

Glossary

Are you sometimes confused by the language of the mental health and disability sectors?

Both sectors try to use person first, recovery oriented and trauma informed plain English to describe and talk about people's lived experience of a mental health condition and recovery.

The NDIS has its own language that you will now need to try to understand as well. reimagine.today aims to use language that is as jargon free as possible. It can also help you learn the language of the NDIS. The glossary will be useful if you need an explanation of some terms as you work your way through the resource.

If you have a suggestion for something in reimagine.today that could be said better we would like your feedback.

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A

A meaningful and contributing life: This means a fulfilling life enriched with close connections to family and friends, and experiencing good health and wellbeing to allow those connections to be enjoyed. It means having something to do each day that provides meaning and purpose, whether this is a job, supporting others or volunteering. It means having a home and being free from financial stress and uncertainty. It means opportunities for education and good health care, all without experiencing discrimination due to having a mental health difficulty. [\[4\]](#)

[Watch this video for more detail.](#)

Access Request Form: An application form a person fills in that the NDIA use that is part of the information used to decide if you might get NDIS funding.

Access requirements: To get the NDIS you must:

- Have a disability that will not go away, or is likely to not go away (see also **Episodic**)
- Be less than 65 years old
- Live in Australia
- Be an Australian Citizen or have a special piece of paper saying you can live in Australia

Access decision: The acceptance or rejection of a person's access request (NDIS application) by the NDIA

Advocate: A person who will support you and help you stand up for your rights, needs and wants. An advocate can also sometimes speak, write or stand up on your behalf.

Aspiration: A hope or dream to achieve something in your life.

B

Budget(s): There are three support budgets that the NDIS can fund – core, capacity building and capital

which are linked to different types of supports. These budgets are the different amounts of money a person receives from the NDIS for different supports.

C

Capacity Building: This is about making sure people with disability and their families develop the skills, resources and confidence they need to participate in the community or access the same kind of opportunities or services as other people.

Carer: A person who looks after someone with a disability. A carer is not paid and is usually a family member.

Choice and control: With the NDIS people get to choose what is important to them. NDIS participants decide what support they get and who supports them.

Community engagement: Ways people are involved in their community.

Community inclusion: This is making sure every person, (disabled or not) who wants to can access and be involved in all parts of an activity or service in the same way as any other member of the community.[\[1\]](#)

Community services: Activities and services which anyone can use in the community, for example libraries and sporting groups. Some service providers also call themselves community services because they grew from the unique needs of local communities

Consumer: A person who has in the past gotten, or is currently is getting, support for a **mental health condition**. These people have a **lived** experience of a **mental health condition**.

Coordination of Supports (support coordination): One of the support categories in a participant's NDIS plan can be 'coordination of supports'. When a person has funding for this support category they are given help to organise and manage their supports in their plan.

D

Disability: A disability is the total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions (The Disability Act 1992). A disability can affect the way a person uses their body or brain, as well as or their ability to do things in their environment. Disability can be understood in a number of ways (see **medical model of disability** and **social model of disability**).

A term describing a person's **impairments**, activity limitations and **participation restrictions**. Denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's environmental and personal context.

A disability can be a:

- Sensory disability like being deaf
- Physical disability like a spinal cord injury
- Intellectual disability
- Psychosocial disability from a **mental health condition**.

E

Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI): This is a program which gives children with disability the help when they are young to make their life better later on, so they don't need to access the NDIS.

Economic and social participation: This means the ways in which you are involved in our community/society and economy. Economic participation means things like working in a job (opportunity to earn money), volunteering or studying. Social participation includes going to a club or group, as well as being a part of and caring for your family and friends.

Eligibility: Means if you meet the rules (**access requirements**) of who can get NDIS funding. The NDIS mostly use the **Access Request Form** to decide if you can get the NDIS.

Episodic: A person with a mental health condition may go through times of living well and not living so well. When a person's mental health condition varies in intensity this is known as 'episodic'. If a person's mental health condition is episodic, but they have long term impacts that require support over their lifetime, they may be able to access the NDIS.

F

Formal supports: Support people pay for with their NDIS package.

Full scheme: The dates when the NDIS will be available to all Australians who are eligible:

- ACT - July 2016
- New South Wales - July 2018
- South Australia - July 2018
- Tasmania - July 2019
- Victoria - July 2019
- Queensland - July 2019
- Northern Territory - July 2019.

Before these dates only some people in some areas are able to apply.

Functioning: This is a term that is used to describe the things you can do, including activities and **participation**. It describes the positive aspects of the interaction between a person and the person's environment.

Functional impact: This is a term that is used to describe the type and severity of a person's disability and how it affects the things they need to do and the way they do them.

Funded supports: Support the NDIS gives you funds to pay for. Support that helps participants do daily activities and to reach their goals. These supports must be **reasonable and necessary**.

Funded support package: The amount of money that is available to a person in their package for supports through the NDIS. A person's plan will tell you how much money you get in your package.

G

Goals (hopes and dreams): Things you want to do or achieve in the future that will help you have a good life (see also **Aspirations**).

Guardian: A person who can legally make choices for a person with a disability. Parents are usually guardians, but some people have the state as their guardians (Guardianship).

H

Health A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being.

I

Impairment – The loss or limitation of physical, mental or sensory function on a long-term or **permanent** basis.^[2] For people with mental health conditions this would also include a loss of function on an **episodic** basis which in many cases leads to long term or permanent impairment and subsequent disablement.^[3]

Informal supports: The unpaid supports participants get from the people around them, for example family, friends, neighbours and shop owners in the local community.

Insurance principle: Every Australian who is born with a disability or gets a disability in their life will get the support they need through the NDIS.

L

Linkages: Under the NDIS, this means about making sure people with disability are linked into informal supports and services in the community that help to meet their needs.

Lived experience: A person's experience of living with a mental health condition or having a close relationship with someone with a mental health condition e.g. a family member or partner. Also used to describe the experience of recovery.

Lived experience of disability: A person's experience of living with a disability or having a close relationship with someone with disability e.g. a family member or partner.

Local Area Coordinators (LAC): These are local 'community partner' organisations who work with the NDIS to help people, their families and carers access the NDIS. Your LAC will help people to get NDIS funding and write their plan and. They can also help participants manage their plan and get supports and services from outside the NDIS (**mainstream services** and local community based supports).

M

Mainstream services: These are non-NDIS government funded and/or delivered services that are used by everyone. They include health and mental health services, public transport, education, housing and employment services.

Market: All the providers offering products and services to people with NDIS funding.

Medical model of disability: The medical model of disability says people are disabled by their impairments or differences.

Mental Health: A state of well-being in which a person realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Mental health condition: This term describes the wide range of symptoms that can indicate a mental illness whether it is diagnosed or not. ^[5]

Mental illness – A mental illness is a diagnosable illness that significantly interferes with an individual's cognitive, emotional and/or social ability.^[6] Mental illnesses are not always diagnosed and people with these conditions may never come into contact with mental health services. Not all mental illnesses cause impairments. ^[7]

Mental health consumer: A person with a lived experience of mental illness or mental health condition (see **lived experience**) who asked supports or services.

Mental health recovery: Mental health recovery is an individual process, and means different things to different people. Recovery is about being able to create and live a meaningful and contributing life in a community of choice with or without the presence of mental health issues'.^[8]

My first plan: The first plan a participant gets with the NDIS, which has their goals and what their budget is for. This plan will last for one year unless something changes.

N

NDIA - The National Disability Insurance Agency: The Commonwealth government organisation who is running and implementing the NDIS.

NDIS - The National Disability Insurance Scheme: This is a reform which is a new way of supporting people with disability and their families.

National Access Team: NDIA staff members who work in locations around Australia to review NDIS access applications decide whether people are eligible to access the NDIA.

Nominee: A person who can make decisions for a person that needs help making choices but does not have a parent or guardian.

P

Participant: A person with disability who gets the NDIS as they meet the eligibility requirements. This is sometimes also referred to as a customer or person.

Participant statement: Information about NDIS participant's living arrangements, relationships, supports, description of day to day life as well as their aspirations and short and longer term goals.

Participation: A person's involvement in a life situation. Represents the societal perspective of functioning.

Participation restrictions: Problems a person may experience in involvement in life situations. Determined by comparing an person's participation to that which is expected of someone without disability in that culture or society.

Permanent: This is when something will not go away, and will be lifelong. To be eligible for the NDIS, you need to have a condition or impairment that is permanent, or likely to be permanent (see also **Episodic**).

Person with disability: This is a person who has impairments or is limited in activities they can do and needs help to do things like:

- understanding things
- making friends
- getting a job
- getting dressed

- getting around.

Plan: Everyone who is part of the NDIS has their own individual plan. A participant's plan will be a written with their NDIS planner. A plan will describe a person's needs and goals, and the money and supports that the NDIS will give them to help achieve these goals.

Plan manager: A person or organisation that manages NDIS funds for the supports in a person's support plan. This includes things like paying supplier invoices, developing service agreements with providers, contracting and paying providers, and preparing monthly reports on how funds are being used.

Plan review: This is when you look over your plan with the NDIS and see if it needs to be changed. A person's NDIS plan is reviewed at least every 12 months. You can also ask for a review if your circumstances change.

Provider: Someone who runs a service or has things to sell to people that are getting NDIS funding. People can choose the providers they want to use and change providers if they are not happy – this is choice and control. The NDIS has a list of registered providers but providers do not need to be registered if you self-manage some or all of your funding.

Psychosocial disability: This refers to the social and economic consequences related to a mental health condition. It is used to describe the challenges, or limits, a person experiences in life that are related to their mental health condition. It sees these challenges and limits, or impairments, as disabilities that can affect a person's ability to participate fully in life.

R

Reasonable and necessary: Reasonable means that it is fair. Necessary means you really need it. The NDIS will give money for things that are fair and that you really need to live a good life against the challenges of your disability.

Recovery: see [Mental health recovery](#)

S

Sector: The businesses and organisations that give services to people with disability, and the groups of people that speak up for people with disability.

Self-management (funding): When a person manages their NDIS money and pays providers directly or through a plan manager. A person can manage all of their NDIS money or part of it.

Self-management (looking after yourself): The amount of help a person needs doing day-to-day things, making decisions and handling problems and looking after their money (see also **Plan Manager** and **Coordination of Supports**).

Service agreement: A document that explains what supports a provider will give you, how you will pay them, how problems might be addressed and what you need to do if you want to change services.

Service provider: See 'Provider'.

Social inclusion: Social inclusion is about being able to participate in and contribute to all aspects of a society that genuinely includes people living with disability; that supports, intervenes and prevents crises; and that does not discriminate or stigmatise. [\[9\]](#)

Social model of disability: The social model of disability says that disability is caused by the way society is

organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people.

Supplier: Someone who provides items to support participants, i.e. equipment.

Supports: The things that help a person with disability needs to do their day-to-day activities, to be part of the community and to reach their goals (this can be support people or items that assist people with disabilities to do day-to-day things).

Support categories:

Funding in your NDIS Plan is broken down into three support categories:

- *capacity building* supports that help you build skills for the future. An example of this is funding for coordination of supports to help carry out your NDIS plan.
- *core* supports that provide direct help with activities of daily living. An example of this is help with housekeeping; especially for times when your mental health is poor.
- *capital* supports that are funded under this category support people to build their independence and skills. These are devices and equipment that may help you to participate in the community. An example of this might be an electronic calendar to help you remember and be on time for appointments.

T

Trauma: A distressing emotional experience that can create significant and lasting damage to a person's mental, physical and emotional growth and may lead to mental health and coexisting conditions.

Trauma Informed: To take into account knowledge about trauma — its impact, interpersonal dynamic, and paths to recovery — and incorporate this knowledge into all aspects of service delivery.

W

Wellbeing: A state of being comfortable, healthy or happy - feeling like you are able to reach your potential, cope with the stresses of life and contribute to your community.

Workforce: People who work with people with disability.

References

Most definitions taken or modified from the NDIS Glossary/Easy English Glossary unless noted).

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[3] National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum, 2011, *Unravelling Psychosocial Disability, A Position Statement by the National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum on Psychosocial Disability Associated with Mental Health Conditions*, Canberra, p.5, accessed at https://nmhccf.org.au/sites/default/files/docs/nmhccf_psychosocial_disability_booklet_web_version_27oct11.p

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[6] Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2000, *National Action Plan for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health*, Mental Health and Special Programs Branch, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, Canberra.

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