



## Frequently Asked Questions about the NDIS



## Frequently Asked Questions about the NDIS

Are you wondering what exactly the NDIS is and how it will work?  
Got questions about how it will affect you and who can support you  
throughout the process?



At Blue Care we're here to answer your questions. We want you to feel comfortable and confident about the NDIS as it's slowly rolled out over the next three years, so we've prepared the following questions and answers to help. There's also useful information on what Blue Care can do to support you.

If you have any other questions, please refer to our FAQs section on the website at [www.bluecare.org.au/disability](http://www.bluecare.org.au/disability).



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## What is the NDIS?

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing support for people with disability, their families and carers in Australia.

The NDIS will provide eligible people with the 'reasonable and necessary' supports they need to live their life and achieve their goals. These goals may include independence, community involvement, employment and wellbeing with tailored supports such as personal care, access to the community, therapy services and essential equipment.

Overall, the scheme is a fundamental shift in how disability support is provided, and puts you in control of how, when and where your supports are delivered. You will even have control over who provides your supports and how your funds are managed.

## How does the NDIS work?

At the heart of the scheme is making you, your family or carers the key decision makers regarding your supports. This change will allow you to tailor the support you receive to meet your own needs and goals.

## When does the NDIS start?

The NDIS was introduced in the Townsville region recently and will be slowly rolled out in stages across Queensland over the next three years, until 2019.

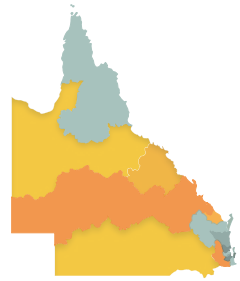
See NDIS rollout timeline over page.

## Who is the NDIA?

The NDIA is the independent agency that is responsible for implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme. If you are eligible for the NDIS, the NDIA will work with you and your family to help you identify the supports you need to live your life and achieve your goals.

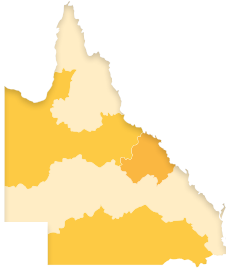
# Timeline: the rollout of the NDIS in Queensland

The NDIS was officially launched in Queensland on July 1, 2016. It is now available in Townsville and Charters Towers (for people with a disability under 18 years of age) and Palm Island (for people with a disability under 65 years of age). It will be rolled out across the remainder of the state in stages, right through until 2019, as follows:



## Rollout stage 1

October 2016 - June 2017

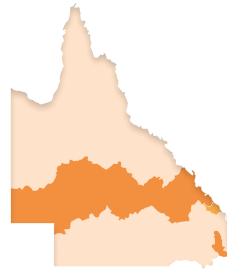


- 1 October Townsville, Hinchinbrook, Burdekin, west to Mount Isa, and up to the gulf
- 1 November Mackay, Isaac and Whitsundays
- 1 January Toowoomba and west to the borders

July 2017 - June 2018

## Rollout stage 2

- Ipswich, Lockyer, Scenic Rim and Somerset
- Bundaberg
- Rockhampton, Gladstone and west to the borders



## Rollout stage 3

July 2018 - June 2019

- Logan and Redlands
- Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Croydon, Etheridge, Cape York and Torres Strait
- Brisbane suburbs north of Brisbane River
- Brisbane suburbs south of Brisbane River
- Fraser Coast, North Burnett, South Burnett and Cherbourg
- Gold Coast and Hinterland
- Moreton Bay including Strathpine and Caboolture
- Sunshine Coast, Noosa and Gympie



## What is Blue Care's view on the NDIS?

At Blue Care we think the NDIS represents a really positive change. We know that when people with disabilities are in control of their own supports, they are better able to live the life of their dreams.

For people living with disabilities, having more choice and control can be very empowering and personally rewarding. We believe that the fundamentals of the NDIS are in keeping with our core values, and we see it as a great opportunity for people with disabilities and their families to begin to realise their goals.

## Will everything just be the same as it is now under the NDIS?

Only if you want it to be. The NDIS will give you more choice and control over the supports you receive and how you receive them.

## Do I have to apply for the NDIS now?

Please be aware that the NDIS is currently only being implemented in the Townsville region, Mackay region (November 1) and Toowoomba region (January 1 2017). It will be slowly rolled out in stages through Queensland in the next three years. Therefore, depending on where you live, it might take months or even years before it is active in your area. Please see the timeline on page 6 to view the NDIS roll out dates.

If you already receive some disability supports through the Queensland Government the NDIA will contact you when the NDIS is implemented in your area to let you know what to do.

If you don't currently receive disability supports through the Queensland Government you will need to apply for the NDIS when it starts operating in your area.

## Will I have control over my funds?

Yes, your plan with the NDIA provides clarity about the amount of funding you are allocated and to what type of support. You can choose to manage these funds yourself or have someone you nominate, the NDIA or a registered provider do it for you.



## Could I lose my current supports?

No, as long as your current supports are reasonable and necessary they will not change unless you want them to.

Even if you don't meet the access requirements for the NDIS you will still receive the same level of supports you receive now.

## Will Blue Care help me prepare for the NDIS?

Yes. At Blue Care, we know you're determined and capable of creating the best possible future for yourself. But we also know that sometimes we all need a little expert help along the way.

That's why we're here to support you with getting ready for the NDIS. When the NDIS is about to be implemented in your region (see the timeline on page 6), we will be there when you need us throughout the whole process. We will work with you to identify your goals, the supports you need and develop your preplan. This will help you get the most out of the NDIS and your NDIA plan.

In the meantime, feel free to ask your support worker or other contacts within Blue Care about anything you would like to know about the NDIS.

## What is a Local Area Coordinator?

Local Area Coordinators are there to support people with disability to explore and build an ordinary life within their communities. The support they provide may include supporting you to find community activities and mainstream services that help you achieve your goals.

## How do I know if I'm eligible for the NDIS?

If you are receiving some disability supports when the NDIS is launched in your area, you will be able to use the NDIS even if you don't meet the access requirements.

If you don't currently receive disability supports you will need to meet some access requirements in order to use the NDIS. These include:

1. Australian citizenship or permanent residency, and
2. Aged under 65 years, and
3. Living where NDIS is available, and
4. Needing support from a person or equipment to do everyday things because of an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent, or
5. Needing some supports now to reduce your support needs in the future.

If you do not meet the access requirements, the NDIA will have a Local Area Coordinator assist you to connect with local disability, community and mainstream supports.

## Will the NDIA ask me to move house?

No. NDIS support relates to how you live, not where you live. However, after working with the NDIA to assess your needs, you yourself may choose to move house if you feel your current arrangements don't meet your needs. For example, you may decide that your current home isn't set up the way you need it, or you may wish to move out from shared accommodation.

## Will I get more support under the NDIS?

Maybe. If your needs are not currently being met, you may be provided with more reasonable and necessary support. At a minimum, you will continue to receive your current support.

## Will I get more funding under the NDIS?

Under the NDIS the focus is on making sure you receive the supports you need to help you reach your goals rather than the amount of funding allocated in your plan.

## Will I have to explain my personal needs again?

During the planning process, you will work with the NDIA to establish your goals and identify what you need to achieve them. Any information, assessments or evidence you can provide will help support your requests.

## I am over 65. Am I eligible for the NDIS?

No. If you are over 65 when the NDIS is rolled out in your location, you will not be eligible for the NDIS. However, people over 65 currently receiving disability supports will be provided with the same level of support.

## What happens to my NDIS plan when I turn 65?

When someone receiving NDIS support turns 65, they can either continue with NDIS supports or transition to age care. However, people who transition to age care will not be able to return to the NDIS.

## Can I change the details of my NDIS plan after it has been approved?

Yes. You can change your plan after approval if your goals, needs or circumstances change. You can also request a review if you don't agree with any of the NDIA's decisions.

## How can I be sure the NDIS will be implemented?

The NDIS has the support of all sides of government, so it is almost certain it will be introduced and supported in the future. See the timeline for the exact planning of the roll-out of the NDIS.

## How will I know when the NDIS is coming?

The NDIS will be rolled out across Queensland in stages over the next three years. If you are currently receiving disability supports, you will be contacted by the NDIA when it is time for you to transition to the NDIS. See the timeline for the exact planning of the roll-out of the NDIS. If you are not currently receiving disability services and are entering the NDIS as a new participant, you will need to contact the NDIA to make a time for your planning meeting.

## Can I change what I need and what my family needs under the NDIS?

Yes, if your circumstances change. If something happens that impacts on the supports you need all you have to do is let the NDIA or your support provider know and they will work with you to review your plan.

In addition, your NDIS plan will include a 12 month review. During this review the NDIA will work with you to see if the supports you are getting are appropriate and if they are helping you reach your goals. You may also wish to change some of your goals or set new ones which may mean your supports will change.

As your NDIS service provider Blue Care will be there with you throughout this process and we are more than happy to help you connect with the NDIA and identify the supports you need to live the life you want.

## Can I keep my pension under the NDIS?

There are no changes to arrangements in relation to the Disability Support Pension as a result of the NDIS.

## Do I have to manage my own funding under the NDIS?

No. The NDIS gives you the option to manage your own funding, but there are other choices available to you too. These other choices are: management by a representative, using a plan management service, or nominating the NDIA to carry out this role. For example you may choose to have a service provider like Blue Care manage your funding for you. Ultimately, the decision is up to you. Either way, you will always have the choice and control over how, when and where your supports are provided.

## Will respite care still be available under the NDIS?

The NDIS brings a new approach to respite care. It actively encourages the person with disability to participate in the community socially and economically. The assumption is that carers will get natural breaks when the person is meaningfully engaged with their community.

## Will special schools remain open?

The NDIS is separate to the education system and won't directly influence the status of special schools. The supports you receive under the NDIS are designed to complement the services the school system offers, not replace them. The NDIS will be available to eligible children.

## Is getting a job expected of me under the NDIS?

Only if it is identified as one of your goals. The NDIS has a focus on supporting you to be part of the community and have the same opportunities as everybody else. Getting a job is part of participating in the economy and can greatly improve your circumstances. This may be one of the goals in your plan under the NDIS and would be combined with appropriate support to achieve that.

## Will I still receive support from the health system?

The NDIS will fund supports that assist you to undertake activities of daily living required due to your disability. The supports you receive under the NDIS are designed to complement the services the health system offers, not replace them.

## Will there be changes to the numbers of support workers needed under the NDIS?

Yes. It is expected that the number of people accessing disability supports in Queensland will almost double under the NDIS. As a result, a lot of new workers will be needed to deliver these supports. For example, it is anticipated that Queensland will need an additional 13,000 workers as the NDIS rolls out.

## Will it be expected that everyone uses public transport under the NDIS?

No, not necessarily. As with all aspects of the NDIS it will depend on your needs and your goals. People who are unable to use public transport because of their disability and have no personal means of transport may be able to access funding through the NDIS to assist with transport. Access to this funding is linked with participation in community through social, educational and employment activity.

## What is the NDIS stance on group homes?

The NDIS supports a wide range of living arrangements, and has funding categories available for individual, group or shared living. The decision about where you live is up to you and your support network.

## Does the NDIS acknowledge the efforts of parents of people with disability?

Yes. The NDIS understands the important role parents' play in supporting the lives of their children. The NDIS encourages parents to work in partnership with the NDIA and considers parents' views and experience to be important to the planning process.



If you have any other questions, please refer to our FAQs section on the website at [www.bluecare.org.au/disability](http://www.bluecare.org.au/disability).



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