



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR ACCESSING THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**
Disability Services

Produced by MIDLAS with funding
provided by the Department of
Communities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03	ABOUT MIDLAS
04	INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE
05	NDIS THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME
06	ELIGIBILITY
07	NDIS LEGISLATION
08	EVIDENCE FOR NDIS ACCESS
13	ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE
14	EXAMPLE PATIENT IMPACT STATEMENT
15	EXAMPLE CARER'S IMPACT STATEMENT
16	EXAMPLE GP SUPPORT LETTER
19	WHO ELSE CAN HELP?
20	KNOW YOUR RIGHTS
21	FOLLOW-UP AND FEEDBACK
22	REFERENCES
23	RESOURCES
24	NDIS ACCESS CHECKLIST



ABOUT MIDLAS

Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Service (Midlas) has been funded by the Department of Communities to support General Practitioners (GPs) to become better informed on submitting National Disability Insurance Scheme applications. This is part of an overall project to highlight the systemic challenges that people with disability face.



Midlas is a not-for-profit community legal centre based in Midland and Ellenbrook that provides financial counselling, financial capability and wellbeing services, tenancy advocacy, disability advocacy, and legal services to people throughout the northeast region of Perth.

Supporting people in our community for over three decades, Midlas has a long-standing strong commitment to improving lives and building resilience.



INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been funded to support people with disability and their General Practitioners (GPs) to ensure all required evidence is provided when completing NDIS Access Request Forms (ARFs).

The aim of the resource is to support the process of completing ARFs. The resources support the numerous challenges around completing ARFs to ensure evidence of a person's disability and functional impact are clearly evidenced within the time constraints facing medical practitioners.

The resource will support understanding of information required by the NDIS and was funded by the Department of Communities. The resource was developed with reference to relevant literature including the NDIS site, informed by the extensive professional experience of Midlas' Disability Advocacy Services including Individual Advocates, the NDIS Appeals team, and feedback from medical practitioners.

The authors thank all those who contributed their time, feedback, and expertise in the development of this resource.

Note on authorship:

This Guide was created by MIDLAS with support from the Western Australian Government Department of Communities.

Suggested citation:

Resource Guide for Accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Perth: Midland Information Debt & Legal Advocacy Service (2024).



THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

The National Disability Insurance Agency (“NDIA”) is an independent statutory agency which implements the National Disability Insurance Scheme (“NDIS”) based on an insurance principle.



The NDIS takes a lifetime approach to a participant’s support needs for people with permanent and significant disability or developmental delay.

The NDIS Plans are built with the considerations on reasonable and necessary supports and choice and control for the participant. The funding decisions are based on the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (Cth) (NDIS Act) and NDIS Rules¹ and Operational Guidelines.²

Submitting a NDIS Access Request Form is the first step in applying to the NDIS, with access based on significant reduction in functional capacity, permanent disability and all treatment having been tried and found to be unsuccessful or deemed a risk. The application is based on thorough evidence from treating health practitioners.

The NDIS now supports more than half a million participants with disability throughout Australia.³

ELIGIBILITY

People are eligible for the NDIS if they:⁴

Have a permanent disability that significantly affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.

Are aged between 7-65 (can apply just before they are 65 years of age).

Children are aged 0-6 years of age with a developmental delay or disability.

Are Australian citizens, permanent residents, or have a protected special category visa.

Live in Australia

NDIS Access forms can be obtained by visiting the NDIS website to download an NDIS Access Request Form or telephoning the NDIS on 1800 800 110



NDIS LEGISLATION

The NDIS Act requires that one must have an impairment or impairments that result in substantially reduced functional capacity to undertake, or psychosocial functioning in undertaking, one or more of the following activities:⁵

- Communication
- Social interaction
- Learning
- Mobility
- Self-care; and
- Self-management

This means that the patient's disability must be permanent with significantly reduced functional capacity and all treatment has been attempted and no other available treatments are available.⁶



EVIDENCE FOR NDIS ACCESS



WHO CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT WITH EVIDENCE?

Examples of common treating health professionals include:

- General Practitioner
- Paediatrician
- Orthopaedic surgeon
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech Pathologist/Therapist
- Neurologist
- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Physiotherapist

The treating health professional who provides the evidence of a patient's disability should:⁷

- Be the most appropriate person to provide evidence of the primary disability; and
- Have treated the patient for a significant period of time (e.g. at least six months).



GPs and health professionals can provide this information by:

- Completing the 'Treating Professional' section (2) of the Access Request Form; and/or
- Attaching relevant reports, letters and/or assessments from one or more treating professionals (if this information is already adequately detailed elsewhere)⁸

The NDIS have compiled two lists of conditions which by their very nature, are considered to cause permanent impairment and disability resulting in substantially reduced functional capacity:

- NDIS list A: Conditions that are likely to meet the disability requirements.⁹
- NDIS list B: Conditions that are likely to result in a permanent impairment with substantially reduced functional capacity.¹⁰



EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

A person wishing to apply for the NDIS needs to provide evidence that they meet the NDIS eligibility requirements. The NDIA accepts evidence provided by anyone in any form.

The below information is to assist anyone completing or supporting someone completing an access request.

As part of the eligibility criteria a person must meet the disability criteria, which is they must meet all of the following:

- The person has an impairment attributable to a psychiatric condition.
- The impairment is likely to be permanent.
- The impairment results in substantially reduced functional capacity.
- The impairment affects the person's capacity for social or economic participation.
- The person is likely to require support under the NDIS for their lifetime.¹¹



What evidence does a person need to provide when they access the NDIS?

The below list is a guide for some evidence types for each criterion. This is not a complete list of options; however, a person may need to submit one or more of these documents to have enough detail to meet the criteria.

One document may also provide evidence over multiple criteria. It can be beneficial to have evidence provided by different people.

Disability/Impairment¹²

(this information is usually provided by a health professional who treats the person. This might be a psychiatrist, GP or psychologist)

- NDIS Access Request Form/NDIS Supporting Evidence Form
- Diagnosis history
- Existing mental health reports or assessments
- Recent government applications (e.g., Disability Support Pension)

Disability/Impairment is likely to be permanent¹³

(usually provided in information from a treating health professional)

- NDIS Access Request Form/NDIS Supporting Evidence Form
- Treatment history
- Treatment plan
- Supporting letter from treating health professional
- Existing mental health specific reports or assessments



Impairment results in substantially reduced functional capacity¹⁴

(usually provided by people that know that person well and/or understand their day-to-day functioning)

- NDIS Access Request Form/NDIS Supporting Evidence Form
- Participant statement/self-reporting
- Support Worker letter
- Carer statement
- Supporting letter from treating health professional
- Recent government applications (e.g., Disability Support Pension)
- Financial guardian or administration orders
- Functional capacity assessments (LSP-16, WHODAS, HoNOS)
- Occupational therapy reports

When writing support statements, a person should focus on the six NDIS Functional Domains:¹⁵

- Social interaction - ability to connect and engage with others in various social contexts. It includes building relationships, understanding social norms, and expressing emotions.
- Self-management - involves taking responsibility for one's own life and making informed decisions. It includes managing tasks, finances, and personal safety.
- Self-care - entails looking after oneself, both physically and emotionally. It includes personal hygiene, health management, and proper nutrition.
- Learning - the acquisition of knowledge and skills through education and experiences. It involves studying, problem-solving, and applying what we've learned.
- Communication - the means through which you express yourself and understand others. It includes speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Mobility - encompass the ability to move and effectively use one's body. This involves actions like walking, running, reaching, and lifting.



ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

Additional evidence such as a carer's impact or personal impact statement may be beneficial for a NDIS Access application. This facilitates the NDIS to be informed on the day-to-day daily living challenges that a person may face.

Below are examples of additional forms of evidence that can be provided in support of an NDIS Access application.

- Patient's Impact Statement including a summary of lived experience and risks to daily living.
- Carers' Impact Statement including summary of supports provided.
- GP Support Letter including in-depth information on how their disability has affected their ability to perform daily tasks in the six NDIS Functional Domains.

While there are no official guidelines or templates for impact and/or support statements, these might include information relating to:¹⁶

- your mental health condition and how it impacts your day to day functioning
- what you need support with, and what your carer does to support you
- your carer's own needs and goals, and how the caring role affects them
- whether they can keep caring for you in the same way into the future
- what other informal supports you have, such as family or friends
- any other important information for the NDIA to know when assessing which supports you might require

The following pages include examples of the above forms of evidence which can be amended to support an NDIS Access Application.



EXAMPLE PATIENT IMPACT STATEMENT

National Disability Insurance Agency
GPO Box 700
Canberra ACT 2601

Date

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Patient's Impact Statement

I have a disability of X and need support on a daily/weekly/continuous basis.

I have little support or/my currents unable to continue to provide the level of support I require.

Some of the supports required included but are not limited to: (to review the six categories of NDIS supports: mobility, communication, social interaction, self-management, learning, and self-care).

- Showering
- Washing hair
- Cooking
- Cleaning my house
- Shopping
- Going into the community

I am at risk if I do not get additional help to support me due to

Yours faithfully,

Name



EXAMPLE CARER'S IMPACT STATEMENT

National Disability Insurance Agency
GPO Box 700
Canberra ACT 2601

Date

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Carer's Impact Statement

I am X's relative/friend/partner, and I am their main support person. X is X years old and has a disability of X. I provide X amount of support to them on a daily basis. However, I am X years old, and I am unable to continue to provide the same level of care for them.

X needs considerable support with daily activities (to review the six categories of NDIS supports: mobility, communication, social interaction, self-management, learning, and self-care). Examples of support provided included but are not limited to:

- Showering – e.g., they may be required to sit on a plastic chair to shower, may need support washing their hair.
- Shopping and cooking on a daily basis. Because their condition is deteriorating, they do not have the energy to do carry out daily living tasks.
- Social and community support

X is at risk if I am not able to continue to care for them at the current level of support. They are unable to XXXX and require extensive support which I am unable to continue to provide.

Yours faithfully,

Name



EXAMPLE GP SUPPORT LETTER

National Disability Insurance Agency
GPO Box 700
Canberra, ACT 2601

Email: NAT@ndis.gov.au

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: NDIS Access Application – Supporting Evidence
Patient Details - Name, Address, and DOB
NDIS Number if applied previously

I am the GP/Consultant for Name of Patient who wishes to apply for the NDIS.
I have been supporting Name of Patient for the past X number of years.

Name of Patient was diagnosed with a disability of XX on date. They have a secondary disability of X.

Confirmation of treatment for disability: dates, time, outcome of treatment.

To include if relevant:

- Whether the Applicant complied with the treatment, and if not; why not e.g., an operation is high risk.
- Include any therapies that may prevent functional decline; and
- Is there any other relevant treatment available that will improve the patient's disability to live an "ordinary" life. Is a high level of support from other people required to support the patient.

XXX 's disability is permanent. The Impact of disability on their functional capacity and daily life is significantly reduced.

Their disability has affected their ability to perform daily tasks in the categories below:



EXAMPLE GP SUPPORT LETTER (CONT.)

Communication:

- Difficulties interpreting communication – how well a patient understands someone and how others understand them.
- Difficulties following instructions, conversations, directions; and
- Difficulties communicating needs.

Social Interaction:

- Difficulties initiating and responding to conversations.
- Social contact (e.g., isolation and withdrawal).
- Making and keeping friends.
- Friction with, or avoidance of, others in the household, leaving the house.
- Interaction affected by specific behaviours (e.g., overactive, aggressive, disruptive).
- How the person gets out and about in community (Do they get family/friend/carer support).
- Social interactions dealings with others (e.g., family, friends, groups).
- Limited social contacts and involvement unless these are organised for the person.
- Unable to attend work, education, or training on regular basis other than a short period.
- How a child plays with other children (e.g., withdrawn); and
- Behaviour - feelings and emotions in social situations.

Mobility:

- How easily patient moves around home and community, and how they get in and out of bed or a chair.
- How far can the person walk before he needs to rest/sit down.
- Lifting items.
- Using the stairs.
- Transport issues – e.g., can the person drive and how far or if can they use public transport; and
- Difficulties travelling alone.



EXAMPLE GP SUPPORT LETTER (CONT.)

Learning:

- Difficulty organising tasks, planning, remembering, learning new information and/or skills.
- Some difficulties completing education or training.
- Difficulty following complex instructions.
- Has difficulty concentrating on any task or conversation for more than 10 minutes.
- Has slowed movements or reaction time due to symptoms; and
- Understanding or remembering new things.

Self-care:

- Issues with personal care, hygiene, grooming, eating and drinking, general health. Dressing, showering, bathing, washing hair, eating, toileting, wellbeing.
- Lives independently but may sometimes neglect self-care.
- Needs some support/continual support to live independently or unable to live on their own.
- Disturbed behaviour e.g., self-harm, suicide attempts, aggressive behaviour; and
- Limited decision-making, planning, organisation skills.

Self-management (if older than 6 years):

- Difficulty in attending to responsibilities due to lack of motivation, interest, concentration, organisation, or different priorities.
- Planning, making decisions, and looking after their selves. This might include day-to-day tasks at home, problem solving, money management. Consider mental or cognitive ability to manage their life.
- Diet/nutrition, shopping/cooking, keeping safe in-home environment (food storage, use of stove etc.).
- Slight difficulties in planning and organising more complex activities.
- Difficulty coping with situations involving stress, pressure or performance demands; and
- Formal guardianship and administration orders for a patient having limited control over affairs demonstrates that there is substantially reduced capacity for self-management.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Yours faithfully,

Name _____



WHO ELSE CAN HELP?



Local Area Coordinators support people with disability to create and work towards their goals, build capacity to make their own decisions and choices and access the supports they need.

They will help people understand and provide support to access the NDIS. They may also provide information about supports available in the community if a person cannot access the NDIS.

Search for Local Area Coordinator Partner Organisations in your area:

LOCAL AREA COORDINATOR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS



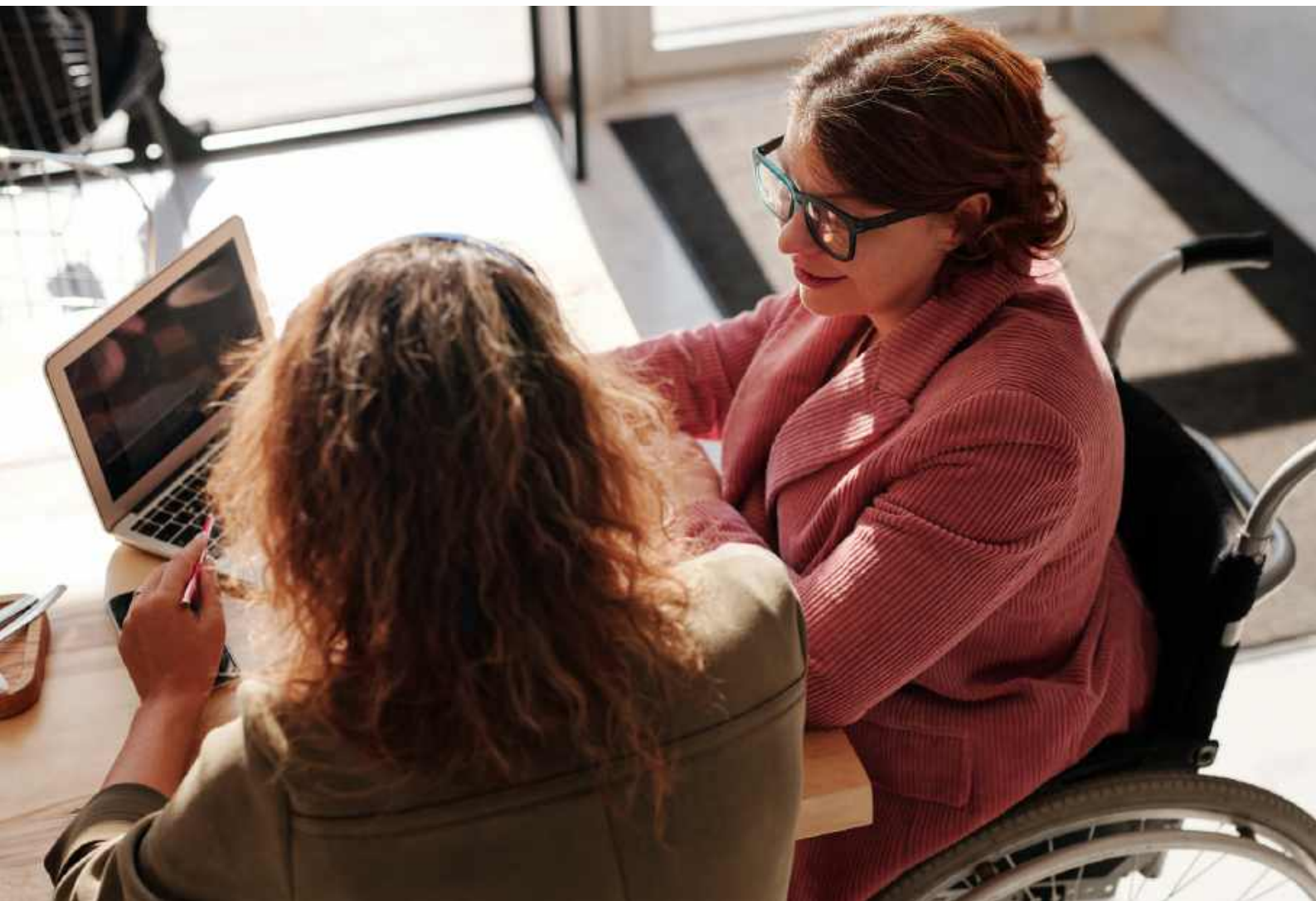
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

An advocate may support a person with a disability to access the NDIS by providing assistance with information and further advice on accessing the NDIS.

MIDLAS Disability Advocacy Services

Phone: 08 9250 2123

Email: disabilityadmin@midlas.org.au



FOLLOW UP AND FEEDBACK



The NDIS will notify applicants of their decision within 21 days.
If a person is eligible, they will be contacted for a Planning meeting.

If a person is not eligible, they will be connected to other services such as a NDIS Local Area Coordinator who is part of an NDIS partner organisation.

Contact the NDIS

Phone: 1800 800 110

Email: enquiries@ndis.gov.au and feedback@ndis.gov.au

You can fill in their [online form](#) to make a complaint, share a compliment or provide feedback.

Visit: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/contact>

REFERENCES

1. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Legislation, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/governance/legislation>
2. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Operational Guidelines, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/governance/legislation>
3. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, NDIS Supporting more than 600,000 Australians and their families, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/9493-media-release-agency-ndis-supporting-more-600000-australians-and-their-families#:~:text=More%20than%20610%2C000%20Australians%20are,networks%20since%20the%20Scheme's%20inception>
4. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Am I Eligible, <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/home/becoming-participant/applying-ndis>
5. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Eligibility and medical conditions FAQs, [https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply/information-gps-and-health-professionals/eligibility-and-medical-conditions-faq#:~:text=To%20be%20eligible%20for%20NDIS,\)%2C%20resulting%20in%20significant%20disability](https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply/information-gps-and-health-professionals/eligibility-and-medical-conditions-faq#:~:text=To%20be%20eligible%20for%20NDIS,)%2C%20resulting%20in%20significant%20disability)
6. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Do you meet eligibility requirements? <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/home/becoming-participant/applying-ndis/do-you-meet-disability-requirements>
7. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Providing Evidence of your disability, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply/information-support-your-request/providing-evidence-your-disability#:~:text=The%20treating%20health%20professional%20who,e.g.%20at%20least%20six%20months>
8. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Providing Evidence of your disability <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply/information-support-your-request/providing-evidence-your-disability#:~:text=The%20treating%20health%20professional%20who,e.g.%20at%20least%20six%20months>
9. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, List A: Conditions that are likely to meet the disability requirements, <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/home/becoming-participant/applying-ndis/list-conditions-are-likely-meet-disability-requirements#14>
10. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, List B: Conditions that are likely to result in a permanent impairment, <https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/home/becoming-participant/applying-ndis/list-b-conditions-are-likely-result-permanent-impairment>
11. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Mental Health Access Snapshot Series, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/1473/download?attachment>
12. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Mental Health Access Snapshot Series, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/1473/download?attachment>
13. © National Disability Insurance Scheme Agency 2013, Mental Health Access Snapshot Series, <https://www.ndis.gov.au/media/1473/download?attachment>
14. © OSAN Ability Assist 2023, The Six Domains of NDIS Functional Capacity: What Are They?, <https://www.osanability.com.au/ndis/the-six-domains-of-ndis-functional-capacity-what-are-they/>
15. © OSAN Ability Assist 2023, Providing Support Evidence, <https://reimagine.today/apply-for-ndis-support/providing-supporting-evidence/>
16. Mental Health Coordinating Council, Resources for Professionals, <https://reimagine.today/resources/>



RESOURCES

1. [Psychosocial disability page](#) - Mental health and the NDIS on NDIS website
2. [Applying for the NDIS](#) - NDIS Guideline to applying for the NDIS
3. [Mental Health Access Snapshot Series](#) - NDIS - Psychosocial Snapshot Series
4. [Evidence of Disability](#) - NDIS - Providing evidence of your disability
5. [NDIS Operational Guidelines 2](#) - NDIS - Operational Guidelines. Of particular relevance to this stage of the process, are guidelines related to: Gateway, Access, Planning and Assessment
6. [Reimagine Today Website](#) - A free online resource to help people living with a mental health condition navigate the NDIS
7. [Accessing the NDIS](#) - Assisting people with psychosocial disability to access the NDIS: a guide for Commonwealth-funded community mental health providers
8. [Western Australia Partners in the Community](#) - Guide to Local Area Coordinators delivering the NDIS in communities
9. [NDIS Access Request Form](#) - the form you complete to apply for the NDIS when you can not be supported by an NDIS partner to apply
10. [NDIS Access GP checklist](#) – for patients to use with their GPs when preparing an application







NDIS ACCESS

Checklist for appointment with my GP

Take this checklist to your GP or other health professional (psychiatrist or psychologist) to help complete your NDIS access forms. You may want to ☐ the boxes as you go through each step.

- ☐ Before starting these tasks, you may also want to read the brochure '6 Steps to the NDIS' to help you better understand the NDIS.

I want to access the NDIS to get support for my psychosocial disability		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have called the NDIS on 1800 800 110 and requested an Access Request Form .	
I have my NDIS Form and I need to get my doctor or health professional to help complete my NDIS paperwork		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have my NDIS Form .	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have made an appointment with my GP or health professional and let them know that I have my NDIS Access Request Form or Supporting Evidence Form. I have requested a long appointment.	
Getting ready for my appointment		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have all the information together about myself, about my disability and how it impacts upon my day-to-day life, to take to my appointment.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have gone through each of the six areas of functional impact and written down detailed information about which ones impact upon me, by how much and how often. I have included details about what it means to me and how it affects me. Areas of need are: mobility and motor skills, communication, social interaction, learning, self-care and self-management .	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have other assessments or reports from other health professionals and have contacted them and asked for copies to be sent to my GP.	



reimagine
MENTAL HEALTH, MY RECOVERY AND THE NDIS

Co-designed by people living with mental health concerns and their supporters in Ceduna, SA, along with MHCSA and the <http://reimagine.today/> team. With thanks to Brisbane North PHN for sharing their work. Produced by MHCC, with funding from the NDIA.














Going to your appointment		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bring any letters from other doctors or previous assessments from therapists and health professionals	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a support person with you. Decide if you want someone to go with you. You can take a family member, friend or a support person from a service you already use with you.	
At your appointment – talking with your doctor		
<input type="checkbox"/>	You need to ask your doctor to write down your Primary Disability . That's the disability or impairment that impacts on you the most. The GP then needs to write down information in one or more of the six areas of functional impact that matches your Primary Disability.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	It is important that the language you GP uses talks about how this Primary Disability impacts upon you, the type of support you need, how often and how much on a daily, weekly or occasional basis.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	It is also really important that your doctor is clear that your disability is permanent and that it is likely you will need support for your lifetime.	
Who can support me if I need more help?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Area Coordinators NDIA in your area can help you get your evidence together for the NDIA. For more info visit: www.ndis.gov.au/contact/locations	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The NDIA can also provide you with extra help. Call them on 1800 800 110	



Table to take to your GP Visit – write down how your Primary Disability impacts on your life and your support needs.







	Functional Area	
AREA OF NEED	HOW DOES MY DISABILITY IMPACT ON MY LIFE?	WHAT ARE MY SUPPORT NEEDS?
Mobility and motor skills 		
Communication 		
Social Interaction 		
Learning 		
Self-care 		
Self-management 		



reimagine
 MENTAL HEALTH, MY RECOVERY AND THE NDIA

Co-designed by people living with mental health concerns and their supporters in Ceduna, SA, along with MHCSA and the <http://reimagine.today/> team. With thanks to Brisbane North PHN for sharing their work. Produced by MHCC, with funding from the NDIA.

You might like to refer to the Reimagine Today Workbook or the brochure '6 Steps to the NDIS'.

	Support Needs	
AREA OF NEED	HOW MUCH SUPPORT DO I NEED?	HOW OFTEN DO I NEED SUPPORT?
Mobility and motor skills 		
Communication 		
Social Interaction 		
Learning 		
Self-care 		
Self-management 		



reimagine
 MENTAL HEALTH, MY RECOVERY AND THE NDIS

Co-designed by people living with mental health concerns and their supporters in Ceduna, SA, along with MHCSA and the <http://reimagine.today/> team. With thanks to Brisbane North PHN for sharing their work. Produced by MHCC, with funding from the NDIA.



MIDLAS ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS IN WHICH WE LIVE AND WORK, THE WHADJUK NYOONGAR PEOPLE. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS, PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING, ACKNOWLEDGING THE PAST AND WALKING HAND IN HAND FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

MIDLAS RECOGNISES, RESPECTS AND WELCOMES DIVERSITY IN ALL ITS FORMS, IN THE BELIEF THAT DIVERSITY IS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND OPPORTUNITY.

