

Recently, the Government introduced the *Securing the NDIS For Future Generations Bill* in the Senate. The Act was introduced in a bid to reduce spending under the scheme, by introducing stricter eligibility requirements and stronger powers to address fraud and non-compliance.

The Act was passed in August and makes substantial changes to the way the NDIS operates. These changes are significant for people with disabilities, their families and carers who rely on NDIS funding – people who may already be feeling significant uncertainty about their support.

This document has been developed by the Family Violence Disability Practice Leads to provide a summary of the changes to the NDIS Act, how the changes may impact victim-survivors with disabilities, and how we can adapt our practice in response.

Not all changes to the Act are unpacked in detail within this document. More information regarding changes can be found under the ‘key resources’ section. Practitioners can also reach out to the FVDPL in your region to discuss these changes, and their impact on clients, in more detail.

When

The changes will be implemented progressively. Some have already come into effect, and some won’t be complete until 2030. Most of the changes will be implemented gradually between 2027 and 2028.

Role of Practitioners

It is completely reasonable that clients might be feeling worried, angry or experiencing grief about these changes and how they may be impacted. It is important that we do not assume what the changes will mean for an individual client, as the impact will depend on their individual circumstances, however practitioners can provide support by:

- Talking through the timeline of when changes are due to be rolled out can be helpful
- Remind clients that this doesn’t mean they will ‘definitely’ lose access to the scheme and that their individual circumstances are important
- Clients can access disability advocacy services if they’re needing support
- Where reductions in funding may increase risk or reduce safety for clients, we can work together to gather evidence and advocate for reductions to not be applied to the clients’ plan

- You can provide access to easy read resources about the changes like [this](#) so people feel informed
- If clients believe they will be impacted soon, there may be a need to identify non-NDIS supports in their circles of care. This may mean identifying housing, health, social and financial community or mainstream support options
- Clients might need extra support to simply talk through the changes or how they're feeling about them
- If a consult is helpful to talk about a client's specific circumstances, please reach out

Key Changes

From 27th August 2026

Changes to how NDIS plans are reviewed and reassessed.

- Providers can no longer submit a change of circumstance on a participant's behalf.
- Only a participant, their plan nominee, or child representative will be able to request an unscheduled plan reassessment.
- Plan reassessments can only be requested if there has been a '**significant and ongoing change**' to a participant's ability to complete daily activities or their personal circumstances.
- Unscheduled plan reassessments and access requests can take up to 90 days (previously these had to happen within 21 days).
 - If the participant has not received a response after 90 days, it is assumed the request is refused. This means a participant will need to independently trigger a review process, which is time sensitive.

Practice consideration

The new changes may mean it becomes more difficult to support participants - particularly young people - to have plan reassessments/reviews where plan nominees or child representatives are people using violence.

This change may also have significant impacts on victim-survivors who need to leave their home or local area to access a family violence crisis response. There is currently no guidance from the NDIA on how the term "ongoing" will be interpreted. Crisis accommodation and refuge services are, by nature, temporary and subject to strict service

timeframes. Practitioners should not assume that a temporary relocation outside a participant's local area will automatically make them eligible for a plan review, particularly given the new 90-day processing timeframe.

Changes to access and eligibility criteria

- Only participants with significant and permanent disability are intended to remain on the scheme.
- Participants will need to demonstrate that an impairment is permanent, or likely to be permanent, by undertaking “all appropriate available treatments.” This includes treatments that are evidence-based, commonly provided in Australia, and reasonably expected to improve, reverse, or reduce the impact of the impairment.
- Participants can only access funding for supports that arise directly from their qualifying impairment
- This higher threshold for permanence is likely to disproportionately affect people with fluctuating conditions, particularly psychosocial disabilities, who may find themselves ineligible during periods of relative stability, and without supports during periods of exacerbated symptoms.

Changes to how ‘functional capacity’ is defined and assessed

- The new legislation now includes a definition of functional capacity.
 - An adult's functional capacity is defined by what that person can do without help, or with commonly used assistive technology (glasses, walking stick), without any consideration of their environmental and personal circumstances, referred to as colloquially as the ‘naked person’ test.
- For a child or young person, functional capacity allows for consideration of what help is appropriate for their age
- This new definition indicates that the NDIS assessment process is returning to a medical model of disability, focused on deficit, which many advocates consider to be a backwards step

Practice consideration

Evidence shows women face increased barriers to accessing treatment from the healthcare system. The new assessment tool will therefore likely have a disproportionate impact on women and girls with disabilities. Currently, women and girls represent 38% of

participants on the scheme, demonstrating the innate gender inequality in disability diagnoses recognised and supported by the NDIS.

The changes to the permanency threshold are likely to also disproportionately affect people living with psychosocial disability, as well as victim survivors who are unable to safely engage with community or allied health services, or who lack access to household finances needed to pursue all available treatment options. As a result, some individuals may be unable to satisfy NDIS eligibility requirements despite experiencing significant impairment.

Changes to the NDIA investigative and compliance powers

- The NDIA has been provided with stronger information gathering and investigatory powers, to compel providers to engage investigations of breaches of the Code of Conduct, and the Standards by the Quality and Safeguards Commission.

Practice Considerations

The NDIS Act introduces significant changes to the enforcement powers of both the NDIA and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. A detailed explanation of these changes is beyond the scope of this summary. However, participants who receive services from providers that do not comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct or Practice Standards may benefit from stronger protections and increased regulatory action.

If you are supporting a victim-survivor with concerns about the quality or safety of their NDIS supports, please seek further consultation with the Family Violence Disability Practice Leader (FVDPL) in your region.

From 1st October 2026

Changes to how funding is allocated

- As participants' plans are reassessed, it is possible that their budgets for social and community participation and capacity building for daily activities will be reduced by **50%**.
 - Note: Not all participants will receive a 50% cut in their funding, and there is some safeguarding in place for people who require 24/7 care.

Practice consideration:

We know that opportunities for social and community participation are sometimes the only opportunities that victim-survivors have to contact emergency services or access a family violence system response without the perpetrator's knowledge. Practitioners therefore should be mindful of how these changes will impact on how victim-survivors access our service, their ability to reach out for support, and enact a safety plan.

Changes to plan suspension procedures

- The NDIA can suspend a participant's access to their plans if they don't respond to requests for information or are uncontactable. The NDIA is required to make minimum 5 contact attempts over 3-4 months, using the person's preferred communication method. If these attempts fail, the NDIA has the power to revoke a person's participant status.

Practice consideration

This will have significant impacts on victim-survivors who change phone numbers or email addresses, or who choose not to answer calls from unknown numbers due to safety reasons. This also provides opportunities for people who use violence to further isolate a victim-survivor from their NDIS support by interfering with a victim survivor's contact with the NDIA.

Thriving Kids program roll out begins

- Children aged 8 and under with Autism and/or developmental delay with 'low' to 'moderate' needs will be eligible for support from Thriving Kids. Children will not need a diagnosis to be eligible for support. Children under 8 with autism and/or developmental delay who have high support needs and meet NDIS eligibility criteria can still access NDIS.

Practice Consideration

The information available to services on Thriving Kids is limited, and while the first Thriving Kids service is to be available from 1 October 2026, and fully operational by 1 January 2028, it's unclear which organisation will be providing the Thriving Kids services in each of the regions. Practitioners should also note the recent changes to the Family Services Responses, which may compound the difficulty families have access intensive disability informed parenting supports.

Research from Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) highlights the impact of these changes. A May 2025 survey found many parents were already “at breaking point,” absorbing unmet support needs due to reductions in NDIS funding.

From February 1st 2027

Changes to how plans are renewed.

- A new process called ‘plan renewal’ will be introduced – this will replace the process previously referred to as ‘plan continuation’, i.e., renewed plans will have the same level of supports the participant had the previous plan period
 - Note: any **money left over in the previous plan period will not roll over** into the renewed plan.

Changes to ‘reasonable and necessary’ decision making processes.

- The NDIA are now required to consider ‘the sustainability of the NDIS’ when making determinations about what supports are ‘reasonable and necessary’. This means participants will need to prove that their supports are cost effective, and not more appropriately funded through other schemes or provided by informal supports.

From 1st April 2027 – 31st December 2030

Changes to NDIS planning processes.

- Under the new framework, participants will need to complete a ‘support needs assessment’ which will be used to determine how much funding each participant receives.
- Note: the details of this new planning process are still being determined. This change will not happen to everyone all at once.

From 1st July 2027

Changes to NDIS provider registration rules.

- NDIS provider registration will be mandatory for services who provide ‘higher risk’ supports, e.g., personal care, and support in closed settings.

Practice consideration

Victim survivors who were already receiving 'high risk' supports will need to use registered providers; they will need to change providers if their existing provider is unregistered. Hopefully, this change will lower the risk of victim survivors receiving unsafe and inadequate support from providers who do not operate in line with the NDIS Code of Conduct.

From 1st October 2027

Changes to the way plan management is provided.

- A panel of plan management providers will be established by the Government. If a participant uses a plan manager, they will need to choose a plan manager from this panel (participants will have 6 months to transition). Further detail around the new plan management is pending.
- Participants will have less choice in their selection of plan managers, in theory this should provide a more consistent standards of support, and additional safeguards for participants.

From 1st January 2028

Thriving Kids will be fully operational across Australia.

- Children aged 8 and under with Autism and/or developmental delay with 'low' to 'moderate' needs will receive support from Thriving Kids, not the NDIS.

From 1st July 2028

Changes to the way support coordination is delivered.

- Instead of participants paying for support coordination out of their plans, participants will choose from select providers as determined by the Government. The details of this change are still being determined.
- Participants will have less choice in their selection of support coordinators, in theory this should provide a more consistent standards of support, and additional safeguards for participants.

By 2030

Mandatory registration

- The legislation introduces a definition of an NDIS provider to support the transition towards mandatory registration
- Under the new definition, an NDIS provider is *any person or organisation that receives NDIS funding or payments, unless specifically excluded by the rules.*
- While mandatory registration will be implemented through a staged approach, all providers that meet this definition will be required to register by 2030.

Further Consultation

As more details about the NDIS changes become available, we will continue to monitor the reforms and explore opportunities to better understand and respond to the impacts on our clients.

Supporting clients who live with disabilities, however, extends beyond navigating NDIS supports.

If you require further assistance to navigate supports for our clients, contact the Specialist Family Violence Disability Practice Leader; Lisa Ashton via email lisaa@wayss.org.au

Further Information

If you are working with clients who are expressing concerns in relation to changes to the NDIS and have questions about how this may impact them, or their family members, please see below some suggestions to help them access information from reliable sources.

The organisations below provide key updates on their websites as Government announcements are made and actively engaging in advocacy alongside the disability community.

People with Disability Australia (PWDA)

PWDA are Australia's peak rights and advocacy organisation by and for people with disability or who are d/Deaf.

See the PWDA [website](#) and social media platforms for updates and advocacy information.

Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYPWD)

Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) are the peak organisation representing the rights and interests of children and young people with disability (aged 0-25) in Australia.

See CYPWD [website](#) for information about changes impacting children and young people with disability.

Association of Children with Disability (ACD)

ACD advocates for an inclusive community where children with disabilities and their families thrive. ACD influences public policy to realize and advance the rights of children with disability and their families. ACD are providing regular updates in relation to the NDIS following announcements on their [website](#) and social media platforms.

Inclusion Australia

Inclusion Australia is the national peak body for intellectual disability and have been advocating for the rights of people with an intellectual disability since their formation in 1954.

Inclusion Australia have developed [information](#) about the NDIS changes in Easy English formats.

Easy English formats benefit many people, including people who are busy, who speak English as a second language, who have intellectual disability or cognitive impairment.

Information specific to a participant's NDIS Plan

For specific information about a participant's NDIS plan, participants or families of a participant are encouraged to contact their Early Childhood Approach community partner [Link Health and Community](#) or the Local Area Coordination Team (LAC), provided by [Latrobe Community Health Service](#).