# The NDIS Bill

WHAT IS CHANGING AND HOW CAN WE BE PREPARED?

MELANIE WEEKS, SENIOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

# What is changing and when?

## Social and community participation

From 1st October 2026, funding for social and community participation supports will be reduced by 50%.

This will occur as plans are reviewed or reassessed.

This will not be a reviewable decision.

## Capacity building (therapy) supports

From 1st October 2026, funding for capacity building (allied health) supports will be reduced by 10%.

This will occur as plans are reviewed or reassessed.

This will not be a reviewable decision.

## What is not changing

Funding for assistance with daily life will not change.

Daily living, transport, consumables, assistive technology, home modifications, employment, disability-related health supports and necessary 24/7 supports will also be protected.

# What is not changing?

## 24 hour high support needs

Will be able to apply for reduced community participation funding to be reinstated.

Can ask for a plan variation within 90 days of their plan being reassessed or reviewed, to ensure access to 24 hour support.

## All participants

Can request changes to their plan, where there has been a significant and ongoing change in their functional capacity or circumstances.

NDIA have 90 days to respond to this request.

If no response within 90 days, this becomes a reviewable decision.

## Parental responsibility

Does not include the additional support a child under 18 needs because of their disability, over and above the support typically provided by parents to children.

NDIA must consider the risk of harm to informal supports, family relationships and informal networks, if the support were not funded.

# Eligibility reassessments

## Who and when

Everyone who currently receives NDIS supports will have their eligibility for NDIS re-assessed.

This will occur over a three year period, beginning in 2028.

## Impairments and treatments

Must be available through Medicare, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme or the public health system.

No restrictive practices (forced medication).

Treatment only considered appropriate if it would significantly reduce, improve or manage the impact of a person's impairment.

## Fluctuating functional capacity

A technical advisory group has been established to consider how to best assess the support needs of people with different types of disabilities, including fluctuating impairments.

# Timeline of changes

- October 2026: cuts to social and community participation, and capacity building supports, will occur when plans are reassessed or renewed.
- December 2026: all claims for service delivery must be made within 90 days of the service being delivered.
- February 2027: clarifying definitions of reasonable and necessary supports.
- February 2027: when plan rollovers or continuations occur, funding from the previous plan will not be rolled over - a new plan will be created from scratch.

# Timeline of changes

- April 2027: Support needs assessments begin – in most cases, these will replace functional capacity assessments from an allied health practitioner.
- July 2027: higher risk supports will need to be delivered by registered providers (personal care). You will still be able to choose unregistered providers for low risk supports.
- October 2027: if you are plan managed, you will only be able to choose your plan manager from a list of government approved providers.
- January 2028: eligibility reassessments begin for all participants.
- July 2028: a new support coordination and connection service will begin. You will be able to choose from a list of providers funded to deliver these services and will be supported with the transition.

# How can OTs support?

## Updated FCA

Accurate information about the hours required for personal care, assistance with daily life, and social/community participation.

Apply for all disabilities to be recognised by NDIA and supported in plan.

## Impairment notices

If impairments are missing, provide additional evidence about those impairments.

Most people with ME experience neurological, physical and cognitive impairments.

Some may also experience psychosocial, communication or sensory impairments.

## Support needs assessments

There will be alternative options for participants with complex needs, for whom ICAN interview not accessible.

Prepare for ICAN interview by documenting difficulties in daily activities and supports required.

# How can OTs support?

## Document impact

Document the impact of changes and reduced supports on participants.

Provide evidence about the need for increased supports where appropriate.

## Link to services

For people who are removed from NDIS or not eligible, assist with linking that person to state based disability support services and equipment schemes.

Consider applying for grant funding if needs cannot be met elsewhere.

## Keep speaking up

Write to your senators and local MPs about the support determination rules.

Look out for consultation opportunities to provide input.

# How participants can prepare

## Prepare for plan review

Keep records of how your funding is being used.

Keep records of every time a support worker takes you to an essential health or medical appointment in the community.

## Prepare for eligibility reassessment

Obtain updated medical letter confirming your diagnosis, that all appropriate treatments have been exhausted, permanence of disability, and need for ongoing NDIS support.

Gather relevant reports and other evidence that explain your disability, circumstances and support needs.

## Prepare for support needs assessment

Be familiar with the ICAN interview format.

Document your difficulties and support needs.

Be familiar with ICAN format – let assessor know if they miss a relevant area.

# How participants can prepare

## Keep records

Keep copies of every letter, email, plan and decision you receive from the NDIA.

Read decision letters carefully, particularly noting information about your review rights and any deadlines.

Write down important phone calls, including the date, who you spoke to and what was discussed.

## Seek advice

If you disagree with a reviewable decision, seek advice about requesting an internal review.

Seek legal advice if your matter is complex or is heading to the Administrative review tribunal

Remember, you don't have to work everything out by yourself.

## Advocacy support

Contact an independent disability advocate:

www.health.gov.au/our-work/ndap

https://www.askizzy.org.au/search/disability%20advocacy%20finder/personalise/page/who-is-looking-for-help-search

https://dana.org.au/what-is-advocacy/#find-an-advocate