



# **COORDINATION OF SUPPORTS**

## **INFORMATION FOR PROVIDERS**

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# Introduction

Plan implementation involves a series of activities to connect with, and maintain, the supports outlined within the participant plan’s Statement of Supports. These activities may include linking to supports and ensuring service delivery is of satisfactory quality and is helping the participant meet their goals. Plan implementation may be performed independently by the participant, or with assistance.

Support to implement the plan (known as support coordination) is the provision of assistance in one or more of the components of plan implementation. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) defines Support Coordination as primarily being;

*‘Assistance to strengthen participants abilities to coordinate and implement supports and participate more fully in the community. It can include initial assistance with linking participants with the right providers to meet their needs, assistance to source providers, coordinating a range of supports both funded and mainstream and building on informal supports, resolving points of crisis, parenting training and developing participant resilience in their own network and community.’*

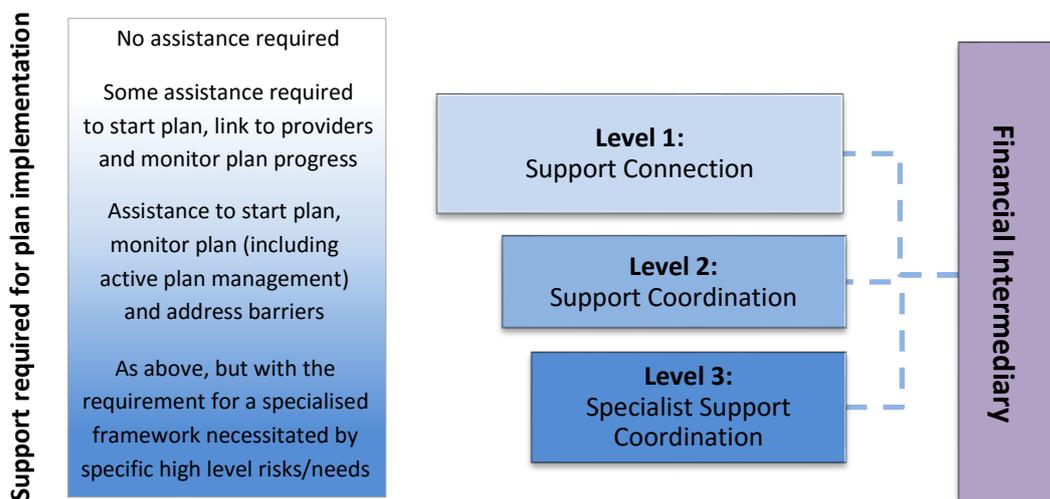
## Role of a funded coordinator of supports

In relation to the NDIA’s definition of Support Coordination, the primary role of a Support Coordinator is to:

- Support implementation of all supports in the plan, including informal, mainstream and community, as well as funded supports
- Strengthen and enhance the participant’s abilities to coordinate supports and participate in the community
- Ensure mainstream services meet their obligations (i.e. housing, education, justice, health)
- Build the capacity of the participant to achieve greater independence to self-direct services and supports in the longer term
- Provide the NDIA with reports on outcomes and success indicators within the agreed reporting frequency

## Three levels of coordination

A broad outline of a tiered approach for funded coordination of supports is illustrated in the following diagram:



## Level 1: Support Connection

*Time limited assistance to strengthen participant's ability to connect with informal, mainstream and funded supports, and to increase capacity to maintain support relationships, resolve service delivery issues, and participate independently in NDIA processes.*

Support Connection is a non-ongoing service focussed on enabling the participant to connect to supports in the plan. The word "connection" is appropriate for a support that assists participants to establish arrangements with funded providers, and to build a network of informal and mainstream supports.

Support Connection's primary focus is helping the participant to start their plan implementation by assisting them to:

- Identify options (funded, mainstream and in informal networks)
- Investigate options
- Understand funding flexibility
- Reach decisions regarding services
- Reach agreement with providers
- Commence service and ensure new support arrangements thrive

**Through the provision of this support it is expected that participants will gain skills to participate in NDIA processes, and gain independence in creating and maintaining supports.**

In the first participant plan, Support Connection may be made available for the full duration of the plan (up to 12 months) to support the participant to learn how to:

- Activate their plan (i.e. link to service providers)
- Monitor quality and spend of services
- Manage flexibility within the plan
- Prepare for review

There may also be some need to address barriers to participation, and resolve service delivery issues.

During subsequent (review) plans, Support Linkages should only be provided for a specific purpose, such as to support the participant to change service provider, or build capacity to achieve specific community participation goals, as opposed to the first year where it may be provided to orient the participant to implement their plan more generically.

## Level 2: Support Coordination

*Assistance to strengthen participant's abilities to connect to and coordinate informal, mainstream and funded supports in a complex service delivery environment. This includes resolving points of crisis, developing capacity and resilience in a participant's network and coordinating supports from a range of sources.*

Support Coordination has the features of Support Connection, with an increased focus on:

- Addressing barriers to participation, and
- Resolving service delivery issues.

The word “coordination” indicates a more intensive engagement than “connection”. It avoids using either “Complex” or “Higher Intensity”, both of which may be viewed by participants as not being strengths based.

In addition to the features of Support Connection, Support Coordination would focus on:

- Regular active management and ongoing adjustment of supports due to participant’s changing needs.
- Management of multiple/complex supports from a range of providers which intersect with mainstream services.
- Crisis resolution and developing resilience.
- Regular monitoring and outcome reporting for the participant/NDIA

In the first participant plan, Support Coordination may be made available to enable the participant to activate their plan and learn about other aspects of the plan cycle, including preparing for review.

**There is an expectation that, where possible, Support Coordination will be replaced in subsequent (review) plans by Support Connection.**

If Support Coordination is required in a review plan, it should be provided for a specific purpose, such as to support the participant to change service provider, or to resolve specific points of crisis or barriers affecting support, as opposed to the first year where it may be provided to orient the participant to implement their plan more generically.

### **Level 3: Specialist Support Coordination**

*The provision of Support Coordination within a specialist framework necessitated by specific high level risks in the participant’s situation. This support is time limited and focuses on addressing barriers and reducing complexity in the support environment, while assisting the participant to connect with supports and build capacity and resilience.*

Specialist Support Coordination includes all the activities outlined in “Support Coordination”, but addresses situations where it is appropriate to have a specialist deliver Support Coordination-style activities, necessitated by specific high level risks in the participant’s situation.

**Specialist Support Coordination is time limited and focuses on addressing barriers and reducing complexity in the support environment, while assisting the participant to connect with supports and build capacity and resilience.**

For Specialist Support Coordination to be included within a plan there must be clear benefits to the participant that result from this model of supports coordination. It is anticipated that this support will be very rarely required and only under exceptional circumstances. Specialist Support Coordination must include clear goals for the duration of the first plan that aim to decrease the need for this high intensity support to continue. It is expected that if coordination is required beyond the first plan, the NDIA will recommend Support Coordination, rather than Specialist Support Coordination.

# Plan Management

Plan management supports focus on strengthening the participant's ability to undertake tasks associated with the management of their supports. This includes building financial skills, organisational skills, and enhancing the participant's ability to direct their supports and/or develop self-management capabilities. Plan management is the financial management of the plan and includes making payments to providers, expense claim processing, developing monthly statements for participants and claiming payment from the NDIA. Plan Managers also liaise with providers and participants to implement and manage the plan.

## Training in Planning and Plan Management

Training in planning and plan management assists participants build capacity to develop planning and plan management skills. This support may be funded in plans for participants who require additional training to support preparations to self-manage or use a registered plan management provider in subsequent plans. Training in Planning and Plan Management will not be funded in combination with Financial Intermediary supports.

## Financial Intermediary

A Financial Intermediary assists participants to manage their plan by paying for and monitoring the funded supports on their behalf. A participant can decide to use a registered plan management provider to manage some or all of the funding of supports in their plan. Financial Intermediary funding includes a setup fee to establish and implement support arrangements with providers and a monthly processing fee. The processing fee is for the plan management support across each month such as transaction processing and provider liaison.

A Financial Intermediary has three main functions:

- 1) Financial plan management activities including paying service providers, processing expense claims, liaison with providers, and developing monthly statements for participants.
- 2) Assistance to build the financial and organisational skills of participants; particularly those with aspirations to self-manage their funding in subsequent plans.
- 3) Provide assistance to participants to strengthen their capacity to find and implement alternative support options. A financial intermediary will typically possess good knowledge of providers and supports, developed through interaction with and processing payments to providers over time.

# Claiming from the NDIA

A core goal for a Financial Intermediary is to manage the administrative elements of the funded supports in the participant plan, which in turn helps the participant to achieve their goals and live their life without the concern of claiming.

As a registered plan management provider, a financial intermediary must comply with the Terms of Business for Registered Providers. A financial intermediary may make payments on behalf of participants to both registered and unregistered providers. However, the prices claimed from the NDIA must not exceed the price level prescribed for supports as outlined in the Pricing Guide and Catalogue of Supports.

When an invoice for a delivered support has been received by a financial intermediary, payment can be requested from the NDIA and paid to the provider after the claim has been processed. The previous process required the financial intermediary to pay the invoice prior to receiving funds from the NDIA.

## Additional information

- It is a policy of the NDIA that coordination of supports is delivered by an NDIA registered provider.
- Where the Support Coordinator also delivers other funded supports in the participants plan, the provider must ensure that any perceived or real conflict of interest is managed in accordance with the NDIA's Terms of Business.

## Definitions

<b>Carer</b>	A person who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability.
<b>Capacity</b>	In this context, refers to the participant's current ability to understand and follow the NDIA's processes, and to engage with other organisations. It is based on existing knowledge and skills, and the ability to develop new knowledge and skills as required.
<b>Disability</b>	An umbrella term used in relation to the disability requirements for access to NDIS. (NDIS Act 2013 s.24)
<b>Financial Intermediary</b>	A registered plan management provider that strengthens a participant's ability to undertake the financial management of their supports. This includes making payments to providers, claiming payment from the NDIA, developing monthly statements for participants, liaison with providers, and assisting to develop the participant's financial, organisational and coordination skills.
<b>Informal Support</b>	Naturally occurring support or assistance available within families, among friends, neighbours and members of a community.
<b>Mainstream Support</b>	Goods, services supports and assistance available for the general community which lie outside funding in the NDIS. These are the first option for service provision for all NDIS participants. Support required to access such services will be included where required in a statement of support for an NDIS participant. Example mainstream services are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• health</li><li>• education</li><li>• employment</li><li>• mental health</li><li>• palliative care</li><li>• aged care</li><li>• housing</li><li>• veterans affairs</li><li>• transport</li><li>• early childhood services</li><li>• income support</li><li>• justice</li><li>• child care</li></ul>

<b>Participant Plan</b>	The plan approved by the Agency CEO which contains the participant's statement of goals and aspirations and statement of participant supports. (NDIS Act 2013 s33)
<b>Plan Implementation</b>	A series of activities to connect with, and maintain, the supports outlined within the participant plan's Statement of Supports.
<b>Plan monitoring</b>	Monitoring the implementation, progress and continued appropriateness of the participant plan.
<b>Service Provider</b>	A person or body (for example a community service organisation) who provides funded disability services under the NDIS Act and is registered with the NDIA.
<b>Support coordination</b>	Assistance to strengthen a participants abilities to coordinate and implement supports and participate more fully in the community. It can include initial assistance with linking participants with the right providers to meet their needs, assistance to source providers, coordinating a range of supports both funded and mainstream and building on informal supports, resolving points of crisis, parenting training and developing participant resilience in their own network and community.
<b>Supports</b>	Services and products required by a participant to address the impact of a disability. Can include mainstream services, assistance from family and carers (informal) and NDIS funded items.