

TIPS: For managing access challenges

[< Previous topic](#) | [Next topic >](#)

Check out this video to find out what are some barriers or challenges that NDIS participants have faced when accessing the NDIS

This website helps you learn about opportunities for people with mental health conditions through the NDIS. As the NDIS is still in its early stages, and helping many people, you may find you face some challenges when you try to access the NDIS. The National Disability Insurance Agency will work with you and others to keep improving the NDIS based on people's experience and feedback.

The following are some possible NDIS access challenges for people with mental health conditions and tips to manage them.

Read this website and the workbook, and try the activities. It can be helpful to have a friend, family member, worker or peer to talk with about what you are learning. You can also join one of the Facebook groups where people are talking about their experiences of the NDIS so you can learn from others. To avoid getting a decision of 'not eligible' it is important to prepare as much as possible before you submit your access request.

Some important things to remember are:

- Take the time to think about what you need and the supports you want so you can explain in your access request. You can use the reimagine.today workbook for this!
- Have clear aspirations and goals to work towards
- Choose someone who can help you to apply, support you or be your advocate
- Speak up, ask questions and express your views and concerns to stand up for yourself. Check out the [Strategies to maintain my health and wellbeing](#) page.
- Gather all of the necessary information before submitting your access request - use the reimagine.today workbook to keep your information in one easy-to-find place.

You may need evidence of several of the following:

- Frequent hospitalisation for mental health problems
- Receiving mental health care and treatment from a GP, public mental health service, private psychiatrist or other health worker
- Little, if any, employment in recent years
- Poor physical health
- Insecure housing
- Extreme social isolation
- Little or no support from family or friends.
- Recent diagnosis and treatment information. **The NDIS Act does not require you have a diagnosis** as the scheme is focussed on functioning in life not a diagnosis. However, proving eligibility for NDIS can be easier with diagnostic and treatment information. If you do not believe you have a mental health condition or have other reasons for preferring not to get treatment, then you might want to discuss this with the National Disability Insurance Agency or their Local Area Coordinator community partner when applying.

If you disagree with your eligibility decision you can ask for the National Disability Insurance Agency or others to review it. Check out the [Requesting a review of a decision](#) page.

If you now get support from a Commonwealth funded mental health program but choose not to apply for the NDIS then you may lose your 'guarantee of service'. The Commonwealth mental health programs are Partners in Recovery, Personal Helpers and Mentors, the Day to Day Living Program and Mental Health Carers: Respite Support.

The guarantee means that you will still get some ongoing support if you apply but are not eligible for the NDIS. If you choose not to apply for the NDIS then this decision may limit the amount of support available to you. Applying for the NDIS and the planning process is a lot of work the first time you do it. The NDIS is a new system of support, so its also unfamiliar. This can make the process confusing and stressful for some people.

It is important to look after your health and wellbeing during NDIS processes. Make sure you keep up your self-care activities. If you have a wellbeing plan which lists things you do to stay well, it can be helpful to review this and perhaps do a couple of extra self-care tasks. Check out the [Strategies to maintain my health and wellbeing](#) page.

It can be helpful to talk to others who've been through the process, so ask your friends and peers, check out if there is a group near you, or search for a Facebook group.

National Disability Insurance Agency now do a 'My First Plan'. It can give you time to get to know the National Disability Insurance Agency and them time to get to know you. This makes the wait shorter for eligible people who are waiting for a plan.

If 21 days have passed since you heard from anyone about your application or your plan, contact the National Disability Insurance Agency. Make a record of the day, time, who you spoke to, and what they said to you, in case you need it later. There is space in your reimagine.today workbook to record this. The National Disability Insurance Agency try to make a decision by 21 days after you apply. Each time they ask for more information the 21 days starts again. This may happen several times.

The National Disability Insurance Agency helps a lot of people of all disability types to get support. If 21 days have passed since you heard from anyone then contact the National Disability Insurance Agency. Make a record of the contact in case you need it later.

You have the right to give feedback or make a complaint. There is more information about giving feedback and making complaints [on this site](#) and on [the NDIS website](#). Not all people will be eligible for, want or need NDIS funded supports or services. reimagine.today includes information about where people who are ineligible for the NDIS can go to for care and support. Check out the [If I do not meet the access requirements. What can I do?](#) page.

If your needs or choices change then you might reconsider applying or reapplying for the NDIS.

A lot of people are watching the how the NDIS and other services for people with mental health conditions are changing. Mental health programs like Partners in Recovery, Personal Helpers and Mentors, the Day to Day Living Program and Mental Health Carers: Respite Support are funded until June 2019. What happens then will depend on people's experience of the NDIS. Some states have closed down some mental health programs causing gaps in services which is a big concern.

If you previously received a service and now do not, we understand that there is a 'guarantee of service' during NDIS transition. This means that you have to get at least what you were getting before. It is important to speak with the National Disability Insurance Agency, Local Area Coordinator community partner or an advocate about this. The NDIS is the biggest social reform since the introduction of Medicare over 30 years ago. It will take some time for it to work well for people with mental health conditions. People with mental health conditions who access the NDIS will benefit from increased levels of support. Increased support increases their health and well-being and this is why it's worth it!

People now receiving state/territory funded disability support services may not notice their initial transition to the NDIS. Others, including Commonwealth funded mental health program clients and other people with mental health conditions, may find both applying for access and planning challenging. The Commonwealth mental health programs are:

- Partners in Recovery
- Personal Helpers and Mentors Service
- Day to Day Living program
- Mental Health Carer: Respite Support .

If you are feeling like participating in the NDIS is not worth it then speak about this with someone you trust. It may not be your choice just now or there may be extra help available to you to navigate the NDIS and other services available. It is important to stay hopeful and optimistic about the opportunity that is the NDIS and other mental health reforms. Interacting with people that have, or that you believe have, more skills and power than you can be hard. This is especially true if others have treated you badly in the past. Examples of others treating you badly are bullying, harassment, abuse and neglect. It is not OK for these things to happen to you. If you are treated badly you might be fearful of speaking with people or be scared to have differences of opinion with people.

Remember if you are:

- Applying to access the NDIS then [there is support available to help you.](#)
- Eligible for NDIS funded supports then you could use your funds to get help in developing skills to develop your confidence, meet new people or resolve differences of opinion . Getting help means that these activities are included in you plan.
- Ineligible for the NDIS it is important to stay hopeful and optimistic about your recovery and [seek out the help you need and want to support this.](#)

[< Previous topic](#) | [Next topic >](#)