

Professional Standards of Practice

Support Coordination

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Produced DIA with input, consultation, and co-design with the Australian Disability Sector and People with a Disability.

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Acknowledgement of Country

Disability Intermediaries Australia respectfully acknowledges Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their rich culture. Disability Intermediaries Australia pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to Australian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

Acknowledgement of Rights of People with a Disability

Disability Intermediaries Australia acknowledges the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which affirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. DIA embraces this

Convention as we continue to support choice and control for all Australians with a disability.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country.....	3
Acknowledgement of Rights of People with a Disability.....	3
CEO Foreward	6
DIA Professional Standards of Practice.....	7
1. Introduction.....	8
1.1. Context	8
1.2. Aim of these Standards	8
2. Legislation, Rules, Requirements, Responsibilities, Standards and Guidance Status.....	9
3. Service Statement and Principles.....	15
3.1. Self-Direction.....	15
3.2. Independence	15
3.3. Consumer Approach.....	15
3.4. Build Capacity.....	15
3.5. Best Interest.....	16
3.6. Dignity	16
3.7. Accountability.....	16
3.8. Values and Beliefs.....	17
3.9. Continuous Improvement.....	17
3.10. Position of Power	17
3.11. Safeguarding.....	17
4. Governance.....	19
4.1. Risk Management.....	19
4.2. Quality Management.....	20
4.3. Incident Management.....	20
4.4. Information Management.....	20
4.5. Continuity of Supports.....	22
4.6. Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery	23
5. Management.....	24
5.1. Operational Management.....	24
5.2. Complaints Management.....	24
5.3. Human Resources Management	25
5.4. Participant Safeguarding	25

5.5. Case Notes	26
6. Conflict of Interest and Service Independence	27
6.1. Managing Conflicts of Interest.....	27
6.2. Maintaining Service Independence	27
6.3. Service Delivery by Family Members	29
7. Support Provision and Connecting with Participants.....	31
7.1. Levels of Support Coordination Service.....	31
7.2. Connecting Participants to Support Coordinators.....	34
7.3. General Marketing.....	36
7.4. Service Agreements.....	36
7.5. Understanding Service Delivery Methods.....	38
7.6. Secure storage of participant’s plan and sensitive information.....	39
7.7. Participants Changing Support Coordinators.....	39
8. Service Functions and Support Delivery.....	42
Support Coordination functions.....	42
8.1. Understand the Plan	44
8.2. Connect with Support and Services.....	44
8.3. Design Support Approaches	45
8.4. Establish Supports	46
8.5. Coach, Refine and Reflect.....	47
8.6. Targeted Support Coordination.....	48
8.7. Crisis: Planning, Prevention, Mitigation and Action.....	50
8.8. Address Complex Barriers	51
8.9. Design Complex Service Plan.....	52
8.10. Build Capacity and Resilience.....	52
8.11. Reporting to the NDIA.....	53
9. Duties outside the scope of Support Coordination.....	56
9.1. Advocacy	56
9.2. Substitute Decision Making	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
9.3. Substitute Decision Making	57
9.4. Alternative funded services specified in the NDIS Price Guide.....	58
9.5. Other Government Services.....	58
9.6. Case Management.....	59
10. NDIS Registration Requirements	61
10.1. Registered Providers of Support Coordination	61
10.2. Provider Registration Requirements – NDIS Commission.....	62
Glossary of Terms.....	64



CEO Foreward

Since our inception in 2018, Disability Intermediaries Australia (DIA) has been an active voice, envoy and thought leader for the increased resilience, viability, and quality in Intermediary services via ongoing support and reform.

DIA continues to grow with our reach spanning beyond our membership and into the broader Intermediaries sector, we are committed to supporting and assisting the development of a high-quality Intermediary supports and services market to Australians with a disability.

As the Intermediaries sector continues to mature and grow, these sector developed professional standards will lay the quality foundations on which Support Coordination Providers operate.

To ensure these standards were developed by the sector, DIA has, over the past two years, undertaken genuine and unprecedented consultation with providers and participants.

DIA formed a Professional Support Coordination working group that included a total of 23 members of the Support Coordination Sector.

This working group has supported DIA in the development of these Professional Standards of Practice.

Further input has been sought from over 600 intermediary service providers to ensure that these standards are fit for purpose and take into account the wide scope of operating approaches and unique service offerings. This input has been gathered through one-on-one sessions with providers, written submissions and workshops.

To ensure these professional standards have captured and embedded the views, priorities, and requirements of people with a disability, DIA has engaged directly with 187 participants.

This participant engagement was conducted through group sessions in Brisbane, Melbourne, and Perth as well as one-on-one sessions with participants via video conference.

Disability Intermediaries Australia is proud to present these Professional Standards of Practice.



Mr Jess Harper *GAICD, AGIA*
Chief Executive Officer
Disability Intermediaries Australia

DIA Professional Standards of Practice

DIA members are expected to act in accordance with these Professional Standards of Practice. These standards will be effective from 1 March 2022.

Sections within these Professional Standards of Practice set specific mandatory requirements for members through the use of 'must'. Members must not depart from specific mandatory requirements.

Sections within these Professional Standards of Practice set an expectation or recommendation of practice through the use of 'should'.

Where members depart from these, they should do so only for a justifiable good reason.

Members must note there may be disciplinary consequences for departing from these Professional Standards of Practice.

When an allegation of professional negligence is made against a Support Coordinator, the legal system is likely to take account of these sector developed Professional Standards of Practice in deciding whether or not the Support Coordinator has acted with reasonable competence.

There are existing national requirements, codes of conduct, rules and legislation that take precedence over these Professional Standards of Practice.

DIA has referenced many of these within these Professional Standards of Practice as prescribed requirements under federal/state legislation. It is the duty of each DIA member to be aware of which standards apply.

Members must be up to date and have knowledge of these Professional Standards of Practice within a reasonable time of them coming into effect. It is the member's responsibility to be aware of changes in law and legislation since the date of publication.

DIA will continue to work with the NDIA and NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission to support the Intermediary sector to delivery high quality supports to people with a disability.

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

The DIA Professional Standards of Practice for Support Coordination (Standards) have been developed to outline the minimum practice expectations required of the delivery of Support Coordination services.

These Standards are designed to establish the minimum standard for Support Coordinators' practice, ensuring they fulfill the expected level of quality, safeguarding and support to people with a disability.

The relevant legislation and principles that encompass the disability sector provide the foundation for these Standards.

The legislative and ethical responsibilities as detailed in the relevant legislation, rules, principles and guidelines underpin all practice and therefore form the basis of the Standards outlined in this document.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken to develop these standards and they will be revised periodically to ensure they remain relevant to the changing disability environment.

1.2. Aim of these Standards

The aim of the Standards is to:

- Set minimum requirements of Support Coordination;
- Set a basis for applying standards across the diversity of practice in Australia;
- Set a basis for minimum expected quality and safeguarding specifically for Support Coordination;
- Provide a guide for the assessment of practice;
- Provide a guide for planning professional development; and
- Set a continuous improvement approach within the sector.



2. Legislation, Rules, Requirements, Standards, Responsibilities and Guidance Status

Support Coordinators play a significant role in assisting participants of the NDIS in achieving quantifiable and positive outcomes whilst maintaining and building the capacity of participants. Support Coordinators must conduct themselves in a professional manner and champion the social and economic participation and employment of people with a disability.

There is a wide range of legislation, rules, requirements, responsibilities, standards and guidance that Support Coordinators operate under. The status of these have been defined in the table below, noting that this is not an exhaustive list and may change at any time.

Table 1: Status of Legislation, Rules, Requirements and Guidance.

Type of Document	Definition	Status
UN Convention		
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	The Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.	Mandatory
Legislation		
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013	The NDIS Act is the legislative instrument that establishes the NDIS with the objective of giving effect to Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by supporting the independence and social and economic participation of people with disability; provide reasonable	Mandatory

	and necessary supports, including early intervention supports, for participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme; and enable people with disability to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports.	
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	The Disability Discrimination Act enshrines that people with a disability have the same rights to equality before the law and fundamental rights as the rest of the community in the areas of work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport as well as the provision of goods, facilities, services, land, existing laws and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.	Mandatory
Australian Consumer Law	The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) is a single, national law, which applies in the same way nationally and in each State and Territory. It is the principal consumer protection law in Australia. Under the ACL, consumers have the same protections and expectations about business conduct wherever they are in Australia.	Mandatory
Sex Discrimination Act 1984	The Sex Discrimination Act affirms that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law, without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding or family responsibilities.	Mandatory
Privacy Act 1988	As Australia is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and	Mandatory

	Political Rights Australia has undertaken to adopt such legislative measures to give effect to the right of persons not to be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home or correspondence.	
Australian Taxation Law	The Australian Tax Office (ATO) has provided guidance with regard to the charging of GST in relation to the delivery of NDIS supports.	Mandatory

Rules

NDIS (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018	The NDIS Code of Conduct explicitly states the standards and obligations that people with disability and the Australian community can expect of NDIS providers and workers delivering NDIS supports and services.	Mandatory All Providers
NDIS (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018	These rules set out some of the conditions that providers must comply with to become and remain registered NDIS providers. They also set out the NDIS Practice Standards that apply to all registered NDIS providers, and those that apply to providers delivering more complex supports in areas including Plan Management.	Mandatory Registered Providers Recommended Non-Registered Providers
NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018	Registered NDIS providers are required to have complaints management arrangements in place and support people with disability to understand how to make a complaint to the provider and to the NDIS Commissioner. The rules will ensure providers are responsive to the needs of people with disability through the timely resolution of issues and will promote continuous improvement.	Mandatory Registered Providers Recommended Non-Registered Providers

NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018	<p>Registered NDIS providers must establish incident management arrangements to enable the identification of systemic issues and drive improvements in the quality of the supports they deliver. Providers must also notify, investigate and respond to reportable incidents.</p>	<p>Mandatory Registered Providers</p> <p>Recommended Non-Registered Providers</p>
NDIS (Practice Standards - Worker Screening) Rules 2018	<p>Registered NDIS providers must ensure that key personnel and other workers in certain types of roles have a worker screening clearance that meets the requirements of the NDIS Practice Standards. This helps ensure that key personnel and workers in these roles do not pose an unacceptable risk to the safety and wellbeing of NDIS participants.</p>	<p>Mandatory Registered Providers</p> <p>Recommended Non-Registered Providers</p>

Standards		
<p>Professional Standards of Practice for Plan Management <i>(these Standards)</i></p>	<p>Practice for Support Coordination (Standards) have been developed to outline the practice expectations required of all Support Coordinators. These Standards are designed to establish the minimum standard for Support Coordinators' practice, ensuring they fulfill the expected level of quality, safeguarding and support to people with a disability.</p>	<p>Mandatory DIA Members</p> <p>Recommended Non-DIA Members</p>
<p>National Standards for Disability Services</p>	<p>The National Standards reflect the move towards person-centred approaches whereby people with disability are at the centre of planning and delivery. Person-centred approaches ensure that individuals are in the centre of service design, planning, delivery and review.</p>	<p>Recommended</p>

National Mental Health Standards	The Standards have been developed to be applied across the broad range of mental health services. This includes bed based and community mental health services, those in the clinical and non-government sectors, those in the private sector and also those in primary care and general practice.	Recommended
NDIA Policy		
NDIA Operational Guidelines	The Operational Guidelines set out some of the NDIA's operational information. They are based on the NDIS Legislation and Rules. They explain what we need to consider and how we make decisions based on the legislation.	Recommended
NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Limits	NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits assist participants and disability support providers to understand the way that price controls for supports and services work in the NDIS. Depending on the management type of all or part of a participant's plan, price limits may set the maximum prices that registered providers can charge NDIS participants for specific supports.	Mandatory NDIA-Managed and Plan-Managed sections of a participants plan only.
Improving Support Coordination for Participants	The 'Improving Support Coordination for NDIS Participants' paper outlines the outcomes from reviewing the current support coordination model in the context of both the consultation process, and broader strategic design of the Scheme.	Mandatory
Guidance		
Who can help start your plan -	General NDIA guidance on Support Coordination, including some FAQs.	Information

Support Coordination

Support Coordination		
Coordinating supports and services	General NDIA guidance on Support Coordination.	Information
Starting my NDIS plan with a Support Coordinator	General NDIA guidance on plan implementation with a Support Coordinator.	Information
How to start my plan with a Support Coordinator (easy read)	Easy Read NDIA guidance on plan implementation with a Support Coordination.	Information



3. Service Statement and Principles

The service statement and principles outline the culture of fairness, participant centred service and transparency that underpin all activities undertaken by Support Coordination Providers.

Support Coordinators play a fundamental role in supporting participants to live a good life, one where participants are socially and economically included within their community.

3.1. Self-Direction

Support Coordinators will focus on the strengths of the participant and promote self-direction and greater autonomy in collaboration with informal supports and/or formal decision makers as appropriate.

Support Coordinators are engaged by, act at the direction of and in the best interests of the Participant.

3.2. Independence

Independence of service seeks to ensure the mitigation or risk of conflict of interest concerns and promotes greater transparency as well as genuine choice and control for the participant.

Support Coordinators will do the utmost to avoid conflicts of interest and, where they do arise, deal with them openly, fairly and promptly.

Support Coordinators will assist participants to achieve their goals, without seeking to further the financial or other interests of third parties.

3.3. Consumer Approach

Support Coordinators will conduct business in an honest, fair, transparent, and professional manner.

Participants that engage a Support Coordinator will receive specialised support to move from a passive recipient with fewer choices of services to active consumers that shapes the market through their informed choice and spending power.

Support Coordinators must ensure that all their advertising and marketing material is reasonable, decent, realistic and truthful.

3.4. Build Capacity

Support Coordinators will work in a safe and competent manner to ensure participants understand and navigate the NDIS, implement and gain increased value from their plan, connect with other broader

systems of support, and strengthen informal supports.

Support Coordinators will work with participants and/or legal decision makers to maintain and build their capacity over time.

This includes maintaining existing capacity and where possible building capacity to undertake Coordination tasks, make informed decisions relating to the choice, delivery and management of providers and the supports they need to enjoy a good life.

3.5. Best Interest

Support Coordinators will assist participants to exercise their choice and control in the supports the participant engage to meet their needs and achieve their goals.

Support Coordinators will work with due skill, care and diligence, and ensure that any staff employed or engaged will service have the necessary skills to carry out their tasks.

Support Coordinators will understand and utilise current strengths and evidence-based practices that apply to the specific needs of the participants they support and reflect and promote these practices within the participant's support team.

3.6. Dignity

Support Coordinators will not discriminate unfairly in any dealings with participants, respecting the privacy and dignity of participants, whilst understanding that participants always have some capacity in their choices.

While acknowledging and respecting the role of families, carers, advocates and other significant persons, Support Coordinators must recognise each participant's right to make their own decisions where they can.

Support Coordinators will support the participant's autonomy and self-determination to make their own choices, including the choice to take some risks in life as per the principle of "Dignity of Risk".

Support Coordinators are not required to or responsible for making decisions on a participant's behalf, rather Support Coordinators may assist participants to make informed decisions.

3.7. Accountability

Support Coordinators will ensure that participants are provided with terms of engagement for their Support Coordination Service which are fair and clear.

These should meet all legal requirements and relevant codes of practice including reference to complaints-handling procedures and, where it exists, an appropriate redress scheme.

In all dealings with participants, Support Coordinators must ensure that all communications (both financial and non-financial subject matters) are fair, clear, timely and transparent.

Support Coordinators are expected to develop and maintain the knowledge, skills, and practices required to support the participants they service.

3.8. Values and Beliefs

Support Coordinators will assist the participant to access supports that respect their culture, diversity, values and beliefs.

Support Coordinators will promote, uphold and respect all participants' legal and human rights and enable them to exercise informed choice and control.

Further, Support Coordinators will promote, uphold and respect each individual's right to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making.

3.9. Continuous Improvement

Support Coordinators will implement practice approaches and principles informed through NDIS practices, recommended industry approaches and their own professional development and learning.

Support Coordinators will take an active role in encouraging and supporting participants, or their advocates, to make complaints or provide feedback in the interests of continuous improvement.

3.10. Position of Power

Support Coordinators must recognise that some participants are not in a position or capable of exercising some or all of their rights under law.

As such Support Coordinators must recognise that they and providers of supports and services hold a position of power and must adequately support a participant to balance this power and support their interests.

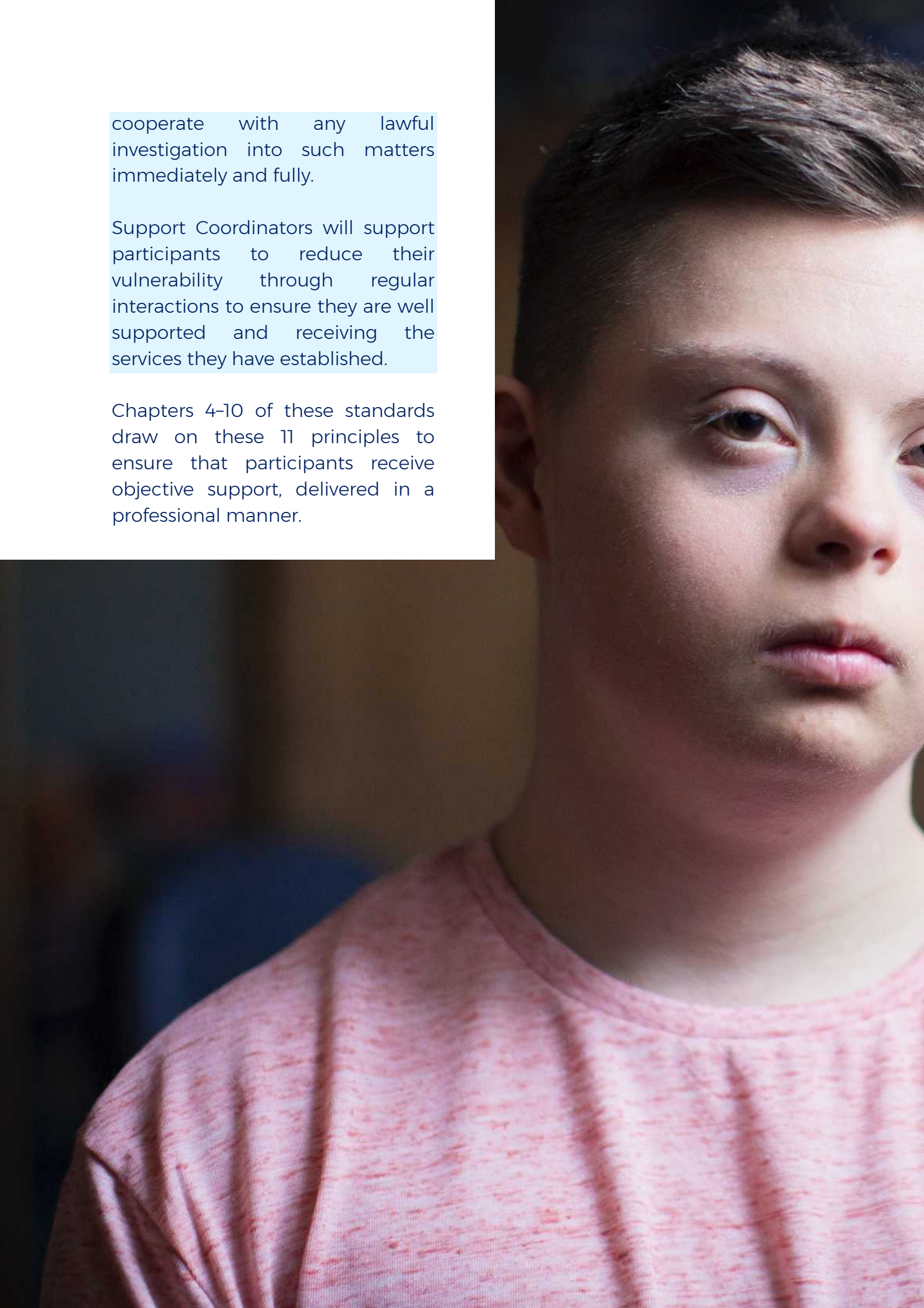
3.11. Safeguarding

Support Coordinators will ensure they hold a zero tolerance to abuse, neglect, and fraud. Support Coordinators will report and

cooperate with any lawful investigation into such matters immediately and fully.

Support Coordinators will support participants to reduce their vulnerability through regular interactions to ensure they are well supported and receiving the services they have established.

Chapters 4-10 of these standards draw on these 11 principles to ensure that participants receive objective support, delivered in a professional manner.



4. Governance

Support Coordination providers must have adequate and robust policies, processes, and systems to ensure the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision, and accountability of their service meets their regulatory and statutory requirements.

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.5 Best Interest

3.7 Accountability

3.9 Continuous Improvement

3.10 Position of Power

3.11 Safeguarding

A governance approach for the delivery of Support Coordination must:

- Provide opportunities for people with disability to have input into the development of Support Coordination provider's policy and processes relevant to support provision and protection of participant rights; and

- Have a defined structure to ensure the Support Coordination provider's financial, legislative, regulatory and contractual responsibilities are met, including monitoring and responding to quality and safeguarding matters that arise.

This governance structure (policies, processes, and systems) must be practical, fit for purpose and proportionate to the size and scale of the provider, cohort of clients, the supports and complexity of the supports being delivered. To achieve this a Support Coordination provider must consider the following areas of its governance structure.

4.1. Risk Management

A Support Coordination provider must implement a risk management approach that allows for effective management of their risk by:

- Documenting the provider's risk through the implementation and use of documents, for example:
 1. Risk Management Framework;
 2. Policies / procedures including a risk metrics; and
 3. Risk Register.

- Documenting and delivering a worker induction that includes training on:
 1. Work health and safety;
 2. Risk identification and management;
 3. Complaints management;
 4. Mandatory reporting requirements; and
 5. Rights and responsibilities in all aspects of service delivery.

4.2. Quality Management

A Support Coordination provider must implement a quality management approach that actively ensures continuous improvement of support delivery by:

- Documenting policies and procedures to enable consistent delivery standard;
- Ensuring regular training, professional supervision and professional development;
- Ensuring quality is informed by the use of a robust feedback and complaints system (see 5.2) and therefore participant directed; and
- Monitoring service delivery and organisational performance to drive continuous improvement.

4.3. Incident Management

Support Coordination providers are required to demonstrate a commitment to participant safeguarding by utilising an incident management approach that:

- Ensures all incidents are documented, including actions taken, resolutions and outcomes;
- All documentation of the incident, actions, resolution and outcomes are provided to the participant in a timely manner; and
- Each incident triggers an immediate review of policy, procedures, and systems that may have contributed to the incident, and relevant changes are implemented into improved service delivery as soon as practicable as part of the provider's quality management framework system.

4.4. Information Management

Support Coordination Providers must ensure that information recorded about a participant is informed, identifiable, accurately recorded, current and confidential.

4.4.1. Consent

Prior to the recording or storage of information:

- Privacy and confidentiality rights and responsibilities are explained in full to the participant and/or legal decision maker in their preferred mode of communication. This includes, but is not limited to, how information is used, retained and shared with other parties and for what purpose;
- The participant's and/or legal decision makers specific and informed consent is obtained and recorded; and
- Participants are informed that they can withdraw or amend their specific informed consent at any time; and

4.4.2. Privacy Statement

Support Coordination Providers must make a privacy statement publicly available, such as published on the Support Coordination Providers website.

At a minimum, a Support Coordination Providers privacy statement must include:

- The legal name of the Support Coordination Provider;
- The types of personal information the Support Coordination Provider generally

collects to fulfil its main functions;

- How the Support Coordination Provider uses and shares the personal information it collects, including the types of third parties the information may be shared with;
- Whether collection of personal information is compulsory or optional;
- How the Support Coordination Provider securely stores and manages access to the personal information, and for how long it may be stored;
- How privacy is protected if the information is transferred;
- The date and version of the privacy statement; and
- How an individual can contact the Support Coordination Provider and request access to the information held about them and/or make a privacy complaint.

4.4.3. Recording and Storage

Support Coordination Providers must ensure information is recorded and stored according to best practice principles including:

- Securely stored in compliance with the Privacy Act 1988;
- Access is managed to all recorded and stored information;

- Medical / health information is recorded and stored in line with Commonwealth, State and Territory requirements.
- Information is relevant, accurate, and specific to the Support Coordinators function; and
- Being recorded and stored as soon as practicable without undue delay.

4.4.4. Request for Information

Boundaries of confidentiality are explained and reiterated throughout service provision, including where a provider is obligated by law to share information of a participant without their consent.

The participant's and/or legal decision makers specific and informed consent to share any of their information with third parties that are not entitled to such information by law.

4.5. Continuity of Supports

Support Coordination providers must have processes in place that ensure access to timely and appropriate supports as directed by the participant and protects the participant from any service disruption by ensuring:

- Day to day operations are managed effectively and efficiently according to these standards;
- When changes or interruptions to supports require alternative arrangements to be made, these arrangements are appropriate, explained to the participant, agreed to by the participant and implemented in a prompt manner;
- Supports are planned and directed by the participant to meet their specific needs and preferences over the course of their plan;
- Participant's preferences are communicated to external services, with the participant's consent, to ensure all experiences of direct support is consistent with their expressed preferences;
- Arrangements meet the participant's support needs with every effort given to ensure sustainability and consistency of supports over the life of their plan; and
- Assist the participant in understanding the options and processes available to them with the NDIA in maintaining support continuity.

4.6. Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

To ensure the delivery of safe, quality supports and services, and the management of risks associated with service delivery it is high recommended that Support Coordination Providers:

- Have a business continuity plan that identifies strategies to manage critical risks to participants, staff and the business;
- Regularly review the business continuity plan;
- Understand the extent to which a disruption of services would impact the health and safety of participants;
- Communicate the business continuity plan to staff and where necessary participants;
- Ensure participants understand how they will be supported under the business continuity plan when enacted;
- Report to the NDIS Commission when there is a significant disruption to the ability to provide services and supports to participants



5. Management

Support Coordination providers must have adequate and robust policies, processes and systems to ensure the overall management of their service.

This section of these Standards will ensure Support Coordination providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.5 Best Interest

3.7 Accountability

3.9 Continuous Improvement

3.10 Position of Power

3.11 Safeguarding

5.1. Operational Management

A Support Coordination provider must:

- Assess the skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications and ability of all workers to govern effectively, deliver quality service and meet the needs of the clients they support, and where gaps are identified relevant training must be undertaken;

- Clearly define and document the responsibility, authority, and accountability for all workers involved in the provision and delivery of support; and
- Proactively manage and document all perceived and real conflicts of interests.

5.2. Complaints Management

Support Coordination providers are required to ensure that participants have easy access to their complaints management and resolution system which ensures all complaints are:

- Documented, including actions taken, resolutions and outcomes;
- Well-managed in a supportive environment;
- Reviewed and where required trigger subsequent updates and improvements to improve service delivery, in line with the continuous improvement system in place; and
- Actioned with detailed information on what has been done to address the complaint provided to the participant along with further avenues for escalation external to the Support Coordination Provider, including the NDIS Commission and Formal Advocates.

5.3. Human Resources Management

Support Coordination providers must have a robust Human Resources Management approach in place that ensures recruitment processes considers base line qualifications and competencies that match each role, and all relevant documentation to support these are kept on file.

5.3.1. Employment Checks and Screening

Support Coordination providers must undertake and document employee screening and checks including:

- Where the Support Coordination providers is registered with the NDIS Commission, NDIS Worker Screening must be undertaken for all risk assessed roles; and
- Police and Working with Children / Vulnerable Peoples checks for all other employees.

5.3.2. Professional Development

Support Coordination providers must ensure all workers, including staff, team members and contractors and labour hire, undertake at least 10 hours of professional development per year (12 months).

Professional development can be conducted and delivered via internal and/or external facilitators either online or in face-to-face environments and may include / incorporate any yearly refresher courses.

All professional development must be documented with copies of certifications kept on file.

Support Coordination providers must document the performance of each works and ensure regular supervision, support, resources, training and development opportunities.

5.4. Participant Safeguarding

Support Coordination providers will ensure that they:

- Report to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission as a third-party where required;
- Report to the NDIA regarding possible fraud and compliance breaches;
- Liaise with the NDIA regarding critical incidents and participant vulnerability; and
- Report to the NDIS Commission situations where participant behaviours place them, their family, the public and staff in danger.

5.5. Case Notes

Case notes are a chronological record of interactions, observations, and actions pertaining to a specific client.

Case notes can be compiled either by hand or electronically. Case notes are an essential component of Support Coordination practice.

When selecting what information to include in a case note, the Support Coordinator must consider whether the information is relevant to the support being provided.

Information on a client must always be recorded according to best practice principles including:

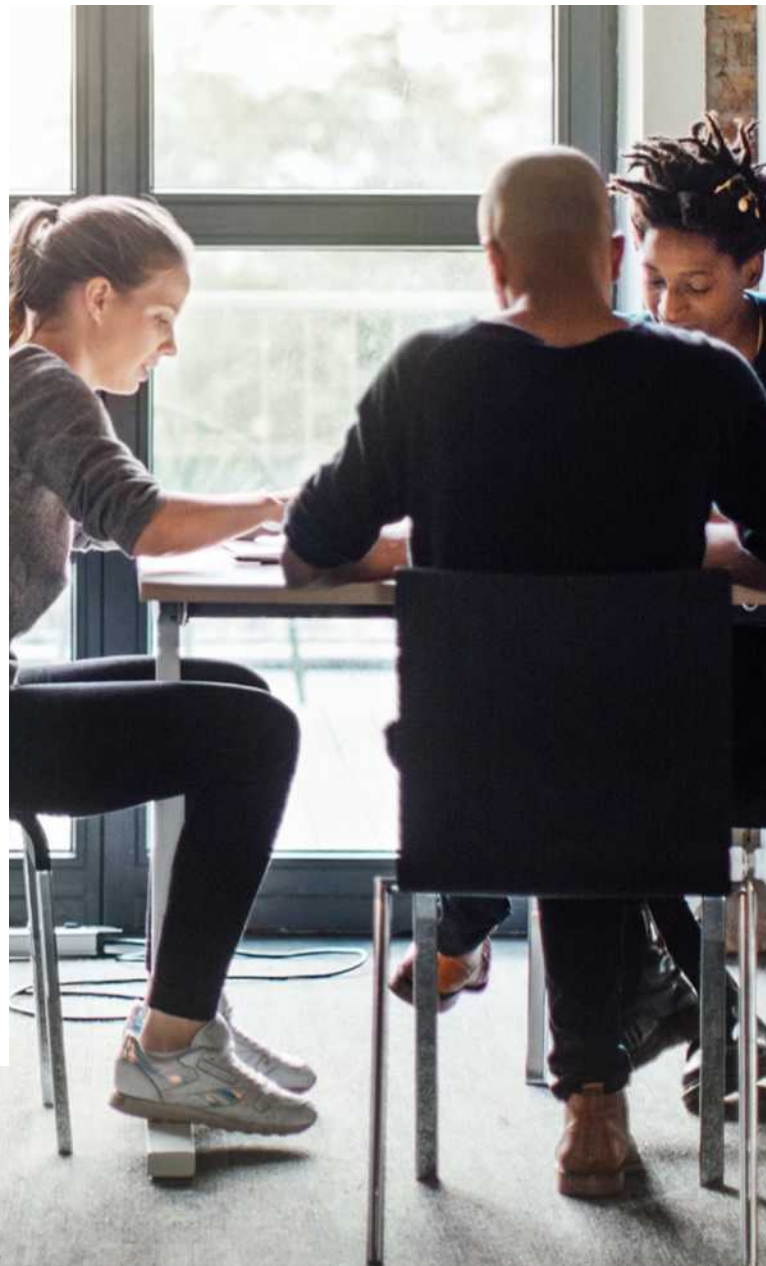
- Ensuring information is relevant, accurate, based in fact, in a neutral tone, and all inclusive;
- Recording information as soon as practicable after service delivery without undue delay;
- Maintaining professional objectivity with no opinion or bias; and
- Considering state and federal requirements regarding recording of medical/health information.

During and or after the engagement of a Support Coordinator, case notes may be

subject to a variety of statutory processes and regulations.

These standards may vary depending on the state and the kind or setting of practice. Such as, being subject to Freedom of Information laws.

Case Notes can be subpoenaed, requested or sought for a variety of legal reasons and situations, thus they should be created and kept, for seven (7) years, in a manner that will be easily accessible by the Support Coordinator to meet these obligations.



6. Conflict of Interest and Service Independence

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.2 Independence

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.5 Best Interest

3.7 Accountability

3.10 Position of Power

3.11 Safeguarding

6.1. Managing Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when someone in a position of trust, such as a Support Coordinator, has real or perceived competing private and professional interest(s), making it more difficult to fulfil their professional duties without bias.

Support Coordinators often provide information and advice to participants and receive sensitive information regarding participants within the scope of their role.

Conflicts of interest may arise when assisting a participant to connect

with providers of supports and broader systems of support.

Support Coordinators must not (by act or omission) constrain or influence the direct decision making by a person with a disability and/or their legal decision maker so as to limit that person's access to information, opportunities and exercise choice and control.

Providers must be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their internal conflict of interest policies and controls to the NDIA and NDIS Commission as requested.

The NDIA and NDIS Commission can conduct an audit of the effectiveness of a provider's conflict of interest policies, practices and controls to ensure choice and control principles are being respected.

6.2. Maintaining Service Independence

To the maximum extent possible, Intermediary Supports (Support Coordination and Plan Management) must not be delivered by an organisation that also delivers other direct supports to the same participant.

Such service independence increases a participant's choice and

control, whilst protecting and ensuring a participant's interests and voice are amplified.

Exceptions where Support Coordination may be delivered by an organisation that also delivers other direct supports to the same participant, may include where:

- Service is delivered in remote / very remote and thin market settings;
- Cultural safety and competence is required to deliver outcomes e.g. CALD, LGBTQIA+ cohorts;
- Thin markets exist and where it is not appropriate for Support Coordination to be delivered remotely, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- Participants require a closed network of supports;
- Participants requires restricted levels of privacy; and
- Expressly approved or accepted by a delegate or authorised decision maker of the NDIA or NDIS Commission.

These exemptions require specific action by a Support Coordination provider to ensure adequate conflict of interest procedures, processes and development plan to locate alternative support arrangements to mitigate such conflict (i.e., independent

supervision and/or alternate support provision).

In these circumstances a provider must document and ensure:

- Participant information and data obtained for the purposes of Support Coordination must be stored separately to Participant information and data obtained for the purposes of all other non-intermediary supports;
- Participant information and data obtained for the purposes of Support Coordination must have access and permissions established so that such information and data can only be accessed, viewed, edited or utilised for the purposes of Support Coordination service provision and delivery, unless otherwise agreed to by the participant prior to such access being granted;
- No remuneration, bonus, commission (whole or trailing) or incentive may be given to workers (employees, contractors, volunteers, management and Board of Directors and others associated with the organisation) for capturing, converting or directing participants to other non-intermediary supports and services;

- A commitment to competitiveness of pricing, avoiding fixed pricing and ensuring a fair market rate;
- How each service is to be provided and the delineation of duties for such services to ensure that duplication of fees or support is not possible;
- That no other support or service is supplied on the condition of also supplying Intermediary Supports (Support Coordination and Plan Management) and vice versa; and
- That the participant or legal decision maker has considered and accepts the following conditions, where they have:
 1. Been presented with and considered all other available / appropriate options for the provision and delivery of Intermediary Supports (Support Coordination and Plan Management); and
 2. Still elected to engage such service from the conflicted provider.

6.3. Service Delivery by Family Members

As a general practice, the NDIA does not fund family members to

provide supports and services to participants.

There are extremely limited examples of where the NDIA has expressly accepted and funded a participant to engage a family member to deliver support and service, these cases are rare, involving direct service delivery and only appear to occur where all other support options are identified and have been exhausted.

As such it is not appropriate for a Support Coordinator to deliver formal and funded support or service to a family member, in these circumstances a participant should look to engage an alternate Support Coordinator.

In the case of Support Coordination providers, where family members are receiving service and other family members work with the same organisation, providers must ensure they record these potential conflicts of interest and document processes to limit engagement between family members whilst ensuring the above processes are also met.

A family member is an individual who is related to a person with disability through one of the following relationships (including half, adopted, in-law, and/or step):

wife, husband, father, mother, guardian, grandfather/mother, daughter/son, granddaughter/son, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, first cousin, boyfriend, girlfriend or domestic/de-facto partner.



7. Support Provision and Connecting with Participants

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.1 Self Direction

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.5 Best Interest

3.6 Dignity

3.7 Accountability

3.8 Values and Beliefs

3.10 Position of Power

3.11 Safeguarding

7.1. Levels of Support Coordination Service

Support Coordination is a capacity building support under the NDIS. This means the focus is on activities to assist a participant to develop their skills, independence, and confidence to act on their own behalf (where possible) and reduce reliance on funded supports over time.

Whilst capacity building supports are included in plans to support participants, and informal supports to build levels of capacity, these supports can also be included to maintain a participant's current levels of capacity and prevent any loss or decrease in capacity.

There are three levels of Support Coordination that may be funded for a participant under the NDIS.

The level of funding for Support Coordination is determined considering individual factors, including the participant's disability and its functional impact, complexity of the participant's circumstances, the existing role of family, carers and other informal supports, and any other individual factors that may be relevant.

These levels are:

- Level 1:** Support Connection
- Level 2:** Coordination of Supports
- Level 3:** Specialist Support Coordination.

If a participant is approved with a budget for Support Coordination in their plan, the funding can be used to purchase supports at any of the three levels of Support Coordination, except where it is specifically stated for use at a certain level.

Where the level of Support Coordination has been specifically stated in the plan, the participant is able to only purchase support at that level.

7.1.1. Intensity

The three levels of Support Coordination are delivered at differing levels of intensity.

Intensity **must not** be confused with frequency. Frequency relates to how often a support is needed throughout a plan period. This in turn impacts the amount of funds put into a participant's plan for a particular level of Support Coordination.

Intensity relates to the level of complexity of the participant's disability and/or their support needs. The higher the level of required intensity the more experienced and skilled the Support Coordinator will need to be in order to meet the participant's needs. This in turn impacts which level of Support Coordination is funded for within a participant's plan.

Support Coordination is delivered at three levels of intensity, Base, Moderate and High.

A participant's support intensity may not be static, for example a participant might need a high level

of intensity to support complex support design but only need a base level of intensity to understand their NDIS plan.

7.1.2. Level 1: Support Connection

Support Connection is delivered at a base level of intensity and will assist a participant to understand their NDIS plan, connect participants with broader systems of supports, and provide assistance to connect with providers. Support Connection will assist participants to achieve effective utilisation of their NDIS plan.

Support Connection will increase a participant's capacity to maintain (or in some cases change) support relationships, resolve service delivery issues, and participate independently in NDIA processes.

In areas where Partners in the Community (PITC) including Local Area Coordination (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) are not operating, participants may receive Support Connection funding.

7.1.3. Level 2: Coordination of Supports

Coordination of Supports is delivered at a moderate level of intensity and will be funded where there is greater complexity in the support environment and/or the

participant's current circumstances within the framework of building capacity.

Coordination of Supports will assist a participant to understand their NDIS plan, assist with reducing barriers to engage and maintain support relationships, design, research and select their support providers in order to assist them to achieve their goals.

Coordination of Supports will coach and assist participants to negotiate service arrangements and actively address any barriers to accessing broader systems of support.

Support Coordinators are focused on assisting participants to build and maintain a resilient network of formal and informal supports by sharing knowledge and experience that supports the independence and builds capacity of participants

It is generally expected participants will develop their capacity and become more independent over time.

For some participants this means that Coordination of Supports funding may only be required in the short term, however for other participants funding may be required for the longer term or even in an ongoing capacity to support and manage the complexity within

the participants support environment and/or circumstances.

7.1.4. Level 3: Specialist Support Coordination

Specialist Support Coordination is delivered at a high level of intensity and assists participants to reduce complexity in their support environment and overcome barriers to connecting with broader systems of supports as well as funded supports.

Specialist Support Coordination utilises an expert or specialist approach and will be allocated in a participant's plan where the NDIA has identified specific high intensity and/or complex support need(s), and/or risks that require active management.

Specialist Support Coordination is expected to address complex barriers impacting a participant's ability to implement their plan and access appropriate supports.

Specialist Support Coordinators are expected to negotiate appropriate support solutions with multiple stakeholders and seek to achieve well-Coordinated plan implementation.

Specialist Support Coordinators will assist stakeholders with resolving points of crisis for participants, assist to ensure a consistent delivery of

service and access to relevant supports during crisis situations.

Specialist Support Coordination is generally delivered through an intensive and focused approach necessitated by the participant's immediate and significant barriers to plan implementation.

Depending on individual circumstances, a Specialist Support Coordinator may also develop and put in place a plan that focuses on how all stakeholders in a participant's life will interact to resolve barriers and promote appropriate plan implementation.

Once developed, a Specialist Support Coordinator will continue to monitor the plan, but it may be maintained by one of the participant's support workers, Level 2 Support Coordinator or other care supports.

In some instances, depending on the individual circumstances, a participant may have Specialist Support Coordination as well as Coordination of Supports funded in the same plan.

For instance, when immediate complex barriers have been addressed and the participant still requires more general coordination of supports for the remainder of their plan period. For others, they may have Specialist Support

Coordination in one plan, and Coordination of Supports in subsequent plans.

7.2. Connecting Participants to Support Coordinators

Where a participant is self-managing their NDIS funds or where a participant is having their funds managed by a Registered Plan Management Provider (RPMP) they may utilise their plan funds using either NDIS Registered Providers or non-registered providers.

Participants using a non-registered provider to deliver Support Coordination services should still be aware of their Support Coordinator's obligations to them and responsibilities against relevant NDIS guidelines, and the NDIS Commission's Code of Conduct where applicable.

One way a participant can identify registered Support Coordination providers is by using the Provider Finder tool in the myplace portal.

The Provider Finder allows participants to search for Support Coordination providers that are located near them.

The NDIA and NDIS Commission also publish an NDIS Provider Register on their websites outlining

registered providers in the relevant states and territories.

The participant's planner, LAC, or ECP can also assist them to find and connect with a Support Coordinator, however they are not responsible for making the decision on the participant's behalf.

Once a participant selects a Support Coordinator the planner, or partner, will receive informed consent from the participant or plan nominee to support the referral process by providing information about the participant's NDIS plan to the Support Coordinator.

A Request for Service (RFS) is the document the NDIA and its partners use to share information with prospective Support Coordination providers on the participant's behalf, where informed consent from the participant or plan nominee has been received.

A potential Support Coordination provider will receive relevant information about a participant and their NDIS plan to make an informed decision as to whether to accept the request for service.

Support Coordination providers may consider their acceptance for a variety of reasons, including (but not limited to) current capacity,

appropriate staff with required skill set, qualifications and knowledge, and conflict of interest.

The aim of this process is to support a prompt connection between a participant and the Support Coordinator and reduce delays in plan activation and implementation.

The RFS should provide a Support Coordinator with enough detail to confidently determine their capacity to deliver the service to the participant.

The Support Coordinator is able to contact the participant or plan nominee named on the RFS should any of the information need clarification, with a response provided in a timely manner.

If a participant has decided to contact a Support Coordination provider directly, or consent for NDIA and its partners to contact providers directly has not been obtained, an RFS may still be prepared and made available to the participant.

This will ensure the participant can contact prospective Support Coordinators and provide the relevant connection and information in relation to their plan.

In this circumstance the Support Coordinator is expected to confirm

acceptance of the referral directly with the NDIA, with the express agreement of the Participant, either by:

- Establishment of a service booking for Agency Managed Participants; or
- Contacting the NDIA via provider.support@ndis.gov.au for Self-Managed or Plan-Managed participants.

7.3. General Marketing

In addition to the RFS procedure, Support Coordinators can engage with participants using techniques such as:

- Relationship marketing by developing a referral network;
- Online marketing including Social Media;
- Content marketing;
- Cause (activism) marketing; and
- Inbound marketing by monitoring online activity and nurturing relationships with these visitors.

7.4. Service Agreements

A service agreement is a formal agreement that outlines an agreed set of expectations of what supports will be delivered, how they

will be delivered, the costs of delivery and the responsibilities and obligations of both the participant and the provider.

As with any provision of service, it is important for the participant and the Support Coordinator to develop a Service Agreement, in which the obligations, roles, function and responsibilities of the services delivered are established and mutually agreed to.

Support Coordinators will develop a service agreement in a plain English and easy to read style through participant collaboration, including formal decision makers and plan nominees if required.

7.4.1. Create A Service Agreement

The Service Agreement between the participant and the Support Coordinator must at a minimum state the:

1. Services to be delivered;
2. Costs to be charged for the services;
3. The way in which the service will be delivered, including the responsibilities for the provider and participant;
4. Preferred contact methods;
5. Relevant escalation contact point/person that will oversee or manage the delivery of service;
6. How the RPMP should escalate under and overspending to the participant;

7. Mechanisms in place for managing conflicts of interest;
8. Way in which a participant can provide Feedback or make a complaint;
9. Process for ending the agreement; and
10. Privacy rights and obligations.

Service Agreements can be executed in a number of ways. Regardless of how a Service Agreement is executed all parties must be in agreement to execute the Service Agreement in this manner. Examples of execution include, but not limited to:

- In writing / paper document;
- By electronic means (particularly useful for vision impaired participants); and
- Verbally between the participant and/or legal decision maker and the RPMP (not the preferred method, but maybe the best option for some participants).

Once a Service Agreement is executed, both parties must receive easy and timely access to the mutually agreed terms (i.e. be given a copy).

Whilst a Service Agreement will formalise the agreed service and support expectations it is still subject to existing NDIS and NDIA guidelines and policies.

Service Agreements cannot be used to create arrangements between the participant and provider that contradict the NDIS Act, NDIA guidelines and policies and NDIS Commission Code of Conduct and Practice Standards.

7.4.2. Capacity Building with Service Agreements

It is encouraged that Support Coordinators use this as a coaching and capacity building opportunity as they assist with the design and service agreement negotiations with other support providers.

Support Coordinators may also need to support a participant to negotiate service agreements with other providers, recognising they cannot act on the participant's behalf and sign.

Whilst a Service Agreement will outline the agreed service and support expectations, as well as the roles and responsibilities for the participant and provider in executing the arrangement, a Service Agreement is still subject to existing NDIS and NDIA guidelines and policies.

Service Agreements must be consistent with the NDIS' pricing arrangements for Agency, and Plan Managed participants, and other guidelines that are in place.

7.5. Understanding Service Delivery Methods

A Support Coordinator must deliver more than just being interested in a participant's physical wellbeing and NDIS plan spend.

A Support Coordinator must understand consider and support the participant to engage a more holistic and inclusive service offering.

This will support a participants emotional, mental and financial wellbeing to build a good life. By getting to know the participant, a Support Coordinator will support the participant to find more tailored supports in a way that most benefits the participant as an individual.

A participant will have a set budget allocated in their plan for delivery of Support Coordination services. In a participant's plan, there may be one budget for Support Coordination, or the plan may have Support Coordination stated for delivery at a specific support level.

During service initiation a Support Coordinator should discuss and agree with a participant how their plan can work to achieve their goals and also how the participant would like to use their Support Coordination budget.

This is an important step in building the capacity of participants to participate in making decisions to manage their plan.

The Support Coordinator role can vary during the plan implementation phase, and it is useful to explain this process to participants to assist with balancing expectations.

A Support Coordinator will assist the participant to build capacity and achieve their plan goals through maximising the value of their plan funding.

Participants must be supported to get the best value from their Support Coordination funding, and Support Coordinators should support participants to clearly understand what activities are billable (such as travel).

It may also be useful to discuss different delivery methods, including face to face, phone calls, and other technology solutions in order to best meet the participant's needs and achieve outcomes as outlined in the Request For Service Document (RFS).

This will assist in managing participant expectations as well as the budget allocation in the plan.

It is important for Support Coordinators to discuss the types of

things that would require contact between themselves and the participant and assist the participant to identify the most appropriate service or person for other supports.

7.6. Secure storage of participants' plans and sensitive information

Support Coordination providers have access to sensitive information about participants, which may include the Request for Service document.

This information is provided so Support Coordinators can effectively complete the tasks and duties associated with their role.

Where this information is provided by the NDIA, and with informed consent of the participant, it has been provided for the express purpose of enabling plan implementation.

Providers are not authorised to use or disclose the information received from the NDIA for any other purpose than what it was intended for.

The protection of information held and disclosed by the NDIA is covered in the NDIS Act. The Support Coordinator must have in

place mechanisms to securely store and maintain participant's information to prevent any unauthorised access; this includes both physical and electronic means of securing access to the information.

Agencies and organisations regulated under the Australian Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) are required to notify affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) when a data breach is likely to result in serious harm to individuals whose personal information is involved in the breach.

The Notifiable Data Breaches scheme applies from 22 February 2018 to all agencies and organisations with existing personal information security obligations under the Privacy Act.

Further guidance on the Notifiable Data Breach scheme is available from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

7.7. Participants Changing Support Coordinators

As with the provision of any funded support, participants can exercise choice and control over their supports and services.

This means a participant can choose to change Support Coordination providers at any time.

If a participant wishes to change support providers, it is recommended they discuss this decision with their provider in order to see if the service can be improved or negotiated to better meet their needs.

If a participant continues with the decision to change providers, they need to consider their rights and responsibilities as set out in the Service Agreement, including notice periods.

It should be noted that any notice period set out in a Service Agreement does not overrule the cancellation rules as set out in the NDIS Price Guide which can be accessed here: [NDIS Price Guide](#)

The Support Coordinator is to discuss and agree with the participant what services will be undertaken to facilitate the change of provider.

These may include:

- A Closure of Services Report;
- Contact potential Support Coordination providers and organise the agreement for this service;
- Arrange for the participant to discuss their plan with the new

provider before the service agreement has started;

- Send a final report of their service to the NDIA, including confirmation that the participant or provider has terminated the service agreement and the date this is effective from;
- Support a “warm” handover with old and new Support Coordinators if the participant agrees;
- For Agency managed participants, the closing Support Coordinator must end the service booking on the portal in a timely manner and provide the participant with remaining funds available; and
- When a participant requests, a copy of past case notes and relevant files are forwarded to the new Support Coordinator.



8. Service Functions and Support Delivery

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.1 Self Direction

3.2 Independence

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.4 Build Capacity

3.5 Best Interest

3.6 Dignity

3.7 Accountability

3.8 Values and Beliefs

3.9 Continuous Improvement

3.10 Position of Power

Support Coordination functions

Support Coordination is available at three different levels as described above, based on the specific functions delivered and the skills required.

Some functions are identical across the three levels.

These functions of Support Coordinators will not always be sequential and will be flexible based on the participant's individual circumstances and choices.

The functions listed in Table 2 below represent the minimum level of competency that a Support Coordination provider is required to be able to deliver at each of the three levels of Support Coordination.

The included functions in Table 2 below do not serve as a mandatory minimum delivery schedule as individual service delivery will be dependent on each participant's requirements, funding and preferences exercising their choice and control.

Participants will discuss their service and their available funding to determine what functions they would like to engage their Support Coordinator for.

Table 2: Functions of Support Coordination

Support Coordination Functions	Level 1 Support Connection	Level 2 Coordination of Supports	Level 3 Specialist Support Coordination
8.1 Understand the Plan	✓	✓	✓
8.2 Connect with Supports and Services	✓	✓	✓
8.3 Design Support Approaches	-	✓	✓
8.4 Establish Supports	✓	✓	✓
8.5 Coach, Refine and Reflect	✓	✓	✓
8.6 Targeted Support Coordination	-	✓	✓
8.7 Crisis: Planning, Prevention, Mitigation and Action	-	✓	✓
8.8 Address Complex Barriers	-	-	✓
8.9 Design Complex Service Plan	-	-	✓
8.10 Build Capacity and Resilience	-	✓	✓
8.11 Reporting to the NDIA	✓	✓	✓
	Base Intensity	Moderate Intensity	High Intensity

8.1. Understand the Plan

The first function for a Support Coordinator will be to support the participant to understand their NDIS plan.

Receiving access to the participant's plan will allow the Support Coordinator to understand their circumstances in order to assist in designing a range of supports that will meet their goals and aspirations.

The Support Coordinator will guide the participant through the approval of their plan supporting them in understanding how the plan will assist them in achieving their goals. Where required, the Support Coordinator can work with the participant to clarify and better understand their goals to support plan implementation.

It is important to ensure participants understand the different budget categories in their plans and understand the opportunities, processes, flexibility as well as limitations of each category.

Participants should also be supported to understand the financial details of their plan including Plan Management options, quote requirements,

service agreements, billable hours, managing service bookings and cancellations.

8.1.1. Minimum tasks for Understanding the Plan

Support the participant to:

1. Understand their plan;
2. Exercise choice and control;
3. Determine how the supports in the plan will best contribute to the participant achieving their goals;
4. Identify any potential barriers to achieving goals and support the participant to develop a plan to overcome these; and
5. Identify the impacts of any barriers to accessing supports and assist the participant to overcome these.

8.2. Connect with Support and Services

The Support Coordinator is required to have extensive knowledge of other services that are available for participants in their community including those designed for them and for their families and other informal supports.

This includes services available in the local community, those funded by state and territory governments or the Commonwealth Government, non-government organisations, and philanthropic and other organisations.

This will assist participants to engage with their community and maximise their access to the broader range of services available.

The NDIA expects Support Coordinators will first strongly emphasize and explore the role of informal, community and the broader systems of support with the participant before connecting to funded supports.

8.2.1. Minimum tasks for Connecting with Supports and Services

Support the participant to:

1. Build access to and become included as a part of their community;
2. Identify connections to the broader systems of support, including other government and community services;
3. Identify connections to existing community supports and service, including advocacy services where required;

4. Explore the range of services available;
5. Connect with services available to them external to the NDIS; and
6. Engage with funded supports and their local community to live a good life.

8.3. Design Support Approaches

The Support Coordinator will assist a participant to creatively design their supports, with an emphasis on the broader systems of supports to work towards the goals identified in their plan.

To assist participants in working towards their goals, there may need to be a diverse range of services required.

A Support Coordinator will collaborate with the participant to design a detailed program to link the participant's goals to a diverse range of supports and services that most appropriately support the participant to implement their plan.

Support Design involves assisting the participant to; express support preferences; identify, access and negotiate with providers on price and service levels; creatively design supports with an emphasis on

community and broader systems of support; and proactively assess whether supports are achieving participant outcomes and continually identify opportunities for improvement.

8.3.1. Minimum tasks for Support Design

Support the participant to:

1. Understand how to become included as a part of their community;
2. Identify their support preferences based on their goals that underpin how they wish to live a good life;
3. Design how their holistic support needs will work most appropriately to reflect the participants goals, how they want to live their life and use their NDIS plan;
4. Identify providers and supports that can meet a participant's needs and support the participant to negotiate on service levels and price in order to finalise a service agreement;
5. Proactively assess whether current supports will achieve the participant's goals and how they want to live their life; and
6. Navigate working with multiple providers, the participant's community and informal supports.

8.4. Establish Supports

Support Coordinators will support participants to increase the skills required for connecting with providers and implementing and managing their plan.

While this may include assisting with establishing service agreements, it is important these tasks are led where possible by the participant and their family/formal decision makers.

Support Coordinators will assist participants to develop a plan when supports are not delivered as expected, or there is an unexpected interruption to supports.

This includes managing discontinuation of services and determining alternatives or replacement providers.

Support Coordinators will also discuss how to manage situations where supports are not provided satisfactorily and to establish mechanisms available for changing providers.

8.4.1. Minimum tasks for Establishing Supports

Support the participant to:

1. Understand the plan management types in their plan;

2. Identify providers for these services and explain whether the participant's providers need to be registered or not. Discuss the quality and safeguards considerations that apply particularly for non-registered providers of support ensuring professional qualifications and industry registrations are in place where required;
3. Ensure their provider is not the recipient of a current and active Banning Order from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, which would exclude them from providing the relevant disability support and service to the participant;
4. Identify the specialist assessments required;
5. Connect with and review services required for successful implementation and delivery of the plan;
6. Navigate and connect with other government services and interfaces;
7. Maximise the benefits they receive from their supports;
8. Develop service agreements with providers;
9. Claim or invoice for supports regularly so as to effectively track and manage plan spend and avoid over/underspending;
10. Understand the NDIA Price Guide, where applicable;
11. Exercise choice and control and assist them to clarify their preferences;
12. Select a provider; and
13. Understand potential barriers and identify strategies to overcome them.

8.5. Coach, Refine and Reflect

The Support Coordinator is required to monitor the implementation of the participant's plan frequently, or as negotiated with the participant and or the legal decision maker, to ensure optimal plan utilisation is reached to achieve the participant's goals.

The Support Coordinator should discuss and confirm that the participant is using their supports in line with plan spend and utilisation expectations.

Where a participant is not implementing the plan how it was expected, the Support Coordinator should discuss this with the participant and or legal decision maker and assist them to identify any barriers and establish a plan to address them.

A Support Coordinator works on behalf of and takes their direction from the participant. As such a Support Coordinator must support a participant to:

- Exercise their voice; speak up when supports aren't working or are not being delivered the way they want them;
- Try new things and be innovative;
- Take measured and appropriate risks in the provision of their supports to achieve a participant's goal; and
- Consider mainstream inclusive ways to belong in community and build friendships.

8.5.1. Minimum tasks for Coach, Refine, Reflect and Report

Support the participant to:

1. Develop skills to manage their plan;
2. Establish service agreements and service bookings;
3. Monitor the implementation of the plan;
4. Maintain connection to and delivery of services throughout the course of their plan. This includes conduct check-ins to understand how a participant is feeling about their support and how they are being delivered;

5. Maximise plan implementation where appropriate to promote plan goals being achieved;
6. Reflect where plan utilisation has not been utilised as planned;
7. Change providers or service arrangements as required;
8. Broaden their view of possible support arrangements, this may include setting up trials to give something new ago;
9. Plan ahead for their plan review; and
10. Understand NDIA processes and how to navigate the participant pathway.

8.6. Targeted Support Coordination

Support Coordinators that deliver level 2 and 3 Support Coordination may possess key skills and capabilities that can support participants with particular goals and aspirations.

Where a participant has a specific goal that closely aligns with a key domain and interface, this should be delivered in a more focused and targeted way, leveraging off the experiences and expertise of specific Support Coordinators.

If a participant has a key goal or aspiration, such as to seek housing

options, Support Coordination services could be delivered to the participant by a Support Coordinator that has particular strengths and demonstrated capabilities of helping participants explore housing options and linking in with the relevant and appropriate broader systems of support.

By leveraging off the key experiences of Support Coordinators with specialised and focused skill sets, participants will be in a better position to achieve their goals and achieve their plan outcomes in a more efficient and streamlined manner, compared to using a Support Coordinator that may not be able to navigate specific interfaces within the broader systems of support.

See appendix for further guidance for delivery of targeted Support Coordination for specific domains or interfaces.

8.6.1. Targeted Support Coordination Interfaces

Targeted Support Coordination Interfaces include but are not limited to:

- Housing;
- Health;
- Child Protection & Family Support;
- Mental Health;

- Early Childhood Development;
- School Education;
- Employment;
- Transport;
- Justice;
- Aged Care;
- Higher Education; and
- Vocational Education and Training.

8.6.2. Minimum tasks for Targeted Support Coordination

Support the participant to:

1. Understand the plan, goals, aspirations, personal context and the specialised field of expertise required for targeted aspirations;
2. Define the scope and extension of the focused/targeted services;
3. Find, connect and establish specialised services, supports or government services available to target the specific identified needs; and
4. Understand how the interactions of these specialised services affect the implementation of the plan, including how other supports might affect the implementation of specialised services.

8.7. Crisis: Planning, Prevention, Mitigation and Action

During the lifecycle of the plan, participants might experience times of crisis or a significant change in circumstances.

Where funded to do so and with the agreement of the participant, Support Coordinators, who are engaged for support during these times of crisis, will be expected to assist participants to prepare for and navigate these events including providing assistance to access appropriate crisis services.

Support Coordinators are not, however, expected to manage or resolve the crisis itself or be available outside business hours as the main point of contact in a crisis. Rather, Support Coordinators are encouraged to work with the participant to ensure a plan is in place with identified stakeholder contacts and immediate next steps in the event of a crisis.

With their understanding of the participant's circumstances and environment, the Support Coordinator should be able to reasonably identify the likelihood of known crisis triggering events and put measures in place to minimise such potential crises.

A Support Coordinator should discuss in advance with participants the possible scenarios they may face during the lifecycle of their plan.

Support Coordinators should support participants to prepare in advance for likely crises or changes in circumstances, which may include reduction in informal support capacity, participant relocating to a new area, acute hospitalisations, change in housing, and any other relevant factor that may affect a participant's life and impact on their plan.

A Support Coordinator can assist the participant in collaboration within broader systems of support, to design a plan to address a potential crisis situation through linkage to the broader systems of support, and where appropriate can include the flexible use of existing NDIS funded supports, based on NDIS plan budget rules.

In addition, based on the particular circumstances, it may be necessary to support the participant to understand how to submit a request for their plan to be reviewed early by the NDIA.

Support Coordinators are not expected to eradicate ongoing periods of crisis as these may be experienced by participants throughout their lives, however

Support Coordinators are expected to increase the participants network of supports to manage crisis periods in an effective manner with a participant centred focus.

8.7.1. Minimum tasks for Crisis: Planning, Prevention, Mitigation and Action

Support the participant to:

1. Design and develop a plan of response for any potential expected crisis or change in circumstance;
2. Design a strategy to access the broader systems of supports, including informal supports to manage and overcome the period of crises or change in circumstance;
3. Design a strategy to flexibly use existing NDIS supports, where possible, to manage and overcome the period of crisis or change in circumstance;
4. Implement the participant's crisis plan and ensure relevant linkages and connections to broader systems of support;
5. Activate a support strategy if the participant experiences an unexpected crisis or change in circumstance; and
6. At the end of a crisis or change in circumstance, assess the participant's plan to determine the need to support the

participant to understand how to submit a request for plan review.

8.8. Address Complex Barriers

A Specialist Support Coordinator helps participants with high and complex support needs or risks in their lives.

Specialist Support Coordinators will understand the participant's circumstances and any related barriers that may affect plan implementation.

The Specialist Support Coordinator should use their skills and experience to assist the participant to overcome barriers that impact on their ability to access and maintain appropriate support arrangements.

Addressing barriers requires full comprehension of a participant's context and other factors that affect them.

To address these complex and multiple barriers, it is necessary to develop a detailed strategy to address each circumstance in a supportive and inclusive way.

A Specialist Support Coordinator should collaboratively design this strategy with the participant and their informal supports.

8.8.1. Minimum tasks for Addressing complex barriers

Support the participant to:

1. Understand the multiple factors that may affect the participant and their ability to successfully address barriers affecting plan implementation;
2. Understand how these barriers are restricting implementation of their plans; and
3. Collaboratively work with the participants informal supports and any other relevant stakeholder to identify a process to address any potential barriers in an effective way.

8.9. Design Complex Service Plan

A Support Coordinator is required to identify all the stakeholders that can contribute to the successful implementation of a participant's plan.

A Specialist Support Coordinator will engage with this stakeholder group and lead the design of a collaborative response and plan in which all NDIS services can positively contribute to the participant achieving their goals.

The service plan will focus on mechanisms for communication between the stakeholders for effective cooperation and aligning efforts for the participant to meet their goals.

8.9.1. Minimum functions for Designing complex service plan

Support the participant to:

1. Undertake stakeholder mapping;
2. Engage with stakeholders actively;
3. Design mechanisms for communication, collaboration and cooperation; and
4. Undertake structured and formal contingency planning.

8.10. Build Capacity and Resilience

A Support Coordinator will work with participants towards achieving their goals and implementing the supports in their plan.

During the lifecycle of the plan, there may be instances where working towards goals is more difficult to achieve.

The role of Support Coordinators should contribute to managing and

overcoming barriers and helping participants to implement their plans or steps towards achieving their goals.

Specialist Support Coordinators are required to work with participants and their informal supports and/or formal decision makers to increase their skills in dealing with complex factors, managing their stakeholders and other government services, which will contribute to increase participant's independence.

When building and developing a participant's capacity, a Specialist Support Coordinator should ensure this is focused on being participant led and assist the participant to be implementing tasks themselves, or with limited assistance or guidance.

8.10.1. Minimum Functions for Building Capacity and Resilience

Support the participant to:

1. Achieve reasonable effective implementation of the plan given any potential barriers or crisis that may arise;
2. Increase their capacity; and
3. Increase the capacity of their informal supports.

8.11. Reporting to the NDIA

At the request of the NDIA and with the explicit permission from the participant, and where funded to do so, a Support Coordinator may be required to submit reports to the NDIA to inform and update the agency about the provision of their services to participants.

8.11.1. Initial Report

Where requested by the Agency, this report details the initial acceptance of Support Coordination service and the first steps taken to activate the plan.

It is usually required eight weeks after accepting the request for service and signing the service agreement.

8.11.2. Mid-Plan Report

Where requested by the Agency, this report will outline the progress made by the participant and Support Coordinator in activating and implementing the plan over a sustained period.

The report will outline the steps the Support Coordinator has undertaken with the participant to ensure successful plan implementation; and the ongoing steps being undertaken by the participant and Support

Coordinator during the plan's lifecycle.

8.11.3. Plan Review and Evaluation Report

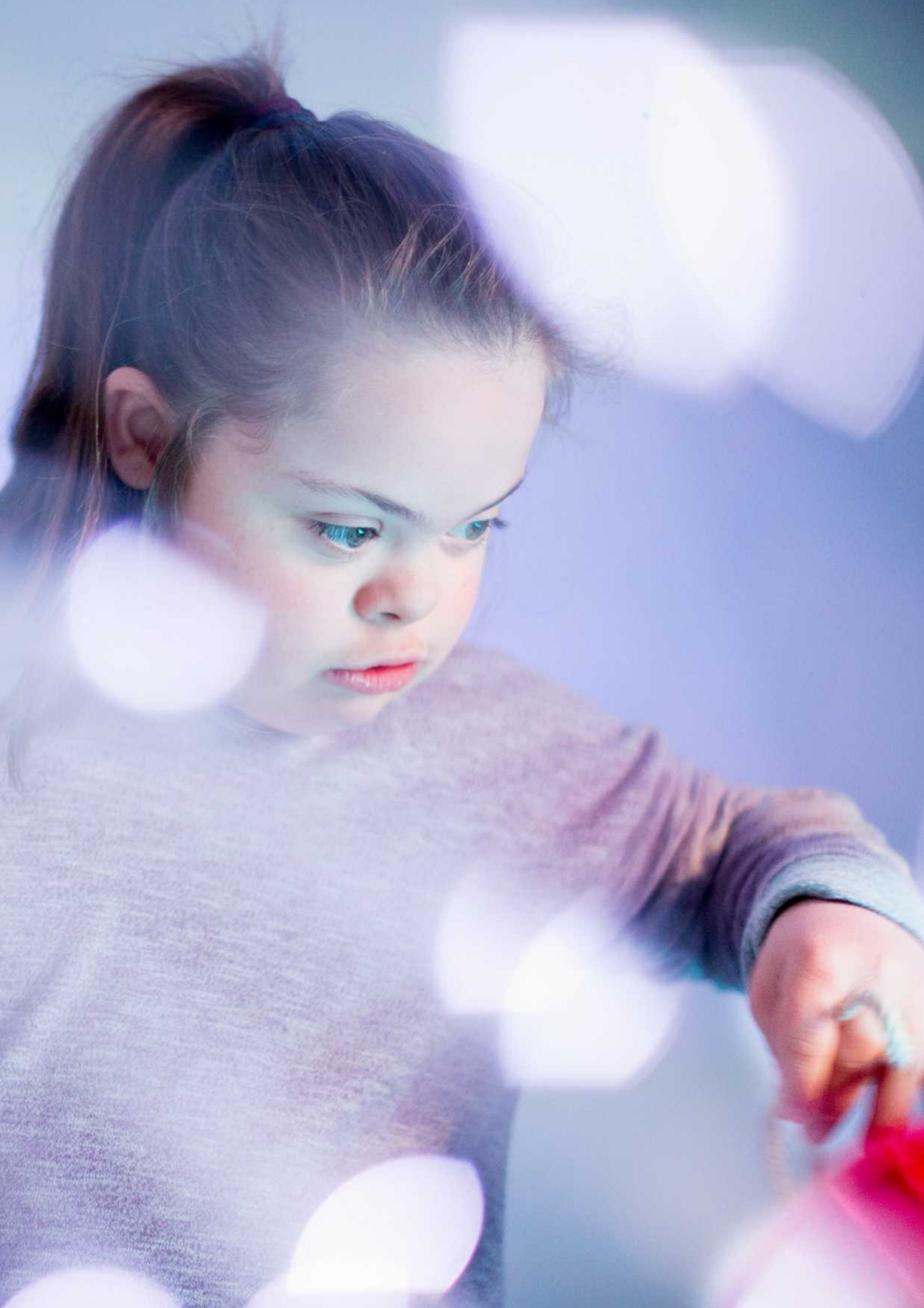
This report provides an evaluation of the implementation of the participant's plan. The report will outline the steps the Support Coordinator has undertaken with the participant to ensure successful plan implementation, including next steps and recommendations for the next plan.

It is usually required eight weeks before the Plan Review Date.

8.11.4. Key Indicators to Address when Reporting to the NDIA

1. Progress in building the capacity of participant and informal supports;
2. Progress in linking to mainstream and broader systems of support;
3. Progress in strengthening participant's community and economic participation;
4. Funded supports utilisation, and/or replacement with informal, mainstream or community supports;
5. Reports from therapists, providers or relevant funded services;
6. Any barriers, risks or issues with implementing the plan and strategies identified and implemented to address these;
7. Outlining the use of funded supports; and
8. Clear evidence on future support needs and recommendations.





9. Duties outside the scope of Support Coordination

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.2 Independence

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.6 Dignity

3.7 Accountability

3.9 Continuous Improvement

Support Coordinators should reflect on their practices and ensure their service offerings include only the relevant Support Coordination functions.

If it is identified that a function or task is better delivered using other supports in the participant's plan, by other government services or another specific programme, the Support Coordinator must not conduct or deliver this service or claim payments from the participants plan.

Support Coordinators are expected to assist the participant to connect with the most appropriate service.

Further, the Support Coordinator's role is designed to increase self-direction in the implementation of the participant's plan.

Support Coordinators are required to work with the participant to effectively implement their plan and assist with designing their support arrangements.

9.1. Advocacy

Support coordinators can assist participants understand how they will engage and participate in NDIA processes, however, Support Coordinators are not funded to act as an Advocate in NDIA processes as advocacy services are funded separately by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

This funding limitation applies to engaging with the NDIS planning and review process for the purpose of Advocacy.

DSS funds the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) to provide advocacy support services to assist participants when engaging in NDIA processes.

NDIS Appeals processes ensure that people with disability, and other people affected by reviewable decisions of the NDIA, have access to support when seeking review of those decisions.

NDIS Appeals provides access to a skilled Disability Advocate who acts as a support person, and also access to funding for legal services, where a case raises legal issues.

The Disability Advocacy Finder is an online tool to help find NDIS Appeals providers and disability advocacy agencies across Australia. All NDIS Appeals services are funded by DSS and provided free of charge to all people.

As above, formal Advocacy services are not funded under the NDIS. It is acceptable for a Support Coordinator or Support Coordination Organisation to also provide formal Advocacy services to the same participant that they deliver NDIS funded Support Coordination services to.

In these cases, each service, formal Advocacy and Support Coordination, must be established separately and not contingent on the delivery of the other.

Further the person or organisation must:

- Communicate clearly with all stakeholders, and at all times, as to how and in what capacity they are supporting and/or representing the participant. For example, during an AAT/NDIS Appeals process it must be made clear that the person or organisation is representing the

participant as a formal Advocate and not funded by the NDIS.

- Records when each role is being undertaken to ensure that participant's NDIS funds are not used for formal Advocacy.

9.2. Provider of Last Resort

Support Coordinators are not a 'Provider of Last Resort'. Whilst a Support Coordinator may have some role to play during crisis, see article 9.8, and establishing supports, see article 9.3 and 9.5, Support Coordinators are not responsible or required to deliver a direct service to a participant as a last resort.

9.3. Substitute Decision Making

Support Coordinators are not a substitute or legal decision makers. Support Coordinators are not able to make decisions on behalf of the participant or their legal decision maker.

Rather a Support Coordinator is able to support a participant and/or their legal decision maker to make their own informed decisions.

9.4. Alternative funded services specified in the NDIS Price Guide

There are many supports and services that a participant might purchase through their NDIS funded supports. It is necessary to consider the NDIS Price Guide and identify if there is a service that aligns with the particular request or need of the Participant.

The Support Coordination budget can only be used to deliver Support Coordination to participants and the budget's funding cannot be used to flexibly fund other supports.

9.5. Other Government Services

There may be interactions between participants and other broader systems of support.

It is important to identify clearly in each situation the different roles and responsibilities of each member of the participant's ecosystem of supports and services.

The NDIA expects that Support Coordinators will first consider the role of informal community and other government supports before the use of funded supports.

Support Coordinators need a good understanding of the community and government services in their community, as many supports are more appropriately funded by these systems.

This includes knowing what services are accessible in the local community and how these can be incorporated to enable the participant to build their capacity to achieve the goals in their plan.

Community Supports are activities and interest groups that are community based and open to all people in the community such as:

- Leisure activities, sporting clubs and groups;
- Music, cinema, theatre, dance;
- Arts and crafts;
- Religious and spiritual groups;
- Volunteering opportunities; or
- Outdoors and wildlife.

Linking to community supports is an important element of developing greater connections in the wider community for participants.

This linking can be best achieved if Support Coordinators understand the unique interests, strengths and personal history of each participant they support.

Broader systems of supports are universally available government services and supports that all Australians have a right to access.

These may include:

- Health;
- Mental Health;
- Early Childhood Development;
- Child Protection & Family Support;
- School Education;
- Employment;
- Housing;
- Transport;
- Justice;
- Aged care;
- Higher Education; and
- Vocational Education and Training.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has agreed to principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other service systems. COAG has also developed and applied the principles to the interfaces above to determine the funding responsibilities.

9.6. Case Management

NDIS funded Support Coordination is not intended to undertake the functions of formal Case

Management as delivered through broader systems of support.

Generally, case management is a process of assessment, facilitation, and evaluation for options and services to meet an individual's and family's comprehensive and holistic needs.

Case Managers work with multiple agencies and service providers across a range of systems to design and implement service models to individual and all their family members in an integrated and exhaustive manner, beyond a NDIS participant's disability needs under the NDIS Act.

In complex cases, the Case Manager may lead case conferencing bringing together all parties to support the individual and their family.

Many of the challenges families face and the supports and services they need are not disability related.

Case Management operated by the systems providing family support, including associated with issues relating to health, mental health, family conflict, family violence or other challenging circumstances families may face, remain the responsibility of the parties funding for operating these broader systems of support.



10. NDIS Registration Requirements

This section of these standards will ensure Support Coordination Providers meet the following service statement and principles:

3.3 Consumer Approach

3.4 Build Capacity

3.7 Accountability

3.10 Position of Power

10.1. Registered Providers of Support Coordination

To deliver Support Coordination services to participants who are Agency managed an organisation must be a NDIS Registered Provider.

Participants self-managing their plan or using a Registered Plan Management Provider may use non-registered providers as well as registered providers.

It is important that both registered and non-registered providers delivering services to NDIS participants are aware of any external obligations or requirements in place that are applicable to their service delivery,

including the NDIS Code of Conduct.

The role of approving an organisation to be a registered provider, maintaining and implementing quality and safeguards arrangements is the responsibility of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Table 3: Registration groups for Support Coordination

Registration Group	Levels of Support Coordination
Assist-Life Stage, Transition <i>Assistance in coordinating or managing the stages, transitions and supports</i>	Level 1: Support Connection Level 2: Coordination of Supports
Specialist Support Coordination	Level 3: Specialist Support Coordination

10.2. Provider Registration Requirements – NDIS Commission

Providers who are based in all states and territories can register with the NDIS Commission.

The registration requirements for Support Coordinators and Specialist Support Coordinators operating in all states and territories are outlined in the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission's *National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018*.

All NDIS providers registered with the NDIS Commission are required to comply with the Code of Conduct and conditions of registration, undergo an assessment against the applicable requirements of the NDIS Practice Standards and a suitability assessment of the provider and its key personnel.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018 establish the registration requirements to achieve and maintain registration, assessing the provider and its key personnel's suitability to operate in the NDIS and the quality and safety of the supports and services offered to NDIS participants.

Further information can be found on the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards website](#).

There are a number of requirements providers must meet to become registered and maintain registration with the NDIS Commission. Registered NDIS providers must:

- Comply with the conditions of registration stated on the certification of registration;
- Demonstrate compliance with the [NDIS Practice Standards](#) for the relevant registration groups (which are determined by the types of services and supports delivered), including through a quality audit;
- Comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct in their organisation and support employees to meet its requirements;
- Have an in-house complaints management and resolution system to record and manage any complaints received, and support NDIS participants or other relevant concerned parties to make a complaint;
- Have an in-house incident management system, and notify the NDIS Commission should a reportable incident occur;
- Fulfil worker screening requirements and ensure all

workers have been screened;
and

- If applicable, a Support Coordination Provider may need to meet the behaviour support requirements, including reporting the use of restrictive practices to the NDIS Commission.

Where the NDIS Commission approves registration of an NDIS Provider, the provider is subject to the NDIS Code of Conduct and ongoing conditions of registration.

This includes maintaining complaints and incident management systems and further requirements where a provider delivers behaviour support or implements the use of an authorised restrictive practice.

Table 4 below is an extract of the requirements for the registration groups associated with Support Coordination:

Table 4: Registration Module Requirements

Registration Class / Group	Bodies Corporates or Individuals and Partnerships
Assistance in coordination or managing life stages, transitions and supports <i>Level 1: Support Connection</i> <i>Level 2: Coordination of Supports</i>	Core Module (Certification)
Specialist Support Coordination <i>Level 3: Specialist Support Coordination</i>	Core Module and Specialist Support Coordination Module (Certification)

The requirements and process for registering as a provider are available on the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards website](#).

Glossary of Terms

AAT: Administrative Appeals Tribunal conducts independent merits review of administrative decisions made under Commonwealth laws.

ACCC: Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Advocate: Provides independent advocacy for the person with disability, to assist the person with disability to exercise choice and control and to have their voice heard in matters that affect them.

CALD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse.

COAG: Council of Australian Governments includes the Prime Minister, State and Territory First Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

Capacity Building: Services that help people develop the skills they need to lead happy, independent lives.

DIA: Disability Intermediaries Australia. Peak body representing Plan Managers and Support Coordinators in Australia.

Early Childhood Partner: Early Childhood Partners are appointed by the NDIA across Australia to deliver the ECEI (Early Childhood / Early Intervention) approach. Early

Childhood Partners are experienced in providing early childhood intervention.

LAC: Local Area Coordinator assists people to navigate the NDIS providing planning and coordination for people with disability to maximise the choice and control over the services they use. This includes supporting people with disability to navigate mainstream services and increase their capability to be an active part of their community.

MACNI: The Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI) is a time-limited specialist service for people 16 years and older, who have been identified as having multiple and complex needs.

NDIA: National Disability Insurance Agency. The federal agency that administers the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

NDIS: National Disability Insurance Scheme which is administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency.

NDIS Price Guide: NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits (previously the NDIS Price Guide) assist participants and disability support providers to understand the way that price controls for supports and services work in the NDIS. Price regulation is in place to ensure that participants receive value for money in the supports that they receive.

NDIS Commission: The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is an independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services. The Commission regulate NDIS providers, provide national consistency, promote safety and quality services, resolve problems and identify areas for improvement.

NDIS Plan: The NDIS plan sets out the participants goals and the supports that will help in achieving those goals. Plans are based on each participant's disability support needs. Plans are unique and individual. The plan can have as many goals as the participant wants and can be as long as the participant wants.

Participant: A person with a permanent and significant disability who has become a participant in the NDIS after the NDIA has determined they satisfy the access criteria.

PITC: Partners in The Community (PITC), include Local Area Coordination (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) services to Australians with disability.

Plan Funding: NDIS funding to provide the supports needed for the participants disability and help them work towards their goals. The funding is based on what is 'reasonable' and

'necessary' to pursue the goals, in addition to the support provided by family, friends, and other community and government services.

RPMP: Registered Plan Management Provider.

Plan-Management: Plan management is a type of disability service funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The overarching function of plan management is to assist and support NDIS participants to manage their NDIS plan funding.

Supports: Supports and services delivered for NDIS participants should help people with disability have the same things in life as other people, like somewhere to live, a job, hobbies and the company of families and friends.

Participants choose and pay for supports and services out of an individually allocated budget based on their goals.

Support Coordination: Support Coordination supports participants to understand and implement the funded supports in their plans and link to community, mainstream and other government services.

UN: United Nations



Confidence through Professional Standards

DIA promotes the highest professional standards and quality in the delivery and management of Support Coordination and Plan Management services. Our name promises the consistent delivery of quality and safeguarding focused standards which bring confidence to the sector we serve.

We believe that standards underpin effective markets. Our sector delivers critical supports and services to people with a disability whilst driving social and economic participation across Australia.

We are proud of our reputation and we guard it fiercely. People with a disability that engage and work with any of DIA's professional members can have confidence in the quality and ethics of the services they receive.

