should come from. It's important to use the correct line item number when making claims to ensure payments are processed correctly.
Plan reassessment	Plan reassessment or plan review	The process of getting a participant's plan reassessed by the NDIS. This may happen because the plan has ended, needs updating or the participant has requested changes. This normally involves providing detailed information about why the reassessment is needed and what changes are being requested. A participant can ask for a reassessment at any time.
Plan variation	Plan variation	Changes made to a participant's current NDIS plan without changing the plan's start and end dates. These can be requested by the participant (known as a 'participant-initiated plan variation') or made by the NDIA. A plan can be 'varied' for multiple reasons, including fixing small or technical errors, updating funding components or periods, or responding to emergency situations.
Claim	Claim	The process of requesting payment from a participant's funding from the NDIA to pay a provider for delivering a service or support.
Operational Guidelines	OGs	Rules and instructions that explain how different parts of the NDIS work. They are based on the NDIS legislation and help guide how decisions are made (e.g. changing your plan, disability-related health supports and using assistant animals).

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Term	Common name	Definition
NDIS Code of Conduct	Code of conduct	A set of rules and expectations for how to provide safe support to NDIS participants. All providers, their workers and employees including unregistered providers must follow this **code of conduct**.
NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits	PAPL or NDIS Price Guide	A detailed document published by the NDIA that outlines the prices, support item numbers (line items), and claiming rules for all NDIS-funded services and supports. It includes any exceptions or conditions that apply to certain supports. The NDIA reviews and updates this document annually.
Short-Term Accommodation	STA	Short-Term Accommodation (STA) and Assistance (including respite) is funding for support and accommodation for a short period away from a participant's usual home. It typically covers the cost of care for up to 14 days at a time. It's often funded when a participant's usual carers are unavailable, or for a≈participant to try new living experiences.
Supported Independent Living	SIL	A type of support that helps participants live in their home by providing help or supervision with daily tasks, such as personal care or cooking meals. It helps participants live as independently as possible.
Core Supports	Core Supports	A type of funding that helps participants with everyday activities, current disability-related needs and≈working towards their goals. Core support funding is 'flexible', meaning it can be used across the four Core Support categories: • Assistance with daily life • Transport • Consumables • Assistance with social and community participation
Capacity Building Supports	Capacity Building Supports	A type of funding that helps participants build independence and develop skills to pursue their goals. Capacity Building funding is not flexible, meaning it can only be used for the specific categories funded in the participant's plan. Examples include paying for a support coordinator to find and maintain living arrangements or support to pursue training, education or formal study.
Capital Supports	Capital Supports	A type of funding for more expensive, disability-related supports like assistive technology (see Assistive Technology), home or vehicle modifications. It may also cover specific one-off purchases for the participant. Capital Support funding must be used exactly as outlined in the participant's plan.

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Term	Common name	Definition
Recurring Supports	Recurring Supports	A new support category made available to fund repeated supports, which only includes transport.
Stated Supports	Stated Supports	Services or supports that are specifically allocated in a participant's plan and are not flexible. This means the funding is set aside for a specific support or service, and can't be used for anything else. You cannot swap 'stated supports' for any other supports.

NDIS roles and people

These are terms for the different roles and people that participants may interact with throughout their NDIS journey.

Term	Definition
Person with Disability	Someone who has long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that may affect their ability to live a full and meaningful life in society on the same terms as others.
Legal Guardian	A person formally appointed to legally care for a person with disability. Parents are often legal guardians.
Local Area Coordinator	Local Area Coordinators (LACs) support people with disability to set and work towards their goals and build their skills and independence. They are generally involved in helping participants create their NDIS plans.
Support Worker / Disability Support Worker	Someone who assists a participant with daily tasks and activities. For example, they might help with cleaning around the house, cooking meals and taking the participant to activities.
Plan Manager	A Plan Manager helps NDIS participants manage their funding by taking care of the financial side of their plan. They pay invoices, track spending and provide budget guidance, making it easier for participants to understand and use their funding. Plan Managers also support providers by processing payments and ensuring claims comply with NDIS requirements, reducing administrative burdens for both participants and providers.
Provider / Service Provider	A person, business or organisation who provides supports in the form of products or services (like equipment, therapies or continence products) to an NDIS participant. Providers can be registered or unregistered with the NDIS.
Plan Nominee	The person chosen to manage a participant's NDIS plan if the participant is unable or prefers not to manage it themselves. These can be parents, guardians or another trusted person like a carer or friend.
NDIS Planner	The person from the NDIA responsible for working with the participant to develop and approve their NDIS plan.
Support Coordinator	Someone who works one-to-one with the participant to help them understand the NDIS, implement their plan, help them manage their funding and supports.

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Term	Definition
Occupational Therapist	Therapists who support the participant build life skills and develop strategies to assist with daily activities and increase independence.
Speech Therapist	Therapists who assist participants with speech, language and communication skills.
Physical Therapist	Therapists who support participants with physical impairments and mobility challenges, helping them improve movement, strength, and physical function through targeted exercises and treatments.
Allied Health Professional	A trained and qualified healthcare worker who provides diagnostic, technical, therapeutic, or support services to help improve a person's physical, mental, or functional health, often working alongside doctors and nurses to support overall wellbeing and independence.

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nib453203 0726