



Disability Services Commission

Western Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (WA NDIS) Operational Policy

Plan Development and Plan Changes

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1. Key words

Plan, vision, goals, strategies, plan development, choice, control, supported decision-making, substitute decision-making, funding, change, review.

2. Policy statement

This operational policy outlines the principles and approach to the development, review and amendment of WA NDIS plans.

3. Principles

Planning is a dynamic process which focusses on building skills and capacity, and is responsive to changes and developments in the person's life over time.

The person with disability is central to the planning process. This process may include people who are known and trusted by the person, in accordance with the person's preferences and needs.

A person with disability has the right to be able to determine their own best interests and make decisions that will affect their lives to the full extent of their capacity. People with disability will be supported to exercise choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports.

Decisions to be made as part of the planning process may require the support of people who either assist the person to make decisions (supported decision making) or who make decisions on behalf of the person (substitute decision making). Planning will incorporate individualised strategies that encourage, support and prioritise the use of the person's natural supports and local community networks.

Planning may identify a requirement for formal supports and services; these are most

effective when they are complementary to, and strengthening of, informal natural relationships and connections in the person's life.

4. Introduction

In WA NDIS, a plan is developed by a person with disability, and this process can include their family, the Local Coordinator and anyone else in their life that they choose. Plan development provides people with disability with the opportunity to identify their goals and aspirations; and to design, choose and control the supports and services they need to achieve this.

An individual plan describes the life a person would like to lead, how they will achieve this, and who and what will help them achieve this. The plan will focus primarily on the natural supports which contribute to achieving personal goals and will include detail of chosen strategies and any funding needed to implement the strategies. It will clearly state how the person will know they have achieved the desired results. A WA NDIS plan includes:

- vision
- current situation
- long term goals and plan goals
- strategies to achieve those goals
- support section
- funding (where the need for funding is identified)
- review date (i.e. the date the review must be completed by)
- the manner in which funded supports will be managed.

For people with complex support needs, a Regional Intensive Support Coordinator may provide consultancy, advice, facilitation and support to the Local Coordinator throughout the planning process.

Individual plans developed in WA NDIS are reviewed every 12 months, or earlier if required, to determine whether the supports helped the person to achieve their plan goals. This evaluation informs the development of the next Individual Plan.

At times, a change in circumstances will require the current plan to be amended without the need for a review (see WA NDIS Operational Policy – Prioritisation of Plans).

5. Implementation

This operational policy will be implemented in WA NDIS areas.

Plan development

The planning process is based on the principles of the WA NDIS Planning Framework. People create flexible plans that explore a range of possibilities. Plans acknowledge the importance of informal, natural supports such as family, friendships and neighbours, and

local community connections. Planning focusses on strengths, rather than deficits, and is informed by the person's support needs. Some people may require little support to plan and their connection with a Local Coordinator may be minimal, while in other instances a person may want the Local Coordinator and other people more closely involved.

A person with disability is presumed to have capacity to make decisions in the planning process, unless indicated otherwise for a specific decision. Where a person needs support to make decisions, they will be assisted to do so. Where a person assists another to make decisions, they will support decisions that reflect the person's choices and preferences. Where a person makes a decision on behalf of another, they will do so with consideration of the person's best interests.

Supports and services

The support section of the plan identifies the supports and services that the person has chosen to assist them to achieve their goals, and details the roles and responsibilities of all relevant people. Supports included in the plan may be:

- informal supports (e.g. friends, family and community supports)
- mainstream supports (e.g. supports provided by general services that are not specific to disability)
- disability supports (supports specifically related to disability).

In-kind programs are existing disability-support services that WA NDIS participants may access and have recorded in a plan. However, no funding is provided to access in-kind supports: the State and/or Commonwealth government(s) instead funds these programs directly.

Funding

If funding is needed to implement a particular strategy, a funding section for the plan will be developed. The Local Coordinator must be satisfied that any funded supports are in line with reasonable and necessary principles and the relevant Support Clusters and Price Framework. The plan also documents whether funded supports will be managed by the person or a representative acting on their behalf (self-management); or by a contracted service provider (service provider–management, which includes shared management).

All plans are considered for endorsement by the Local Coordinator. Where funded supports are included, the plan will need to be approved according to the Delegation Framework for Approval of WA NDIS Plan Funding. All delegation levels require the Local Coordinator to endorse a plan. Depending on the level of funding requested, the plan may be required to then progress to the Area Manager, Regional Manager, Director NDIS Operations or Director General for final approval.

Sometimes a plan will progress so that the person with disability can commence receiving



some supports and services while other strategies in the plan continue to be negotiated or subject to review and/or appeal. Pending the outcome of these processes, a new plan may be developed that includes the additional supports and services.

Review of plans

Individual plans developed in WA NDIS are reviewed at least once every 12 months to determine whether the plan assisted the person to achieve their plan goals. The Local Coordinator undertakes the review with the person and any other people they wish to include or an otherwise identified person who may have relevant information.

A review date must be agreed to at the time the plan is endorsed. There may be some occasions where a review date is set earlier than 12 months, for example at transition times such as leaving school.

Changes to the current plan (prior to planned review)

Any proposed changes to a plan that are significant will require a review of the existing plan and development of a new plan.

The current plan can only be changed in response to these following circumstances:

1. Change in need requiring an immediate response.
2. Change in service provider, where there is no change in supports or funding required.
3. The addition of an in-kind support being received by the person with disability.
4. Due to the outcome of review and/or appeal process.

Although these circumstances in themselves will not trigger a review and subsequent development of a new plan, the underlying changed situation may suggest a review is needed if the change is likely to be significant and ongoing (see WA NDIS Operational Policy – Prioritisation of Plans).

Where short-term additional support is required to address an unforeseen change in need, a plan may be changed while a new plan (including a review) is in development.

A change from one service provider to multiple service providers for the same supports will generally trigger a review of the plan.

Review of decisions

Some decisions in WA NDIS are reviewable decisions. Reviewable decisions include plan management decisions and review dates. The person will be advised of the decision in writing; that the decision can be reviewed, and of the review process (see WA NDIS Operational Policy - Reviewing and Appealing WA NDIS Decisions).



6. Compliance

Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

7. Communication

This document will be published on the Disability Services Commission's website and intranet, and relevant employees and other stakeholders advised of its existence.

8. Evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed in 24 months or whenever required by a significant change to relevant policy, people, process, technology and/or information. Evaluation of the policy will take into account operational learning, feedback from stakeholders and relevant data.

9. Related documents

WA NDIS Planning Framework

WA NDIS Operational Policies:

- Support Need Assessment
- Review of Plans
- Funded Supports in the Plan – Reasonable and Necessary
- Reviewing and Appealing WA NDIS Decisions
- Safeguarding

Self-management of Funded Supports Policy

Individualised Funding Policy

Guardian and Administration – Principles and Procedures

WA NDIS Perth Metropolitan: Support Clusters and Price Framework

WA NDIS Lower South West: Support Clusters and Price Framework

Guardianship and Administration Act 1990