

Guidance on **Food and Nutritional Supports**



1. Food

The NDIA generally does not fund food within a NDIS Participants plan.

This is because the NDIA views food is:

- Not generally a disability-related support
- Considered a day-to-day living cost that is not caused by your disability.

If a Participant's disability means they have trouble preparing food for themselves, eating enough, or understanding the nutrition they need. This could be because of physical, cognitive, or psychosocial disability. The NDIA may fund nutrition supports to help with this.



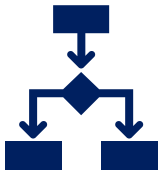
2. Nutritional Supports including Meal Preparation

Nutrition supports is a wide range of different supports and can include:

- Nutritional supplements;
- A dietitian to create a meal plan for a Participant.
- Someone to help the Participant follow a meal plan.
- Someone to help the Participant plan, shop for, and prepare meals if their disability means they have trouble doing this themselves.

In some situations, Nutritional Supports may include:

- the Participants getting meals prepared and delivered.
- Home enteral nutrition is often called HEN. Nutrition supports may include products and equipment for HEN. It could also include help to give the Participant HEN and look after any equipment for it.



3. When can a Participant Purchase Meal Preparation and clarity around Participant Plan Flexibility.

- 3.1 A Participant's NDIS Plan (both PACE and SAP) should specify if delivered meals are approved (deemed Reasonable and Necessary) for the participant.

Where a Participant's NDIS Plan does not expressly specify that delivered meals have been approved (deemed Reasonable and Necessary) the participant should be directed to seek clarification and approval in writing from the myNDIS contact listed within their plan.

This is required even if the Participant has been previously approval and it has not been transferred as a specification into their PACE plan.

See 3.2 for guidance on flexibility.

Plan Managers are advised that the NDIA will consider claims for these supports as being non-compliant without such evidence.

- 3.2 Where a Participant is funded for a support worker to assist a participant with shopping for and preparing meals is unable to undertake this support (for example the support worker is sick, and a replacement support worker is not able to be found). A participant may utilise Meal Preparation and Delivery as a replacement support.

These exceptions and flexibility are designed to only be utilised until normal support arrangements can resume (e.g. until the support worker is able to return back to their role or a replacement support worker can be arranged).

The NDIA has confirmed that such flexibility is expected to be for a short period of time. The NDIA has not defined what “a short period of time” is nor have the NDIA specified what evidence is required in these circumstances.

DIA recommends that Plan Managers and Support Coordinators make case or file notes of such circumstances to support claim audits conducted by the NDIA.

The NDIA have confirmed that evidence and a change of circumstance would need to be undertaken if the participant wished to undertake these flexible arrangements for a protracted period of time or where additional funding is sought.

As these situations can present in very individual circumstances, a ‘one size fits all’ interpretation of “a short period or protected of time” has not been defined by the NDIA.

To support DIA members, it is DIA’s view that “a short period of time” should be less than a week (7 days). Where participants are seeking to go beyond this period of time participants should be directed to seek approval in writing from their myNDIS contact to clarify their individual circumstances.

NOTE

Disability Intermediaries Australia provides this guidance based on the most current information available within the NDIS and represents DIA’s interpretation of current legislation, rules, operational guidelines and information available from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

DIA reminds members and the wider sector that when in doubt and where individual situations require individual considerations, participants should be directed to seek approval in writing from their myNDIS contact or NDIS Planner (delegate) to clarify their individual circumstances.