



What is support coordination and how do I get it?



What is support coordination?

One of the easiest ways to describe a support coordinator is that they are kind of like an NDIS assistant. They are there to help you understand your NDIS plan, and connect you with services that help you make the most of your plan. The NDIS can be confusing, and the role of support coordinators is to try and make it a little less so.

Sourcing and then managing multiple providers and services can be complicated and time consuming. 'Who can provide me with the services I need?', 'What is a service agreement?', 'How do I manage so many appointments?', 'I need to ensure all my providers are kept up to date with my treatments', 'How do I change my service provider?'.

Some people may prefer to do this themselves. For other people, that's where support coordination can be really handy. Support coordination works with you to source the right providers and the right services, coordinating your supports for you and building on your informal support like your family.

How do I get it?

Like just about anything with the NDIS, support coordination is something that will need to be deemed 'reasonable and necessary' (</media-news/blog/reasonable-necessary>) by your NDIS planner. It's important to ensure you request support coordination in your plan, if it's something you think you'll need.

Here are some situations where support coordination is often considered:

- You have complex needs
- You are new to the NDIS
- You have never had any funding before
- You have substantial funding and need assistance in accessing supports
- You have a big transition time in your life coming up (such as finishing school, moving out of home or starting a new job)
- A number of people in the family have disability
- You don't have any immediate family support around you

The three levels of support coordination

There are three tiers of support coordination available depending on how much or little assistance you'd like:

Support connection

This is short term assistance to help you source a range of providers that meet your needs but with you taking the responsibility for coordinating all your support and selecting your providers. This is generally provided by your Local Area Coordinator (LAC).

Coordination of supports

Available long term, throughout your plan, to provide connection and coordination of your supports from a range of sources in a more complex environment.

Specialist support coordination

Specialist supports for more complex situations. This is more like case management.

What to look for in a support coordinator

Objectivity

You want to source the most appropriate providers and services to meet your needs. A support coordinator may work for an organisation that provides multiple services that could be in your plan. Before you sign up for support coordination, ask them what checks and balances are in place to prevent them from simply recommending their own services.

Willingness to truly partner with you

Do you have a reasonable rapport with your support coordinator? Depending on the level of support coordination you are funded for, you and your family may have extensive dealings with your coordinator, so it's important to have a good relationship and feel as though they have your back.

Outcome-focused

The NDIS is centred on capacity building such as acquiring new skills, increasing independence, and providing value for money. A good support coordinator will be focussed on the outcomes that are outlined in your plan, and what you tell them are important to you. Ask them to outline specifically how they will support you to achieve these outcomes. Together, you should be working towards your goals.

Experience in your locality

Extensive knowledge of disability and community sectors services in your area – especially quality services that can best meet your individual needs.