

GETTING READY FOR NDIS PLANNING



A TOOLKIT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO HAVE
COMPLEX HEALTH AND DISABILITY SUPPORT NEEDS



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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to assist people with disabilities and complex health and disability support needs (and their supporters) to be ready for NDIS planning. It is designed for people where the implications of their disability and health status call for specific recognition and tailored support to enable them to:

- Participate more fully in their communities and in life
- Avoid unnecessary admission to hospital if their health condition worsens or home or support circumstances change
- Be as well-prepared as possible if they are admitted to hospital and need to work with health practitioners and NDIS staff to make (or renew) NDIS plans

How will this toolkit help?

Using this toolkit will help you to put your thoughts on paper and get all the necessary information together in one place. This will put you in a good position to:

- Direct NDIS planning (*whether making new plans or reviewing existing ones*) and develop a successful plan that covers both health and disability needs
- Describe the supports necessary for you to live the life you envisage
- Guide planning about your care when you are using health services
- Be as organised as you can (and have your information and plans at the ready) should your health status or circumstances change

Why use this one?

There are many great planning tools out there (some of which are listed in the last part of this toolkit). All are designed to assist people with NDIS planning. While this one covers similar ground to many others, it's been written specifically with health in mind. Its intention is to make health visible in people's planning, and assist them to ensure that the specific health issues and risks they face because of their disability are included in NDIS planning.

What's in it?

The toolkit is made up of distinct parts. You can download each part here: summerfoundation.org.au/ndis-readiness/.

They include:

Information about the NDIS that's relevant to preparing for NDIS planning meetings, and beyond.

Planning worksheets with prompting questions to help you think about what a good life would look like for you, the steps you might take to get there and the support that you need. There are suggestions about what might fit in each section, how to express things in a way that's compatible with NDIS planning, and examples of how others have answered these questions.

A hospital support plan template for you and your health practitioner to use to be ready for hospital admission, should that happen.

It may suit you best to work through it one part at a time rather than doing it in one sitting. Some components may feel more relevant to you than others. Depending on whether you already have a NDIS plan or not, you may just want to hone in on one specific part.

About each part

- 1 **DISABILITY AND HEALTH SUPPORTS AND HOW THE NDIS DEFINES THEM** gives information about NDIS categories for support, and what might fit in each, so you know what to expect in the planning conversation and the language that will be used. An NDIS background briefing!
- 2 **MY DETAILS AND PREFERENCES** covers personal information; how to communicate and work with you; decision-making and how to support you in that; your specific health needs and the supports you need to feel safe and stay well; and your current living arrangements and what you value about them. Using this part helps you get the 'essentials' about you into one place.
- 3 **WHAT WOULD A GREAT LIFE BE FOR ME?** This part steps you through describing the life you envisage and thinking about the what, how and who of getting there. It helps you get ready for NDIS conversations about goals.
- 4 **ABOUT MY HEALTH - BEING PREPARED FOR NDIS PLANNING** is a pre-planning tool for people with complex health and support needs that takes you through all the possible areas of daily life you may like to discuss in NDIS planning, and assists you to think about what's OK, what could be better, and what you'll include in your NDIS plan. Using this part will enable you to think through and document the detail, and have it ready to bring to the planning meeting.
- 5 **IF CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE** focuses on the changes you may anticipate in your health or circumstances, and helps you to explore and plan for some of the "what ifs". Using it will assist you to think and talk about risks, and the things you can put in place to minimise them.
- 6 **ABOUT MY HEALTH - BEING PREPARED FOR HOSPITAL ADMISSION** is a stand-alone template for you to fill out with your health practitioner and other support people. It's a way for you to document everything hospital staff might need to know to ensure they provide the right care, keep you safe, and enable you to participate in decisions.
- 7 **SOURCES** and other useful things to follow up.

Before you start

Before you get into the toolkit, we have provided suggestions about what you might like to think about, some tips based on what others have learned, and some video links to people reflecting on their experiences of planning.

- 1 Making a plan involves thinking about your future and envisaging what's possible. This can be hard when you are dealing with enormous change (perhaps trauma), adapting to new disabilities, dealing with health issues, or trying to make sense of new systems. Think about who you would want and trust to plan with you – partner, friend, family, health practitioner?
- 2 Retaining and understanding what you are being told, and keeping records, can be difficult, particularly when there's a lot happening at once and the language is new. You might like to have someone with you when you are talking with a health practitioner about health support needs - another person to take it all in, and perhaps take notes. Alternatively, you could work with your health practitioner to record discussions about planning, support needs and the NDIS. That way you can listen to them again later.
- 3 Gathering documents and reports can be onerous. Applications for NDIS funding require evidence of disability. It's important to have health practitioners' assessments about your health and your capacity at the ready. Specialists' letters and reports that document your support needs, and any risks associated with your current living environment, are also critical.
- 4 It can be useful to know what language your GP or health practitioner should use when they provide evidence for the NDIS. You can point them to *Getting the language right*. The prompting questions in this toolkit have been designed to help you picture and express your goals in a way that will be compatible with the language and planning process of the NDIS.
- 5 Consider sharing your completed worksheets with a partner, family member or friend, giving a copy to your GP or health practitioner, asking to have it included in your hospital record, or uploading it to a mobile device or to *myhealthrecord* - wherever is most readily accessible to you.

- 6 Given that planning often involves talking about 'house and home' and what this might need to be, it's important to know that NDIS support coordinators can help people to explore housing alternatives. Funding can include up to 75 hours for a support coordinator to assist a participant to develop a housing plan, and up to 50 hours of allied health assessments for the participant to consider whether there are home modifications that might be suitable for them. To find out more about access to housing through the NDIS, go to:
summerfoundation.org.au/ndis-housing-resources/

The experience of others

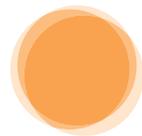
Hearing how other people have prepared for and experienced NDIS planning can be a useful way to get a picture of what the process might involve, and what kind of preparation might work for you.
summerfoundation.org.au/people-category/ndis-access-stories

A note on sources

Getting ready for NDIS Planning has drawn on a range of resources, with grateful acknowledgment:

- Resources (both public and 'in-house') produced by other organisations, in particular NSW ParaQuad/Brightsky Australia *Supporting My Life Choices: A preparation guide for my plan*; Carers Australia *Carer Checklist: to prepare for the national disability insurance scheme assessment & planning meetings*; Spinal Cord Injuries Australia *Preparing for Your First NDIS Planning Meeting*; Spinal Cord Service *Working with the NDIS*; Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre *NDIS Information Booklet*; Austin Health *Support Plan Template*; NSW Government (2013) *NSW Health & Ageing and Disability and Home Care (ADHC) Joint Guideline*.
- The learning and written resources of the Summer Foundation's NDIS Connections, Hospital Readiness and Discharge Planning Projects, as well as the Summer Foundation *Housing Toolkit*, *Sample NDIS Plans* and *Pre-planning tool*. See summerfoundation.org.au/documents-category/publications/

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