

11. Planning Meeting



Now you have everything prepared, you've gathered evidence, considered which supports and services to request and linked to your NDIS sample goals, it's now time for the planning meeting with your NDIS Planner.

Once you have contacted the NDIA to request a plan, and then filled in and submitted the access request form posted to you, the NDIA will contact you and, if you have been approved for eligibility, will schedule a date and time for the NDIS planning meeting.

Make sure you will have enough time to prepare and collect all evidence before the meeting. If you don't feel you've been given enough time to prepare, you can contact NDIS and request an extension. It is advisable to do this as soon as possible.

It's also a good idea to ask the NDIS about the professional background of your allocated NDIS Planner before the meeting. If you feel the background, skills and experience of your allocated planner does not suit your support needs, you can request a different NDIS Planner to conduct the meeting. You cannot request a specific planner, but you can request for your existing planner to be changed.

You will also be given the option of having a support person attend the NDIS planning meeting with you. You can choose which support person you would like to bring. This can be a family member, personal friend, professional from a current service or organisation you are accessing, or an advocate. This is optional and you can also attend the meeting alone.

It's a good idea to have all of your documented evidence (such as professional assessments, reports, etc.) neatly pre-prepared in a plastic pocket folder to give to your planner. These can be referred to throughout the meeting, and for the planner to use in the planning approval stage.

Remember, you want to make it as easy and straightforward as possible for the planner to approve the supports your child is needing, and relevant evidence is the best way to achieve this.

The NDIS planning meeting will typically run for 1.5 to 2 hours. It's a good idea to think of your NDIS planning meeting as a bit like a business meeting. The idea of the meeting is that you are negotiating funding for supports.

Based on the information and evidence presented by you, the NDIS Planner will decide whether these supports are "reasonable and necessary" and ultimately, whether they will be funded by the NDIS.

Watch the Legislation and Language video to familiarise yourself with the kind of language that is useful when negotiating with NDIS Planners. Each NDIS planning meeting will vary depending on the style and approach of the NDIS Planner, but here are some general areas that most NDIS planning meetings will cover:

Level of functioning and support needs

The NDIS Planner will ask a series of detailed questions to gauge your level of functioning and support needs in relation to different life domains such as daily living, health and wellbeing, and learning. The NDIS Planner will also want a clear idea about existing informal, community and formal supports and services assisting your support needs, and current gaps in support and service provision (if there are any). It's a good idea to have already considered and taken notes on your level of functioning and support needs in different domains, and to provide evidence to support this information wherever possible.

In the DCA NDIS Planning Workbook, you can find prompting questions for each of these domains, which are a good way to practice and prepare for the planning meeting.

Interests, goals and hobbies

The NDIS Planner will also likely ask what activities you enjoy, and what is important for you in your daily life. It's important to have considered these questions before the planning meeting, particularly if there is something you enjoy but have difficulty accessing due to a lack of supports in relation to your disability.

For example, you might say that you love participating in basketball games with your local team, however you are experiencing limited communication access with the coach and teammates due to a lack of Auslan interpreters being provided, or social exclusion due to a lack of deaf awareness amongst the team. This is also a good time to present the pre-prepared NDIS client goals you have come up with.

Requested supports

It's important to note that your NDIS Planner will not necessarily ask you directly what supports you feel you need. They will often work this out indirectly based on your level of functioning, support needs, and the NDIS sample goals. This is why it is important to have prepared information on the supports you want to request in advance, and to have already considered how these supports can be linked to your level of functioning, support needs, and NDIS goals.

It is still a good idea to have a list of supports you would like to specifically ask for at the planning meeting. This way, if something is not covered by the planner, you can suggest it yourself and explain why this support is reasonable and necessary.

Watch the 'What is Covered' video for ideas on the types of supports you may want to request in your NDIS Planning meeting.

Your DCA NDIS Planning Workbook will also assist you in coming up with ideas for the types of supports that could be requested, based on different areas and domains of your life.

Another important point to be aware of in terms of requested supports, is that NDIA planners will often want to know the specific details of the requested support for example, exactly how many hours and days a year a specific support will be needed and for exactly what purpose. They often request quotes for services such as interpreting, so it is good to be prepared with quotes wherever possible.

For instance, if you are wanting funding for an Auslan interpreter to be present at certain community events or lessons, you will often need to explain exactly which events or lessons these will be, how many hours of interpreting will be needed each time, and how many times per year, and to have a quote of amount per hour from an interpreting provider prepared and ready to show the planner.

If you are asked for a quote which you have not prepared, you can ask your planner if you can provide this after the meeting, as they will usually allow some extra time for you to get any extra information to them before your NDIS Plan is approved.

After the NDIS planning meeting, there is currently no exact time frame given for how long it will take before your plan is approved.

It's a good idea to ask for your NDIS Planner's contact details, and if you are concerned about how long it is taking for the plan to be finalised, to follow up with your planner about this.

It is also always a good idea to ask for your NDIS Planner's details for future contact, as this is often much easier and more straight forward than going through the NDIS general helpline.