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## Vaccination support

### Can I ask my support worker to help me arrange my vaccination appointments?

Yes. If you normally have a disability support worker help you with daily activities, you can ask them to include booking your appointments and accompanying you to attend an offsite location to receive your COVID-19 vaccinations.

Your provider who will organise your vaccination may be eligible to claim \$75 for your COVID-19 vaccination.

Providers can claim this directly through the NDIA. It does not come out of your budget.

### When should I get the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose?

Information about booster doses for COVID-19 vaccines, who they are recommended for, when you need one and how to get it, is on the [Department of Health and Aged Care website](#).

Talk to your healthcare professional about when you need a COVID-19 vaccination. Keeping your vaccinations up to date is the best protection from COVID-19.

### Why is the NDIA offering providers a participant vaccine enablement payment? What is it for?

To ensure [NDIS participants are supported to get COVID-19 vaccines](#), we offer a [participant vaccination enabling payment](#) to eligible providers.

This payment helps to remove any barriers preventing NDIS participants to stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations.

This payment does not come out of your plan, it is claimed directly by your provider from the NDIA.

It helps your provider to cover the costs to:

- contact you to discuss vaccination options
- help you to arrange vaccination appointments, including your informed consent
- arrange safe transport to and from your appointments
- to do with staff rosters.

Your provider can also claim the cost of other supports required for you to get to your appointments, such as taxi fares and a support worker. You must be consulted and agree to these services.

## Low cost assistive technology (AT) for support continuity

### Can I buy additional assistive technology, electronics or equipment with my NDIS funding?

We recommend participants and their families and carers work with their existing providers to discuss the best way to receive specific disability related supports to reduce the personal health risks of COVID-19.

This may include using available technology to connect on a device, developing home exercise programs and borrowing equipment

Find out more:

- [Low cost AT for support continuity](#)
- Mid cost AT
- Participant factsheet – [Understanding assistive technology evidence, advice, assessments, and quotes](#)
- [Our Guideline – Assistive Technology](#)

### [Transcript for 'Increased flexibility for low cost AT'](#)

#### **What if I don't have enough money in my plan?**

The purpose of this policy is to help participants continue therapy and supports when they are impacted by COVID-19.

You should use existing funds to pay for low cost AT. Additional funds will not be added to your plan just for these purchases. We expect these costs to be used within your existing budget.

If your plan does not have sufficient funds for ongoing supports, you should follow the usual process for a [plan reassessment](#). The NDIA will not accept changes to plans solely to purchase low-cost AT under this policy.

#### **How do I pay for my purchase?**

If your plan is NDIA-managed, you can purchase these items from NDIS providers authorised to supply AT devices.

If you are using a plan manager, they can arrange the payment for low cost AT for you.

If you are self-managing your NDIS plan, there are 2 options to pay for your supports with your NDIS funding:

1. Make a Payment Request and then pay your provider. Once you receive written confirmation that the AT item is required to support your existing NDIS services and an account or invoice from your provider, make a Payment Request.
2. This can be done online using the myplace portal. Money from your NDIS plan budget will be paid into your nominated bank account within 2 business days. You can then pay your provider. Pay your provider and then make a Payment Request. Once you receive your support, pay your provider using your own money and get a receipt. Make a Payment Request to have the money from your NDIS plan budget paid into your nominated bank account. You will be reimbursed within 2 business days.

For times when self-managed participants need to make a claim after 90 days, they can't claim using the myplace participant portal. Participants should instead use the [self-management form](#).

You can use your Core Supports budget flexibly to cover the cost of the item.

Participants who only have funding in their capacity building budget can use the temporary line item to purchase low cost AT

- Support Capacity Building delivery(15\_222400911\_0124\_1\_3).

All participants and providers should keep a copy of the written advice about the AT item purchased. Self-managing participants can upload this to their participant record.

### What needs to be included in the written advice?

If a specific item is required to maintain supports, written advice will be required to support this purchase. If the need is for an air purifier to enable in-home services for a participant with significant disability related respiratory risk, the advice needs to be provided by the participant's medical practitioner.

You must make sure you receive and retain the written advice before you buy or rent the proposed AT item. You need to keep this evidence in case the Agency request it at a later date.

The written advice, as part of an email, should include:

- the participant's name and NDIS number
- confirmation that delivery of current supports in the participant's plan have been, or would be significantly hindered due to physical distancing restrictions, or other consequences of COVID-19, and that alternative solutions to maintain supports have been considered but do not fully address the limitations
- how the device is necessary to maintain supports and services while maintaining physical distancing requirements
- the specific technologies and associated accessories required, and that these represent the lowest specification capable of delivering the benefit; and
- that the participant can use the device/s to access the support.

Before the participant (or nominee) or provider makes a claim for the selected item, the participant should be sure that:

- they do not already have the item, another suitable item or access to the item, and
- a similar or suitable item has not been funded by another service system (such as education)
- the item or circumstances are not specifically excluded under this policy.

## What is the definition of low cost? And how much money can I spend?

Participants can spend up to \$1,500 on low cost AT items from their existing budgets under this policy.

We expect that participants should not need to spend more than \$750 on electronic devices to maintain existing services.

In the case of computer tablets for telehealth and care or participating in online video classes, advice from AT specialists is that most NDIS participants will not need more than a standard tablet, which costs no more than \$600.

For information on what is excluded from this policy visit the [Low cost AT for support continuity](#) page.

## Can I buy a laptop or desktop computer under this policy?

Generally no, unless you and your provider agree they are the most suitable solution to continue your supports and for your particular disability needs, and they are within the low cost AT price limit.

You can only buy items that help you continue to access your existing supports and services. You cannot use your NDIS funding to purchase a smart device for entertainment, education or gaming.

## Can I buy an air purifier for personal use under this policy?

You can use your existing Core Supports budget, consumables category to purchase a portable air purifier (or other ventilation device such as a portable extraction fan or pedestal fan) to ensure safe access to NDIS funded supports in your home, where you:

- have a disability that compromises your breathing (lung function) and/or puts you at increased risk of acquiring, or becoming very unwell if you acquire, COVID-19
- are at increased risk of acquiring COVID-19 due to the nature and volume of close personal supports you receive each day from support workers in your home
- are unable to (due to disability) effectively minimise your risk of acquiring COVID-19 by following health advice (e.g. to wear a mask), or otherwise ensure adequate ventilation within your home or residence by other means (e.g. opening windows).

You do not need to provide any evidence or otherwise seek approval for any low cost AT device purchased below \$1,500 in value, but you must keep the evidence.

The expected price range of a portable air purifier varies between \$300-\$700 per unit.

If you need additional funding or believe you need to purchase a device valued at more than \$1,500, you will need to seek a plan reassessment and provide relevant evidence.

You can refer to the following for more information:

- [Low cost AT for support continuity](#)
- [Participant factsheet – Understanding assistive technology evidence, advice, assessments and quotes](#)
- [Mid cost AT](#)

For more information on low cost AT, read [Our Guideline – Assistive Technology](#).

Portable air purifiers are unlikely on their own to prevent transmission of COVID-19. You should consider current health advice on how to effectively minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission within your home. Improving ventilation and air quality (whether through natural or mechanical means) is just one way to help reduce the risks of COVID-19.

You should also seek professional advice before selecting and installing a portable air purifier or other ventilation improvement equipment within your home if you choose this as a control.

### Do I need an assessment before I buy low cost AT?

We recommend participants and their families and carers work with their existing providers to discuss the best way to receive services and supports while maintaining physical distancing. This may include using available technology, developing exercise programs you can do at home or borrowing equipment and keeping in touch over the phone.

Your provider of supports must confirm in writing the proposed device is necessary to continue supports and services while maintaining physical distancing requirements.

No further assessments are required to purchase of low cost AT.

## Plan flexibility

### Can I use my plan funding differently (with video)?

The funding in your Core Supports budget is flexible, so you can use the overall funding in this budget to purchase the disability-related supports you need.

You can decide how to use this funding for day-to-day disability-related assistance, to pay support workers to help with everyday tasks like grocery shopping, or daily living tasks.

Daily living expenses like groceries, rent or bills are still a personal expense, and you cannot use your NDIS funding to pay for day-to-day items.

[Transcript for 'Using the Funding in Your Plan Differently - Auslan'](#)

### **Can I use my Core support funds flexibly?**

Participants who are either plan-managed or NDIA-managed and have a Core Supports budget can use all four funding categories without the need for a plan reassessment.

This means that, if your NDIS plan is plan-managed or NDIA-managed, you have more flexibility in how you use your Core Supports budget. Self-managed participants already had this flexibility.

It is important to remember that NDIS funding is for disability-related supports, not for everyday or ordinary living expenses.

Participants who already receive periodic transport payments will continue to have these paid into their bank account. This funding is not flexible.

### **I was accessing support coordination through my Core budget. How do I access it now?**

After 31 March 2021, you won't be able to use your Core budget to access support coordination.

28 February to 31 March 2021 is the transition period to assist participants still utilising this temporary measure to better manage their supports. If you were not utilising this support during the COVID-19 pandemic you should not start using this support during the transition period.

The temporary line items for support coordination in Core – Assistance with Daily Life will be deactivated on 1 April 2021.

If you have support coordination funds in your Capacity Building budget, you can continue to access this support.

If you do not have support coordination in your plan and your circumstances have changed, you can ask for a plan reassessment to have any reasonable and necessary supports included in your next plan.

### **Can I use my transport funding flexibly?**

Participants who already receive periodic transport payments will continue to have these paid into their bank account, to cover transport costs connected to activities included in their plan. These funds cannot be used towards other core supports.

Participants who do not receive periodic transport payments will still be able to use their Core Supports budget flexibly across all four support categories for transport funding.

If you have periodic transport funding already in your plan, you will be able to use your funding across three core supports budget categories, not including transport.

### **My plan is part NDIA-managed, part plan-managed. Are all of my Core support categories flexible?**

Yes, you can use your funding flexibility across all Core Supports budget categories.

However, the amount allocated to the plan management type is fixed.

### **Can I change my plan from self-managed to plan-managed or agency-managed to have more flexibility in my overall funding?**

Yes, but this will require a reassessment of your plan.

If your plan does change to self-managed, you will have record keeping responsibilities. You are required to follow the guidance outlined on the [Self-management](#) page.

Please contact [the NDIS](#) if you would like to discuss changing your plan.

### **What do I do if my funding is at risk of running out?**

If you are concerned about your funding running out, please contact [the NDIS](#).



## **I am not at work now due to COVID-19 and don't know how I can use my employment supports**

Your Finding and Keeping a Job budget can be used flexibly so that you can keep focussing on work.

Talk to your employer about the types of supports they can offer to keep you connected to your work and keep building your skills.

These kinds of supports might include:

- in home education
- online training or developing skills that you can use in your current job or as part of your career development
- employment assistance that maintains your connection with work and colleagues and helps you learn new skills like video conferencing.

You need to agree to any changes to your supports, and the NDIA encourages you and your employer to come up with creative ways to work together during this time.

If your employer isn't offering alternative supports while you're at home, you are able to use your NDIS plan to discuss options with other service providers who provide supports to keep focussing on work and developing your skills.

## **Can I redirect my funds to family or friends to provide support that would normally be provided by support workers? Can I use it to assist others who do not have enough to cover basic essentials?**

No. Your funding is designed to support your disability-related needs.

Any NDIS participant who is concerned their support needs are not being met should call their support coordinator (if they have one) or [the NDIS](#).

## **My providers will be delivering services using videoconferencing. Can I use my NDIS funding to pay for my internet connection?**

Daily living expenses like groceries, rent, bills and internet charges are a personal expense. You cannot use your NDIS funding to pay for day-to-day items.

**When a provider is delivering support to a participant via telehealth, how are the remote and very remote area price limits applied—is it based on the provider’s location when they deliver the support or the participant’s location?**

When a provider is delivering support to a participant via telehealth, how are the remote and very remote area price limits applied—is it based on the provider’s location when they deliver the support or the participant’s location?

**My provider can’t deliver services – how do I make sure I am not charged?**

Your provider should be in touch to organise a replacement worker or carer to help you.

It’s important that you discuss what your essential needs are with your providers, to ensure they are being met.

All NDIS providers must follow NDIS rules, codes and policies.

If you have any concerns, you should first speak to the provider directly, or to your support coordinator if you have one.

If you need additional advice, contact [the NDIS](#).

If you think you are still being charged incorrectly, you can report the problem by:

- filling in our online tip-off [form](#)
  - this will assist the Agency in getting the important information we need to follow up properly and quickly
  - you will receive a reference ID once you have submitted the tip-off
- if you need help completing the online tip-off form you can call the NDIS Fraud Reporting and Scams Helpline on 1800 650 717.
- emailing [fraudreporting@ndis.gov.au](mailto:fraudreporting@ndis.gov.au)

If you have any concerns about the quality of services or supports, you can also contact the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](#).

## Using your budget

Visit the [Your health and safety FAQ](#) page to learn more about personal protective equipment (PPE).

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