



Disability Services Commission

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

## Plan Development and Plan Changes

### 1. Keywords

Plan, vision, goals, strategies, plan development, choice, control, support, 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

The person with disability is central to the planning process. The planning process may include people who are known and trusted by the individual, in accordance with the individual's preferences. In some circumstances this will include substitute decision makers.

The planning process will provide an opportunity for all those involved to share and discuss outcomes, creative ideas, strategies and approaches for the future.

Planning will incorporate individualised strategies that encourage, support and prioritise the use of informal supports and local community connection.

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.

The planning process 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.

### 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 clarify what they define as a good life in their community and to design, choose and control the supports and services they need to achieve this.

An individual plan is a document that 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, if required, it will include details of 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 may include:

- 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)
- decision about the manner in which funded supports will be managed.

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

There may be some occasions following the plan endorsement when a change in circumstances will require the current plan to be changed without the need for a review. Refer to the WA NDIS Operational Policy – Prioritisation of Plans.

## **5. Implementation**

This operational policy will be implemented in the WA NDIS trial.

### **Plan development**

The planning process is based on the principles of the WA NDIS Planning Framework. Individuals 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. The planning process focusses on strengths, rather than deficits, and is informed by the individual's support needs. Some people may require little support in the planning process and their connection with a Local Coordinator may be minimal, while in other instances a person may want the Local Coordinator more closely involved.

All plans will, however, need to be considered and endorsed 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. The first delegation level requires 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 Director, Executive Director or Director General for final approval.

Sometimes there is a need to progress a plan so that the person with disability can commence receiving some of the supports and services in a timely manner while the other strategies continue to be developed, or negotiations (regarding approval, or funding or service model for example) continue.

### **Support section**

The support section of the plan identifies the supports and services that individual has chosen as best suited to assist them to achieve their goals. This will detail 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); and
- disability supports (supports specifically related to disability).

### **Funding section**

If funding is required to purchase supports or services in order to implement a particular strategy, a funding section for the plan will be developed. The Local Coordinator must be satisfied that any supports to be funded meet the WA NDIS funding criteria including meeting the reasonable and necessary principles and the relevant Support Clusters and Price Framework. The management of the funding under the plan (self-managed or organisation–managed, which includes shared-management) is also documented in the plan.

### **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 review is undertaken with the individual 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 be changed in response to three circumstances only:

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.



Although these three 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.

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.

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 fund these programs directly.

### **Review of decisions**

Some decisions in WA NDIS are reviewable decisions. Reviewable decisions include plan management decisions and review dates. The individual will be advised of the decision; that the decision can be reviewed, and of the review process.

## **6. Related documentation**

WA NDIS Planning Framework, October 2012

WA NDIS Operational Policy – Support Need Assessment

WA NDIS Operational Policy – Review of Plans

WA NDIS Operational Policy – Funded Supports in the Plan – Reasonable and Necessary

WA NDIS Operational Policy - Managing Funding for Supports in a Plan

WA NDIS - Operational Policy – Reviewing and Appealing WA NDIS Decisions

Individualised Funding Policy June 2015, Disability Services Commission

WA NDIS Perth Metropolitan: Support Clusters and Price Framework

WA NDIS Lower South West: Support Clusters and Price Framework

## **7. Evaluation and review date**

30 June 2017 or earlier if required.

### **For further information contact**

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