



ndis

# Guide to Plan Management

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# 1. Introduction

Plan management is a type of disability service funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The overarching function of plan management is to assist and support NDIS participants to manage their NDIS plan funding.

Plan management can support participants by:

- managing and monitoring a participant's budget
- managing a participant's NDIS claims and disbursing funds to providers for services delivered
- providing regular statements to a participant to show the financial status of their plan including prompt notification of over or under utilisation
- offering increased choice and control to a participant over plan implementation and utilisation through additional plan financial assistance.

Participants can also receive advice from plan management providers about how to best utilise their NDIS plan funding which can assist in building a participant's financial capacity and knowledge.

## 1.1 Purpose of this guide

The NDIS Guide to Plan Management is a practice guide intended for participants with plan management services included in their plan, providers of plan management services, and the wider community.

The purpose of this practice guide is to:

- assist participants to understand what to expect from plan management
- describe the process through which a participant can access plan management

- explain the expected roles, responsibilities and activities of plan management providers
- explain how participants can engage with plan management supports to maximise use of their NDIS plan
- Outline the broader system which plan management providers are expected to operate within.

## 1.2 Management of funding in a participant's plan

Funding in a participant's NDIS plan can be managed in a number of ways:

- 1. Agency managed:** This is when a participant chooses to use the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to manage their NDIS funds. The NDIA will directly pay registered providers of relevant services on behalf of a participant.
- 2. Self managed:** This is when a participant (or their plan nominee) manages their NDIS plan funds. The NDIS will reimburse a participant or their plan nominee directly for the NDIS supports received.
- 3. Plan managed:** This is when a participant chooses to use a plan management provider who will assist a participant with managing their NDIS plan funds. Plan management providers can purchase supports on behalf of participants from either registered or unregistered providers. A plan manager will receive funds from the NDIA and disburse funds on behalf of a participant to providers of other services received.

### 1.3 Plan managers as registered NDIS providers

Plan management providers, except those in Western Australia, are required to be registered with the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission \(external\)](#) (NDIS Commission).

This is the independent agency established to improve the quality and safety of NDIS supports and services for NDIS participants. The NDIS Commission regulates the market of disability supports to provide national consistency, promote safe and quality services, resolve problems, and identify areas for improvement.

The NDIS Commission is responsible for provider registration in all states, except for Western Australia which will transition to the NDIS Commission on 1 December 2020.

To deliver NDIS plan management services, providers (including organisations and sole traders) must be a registered NDIS provider and be approved under the 'Management of funding for supports in participants plans' registration group, which is the group (or class) of supports and services being delivered.

Plan management providers must follow the requirements and conditions of registration. Additional information about the provider registration process, the NDIS Code of Conduct and Practice Standards can be found on the [NDIS Commission's website \(external\)](#).

For providers in Western Australia, please refer to [WA Provider Registration information](#) on the NDIS website.

### 1.4 User of non-registered providers

Participants who choose a plan management provider can access supports and services from both registered and non-registered providers for most supports.

All NDIS Providers – registered or non-registered – are regulated by the NDIS Commission and are required to comply with the NDIS Code of Conduct. The NDIS Commission can take and manage complaints about NDIS supports and services delivered by providers that are not registered. If a provider that is not registered does not comply with the [NDIS Code of Conduct](#), the NDIS Commission can take a wide range of actions against that provider.

Certain supports, including Specialist Disability Accommodation and Specialist Behaviour Supports can only be delivered by registered providers. Additionally any NDIS service provider that uses a regulated restrictive practice in the course of delivering NDIS supports to a participant must be registered with the NDIS Commission for the type of support they are providing.

Participants who choose to use non-registered providers to deliver their supports should be aware that a non-registered provider must adhere to NDIS price controls arrangements.

Plan management providers can support participants to access information from the NDIS Commission and the NDIA about the obligations and responsibilities of registered and non-registered NDIS providers.

### Susan's story



Susan is an NDIS participant and has recently been contacted to attend a planning meeting. At the planning meeting, Susan's goals and support needs are discussed. Susan's goal is to obtain employment in the hospitality industry.

Prior to becoming a participant in the NDIS, Susan had developed a trusting relationship with an experienced and qualified therapist, who is yet to complete the process to become a registered provider. Susan explained this relationship was important because the therapist assists Susan with developing skills required to use public transport, which is essential for travel to and from employment opportunities.

Susan wishes to continue to receive therapist support and believes plan management would be the best option to manage this service. This is because plan management allows Susan to access both registered and non-registered providers of services that best meet Susan's preferences and needs, and Susan is prepared to take responsibility and work with a qualified plan manager to manage her NDIS funding.

## 2. Principles of plan management

The following principles guide expectations about the provision of plan management supports to participants. These principles have been developed through consultation with participants and outline expected behaviours in the delivery of plan management services. The primary activities of a plan management provider are outlined in [section 4](#) of this guide.

### 2.1 Achieving goals and outcomes

Plan management providers should support participants with budget management and NDIS funded supports administration activities to achieve a participant's goals and outcomes.

Plan management providers should work collaboratively with a participant to understand the funds available within their plan and provide advice about how to draw on this funding to achieve their goals and outcomes.

### 2.2 Ensuring independence

Plan management providers must assist participants to manage the financial aspects of their plan without seeking to further the financial, or other interests, of themselves and their organisation, or any third parties.

This means plan management providers are required to have policies and processes in place to actively manage any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

The NDIA encourages participants to engage with an independent plan manager who does not provide other NDIS funded supports to them. This will ensure that plan management services are impartial, enabling a participant to make informed decisions about their support arrangements.

Section 4 of the [NDIS Commission Code of Conduct \(external\)](#) describes the expectations of providers to act with integrity, honesty, and transparency, which includes managing real and perceived conflicts of interest.

### 2.3 Demonstrating accountability

Plan management providers must provide information and advice to participants about the management of their NDIS funding to purchase supports in accordance with a participant's plan budget.

Plan management providers must work with a participant to define how they will manage their funds. This includes defining the invoice authorisation process and keeping full, accurate records of required evidence (such as invoices) and information needed to monitor and make a claim for funds from a participant's plan.

Plan management providers must provide a participant with regular (at least monthly) reports of plan expenditure and the balance of funds remaining in a participant's plan. The plan management providers must also alert a participant of any risks associated with plan spending on services that will exceed a participant's NDIS plan limit, or paying for supports and services not funded by the NDIS in a participant's plan.

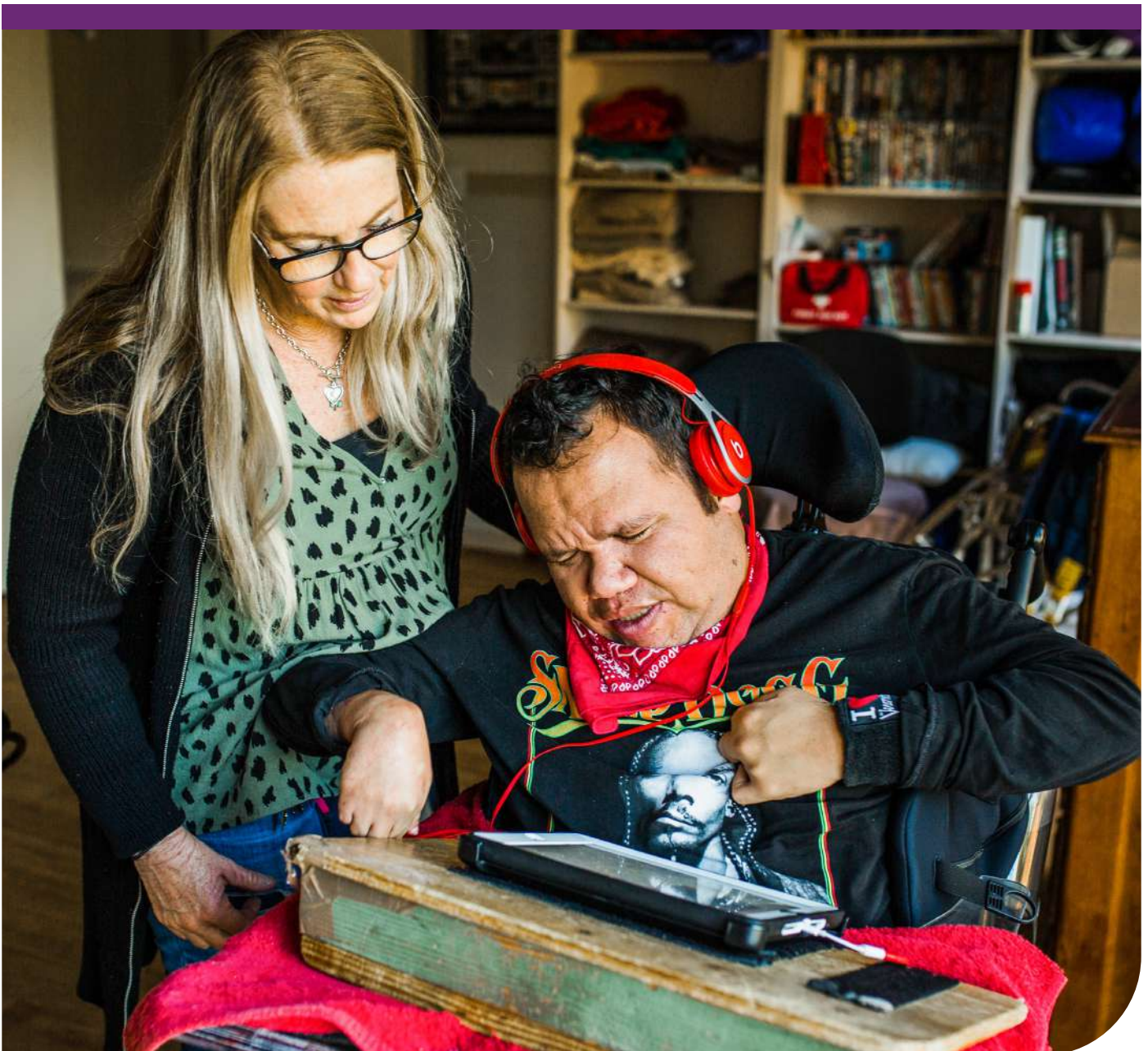
A plan management provider must have robust security processes in place to store and maintain participant information. Both the physical and electronic means of storing NDIS participant information must protect against unauthorised access. These records should be consistent with the [Australian Taxation Office](#) requirements.

The [NDIS Commission Code of Conduct \(external\)](#) provides additional information about what is expected of providers concerning the appropriate use and storage of participant information.

## 2.4 Consumer awareness

Plan management providers are expected to uphold participant rights as consumers, and in line with their plan, enable a participant to exercise greater choice and control over the supports and services they engage.

These rights apply to disability items or services bought with NDIS funding, in the same way they apply to other goods and services. With the support of a plan management provider, a participant should be encouraged to make informed choices within the market.



# 3. Participants and plan managers working together

Participants should be supported to exercise choice and explore opportunities for informed decision making in the pursuit of their goals and in the planning and delivery of supports.

This choice extends to the way a participant's funded supports are managed, choice of provider, including choice of plan manager.

## 3.1 Planning and plan management

A participant can choose to have one or more of their funded supports managed by a plan management provider and this request can be made during a participant's planning meeting.

If plan management services are requested by a participant, separate funding will be included in a participant's NDIS plan to pay for the services of a plan management provider.

## 3.2 Connecting to a plan manager

Participants are encouraged to select a plan management provider who best matches their preferences and needs. A participant can find and connect with a plan management provider in a number of ways, including:

- contacting a Local Area Coordinator, Early Childhood Partner, or support coordinator

- seeking recommendations from peer networks
- using the Provider Finder tool on the [NDIS myplace participant portal](#), and
- exploring other online resources and websites including the [NDIS Commission \(external\)](#).

Participants are able to verify that their preferred plan management provider is registered by checking the NDIS Commission's register.

A participant should have a clear understanding of the supports they have chosen and how they want their supports to be provided. When a participant engages a plan management provider, or any other provider, it is important to establish a [service agreement](#).

A service agreement outlines the services to be provided by a plan management provider, the duration of these services, the roles and responsibilities of both parties, how to resolve any problems, and what happens if either party wants to change or cancel plan management services.

Plan management providers are expected to use a participant's preferred language and method of communication when establishing a service agreement. This is to ensure both participants and plan management providers have a clear understanding of their agreement. More information about service agreements is available on the [NDIS website](#).

## Terry's story



Terry attended his NDIS plan review meeting with a goal to live independently. Terry and his parents self-managed Terry's initial NDIS plan.

With Terry's goal to become more independent and move out of his parent's home, Terry identified that changing from self-management to plan-management would enable a focus on achieving independence without the additional responsibility of managing the administration of his own plan funding.

Terry spoke to his peers about experiences and recommendations, and used the Provider Finder Tool to locate a plan management provider. Terry's subsequent NDIS plan included capacity building and training in financial management to further support Terry to work towards living independently and managing his own money.

### 3.3.1 Plan management (financial administration)

Plan management refers to the financial administration of a participant's NDIS plan on a participant's behalf. This service will assist a participant by:

- managing and monitoring a participant's budget in accordance with the plan management service agreement for the duration of the NDIS plan
- managing the NDIS claims and disbursing funds to providers for delivered services
- maintaining records for a participant and producing regular (at least monthly) statements for participants showing the financial status of a participant's plan, and
- providing access as required to a wider range of service providers, including non-registered providers, while ensuring compliance with the price limits contained within the [NDIS Price Guide](#).

Plan management funding is included in a participant's plan, but is separate to the reasonable and necessary funding of a participant's NDIS disability supports.

Plan management funding includes both a plan management establishment fee, and a monthly processing fee. The purpose of the establishment fee is to cover the initial cost for the establishment of financial arrangements between the participant and the plan management provider.

A meeting (face to face, telephone or other online engagement) between a participant and a plan management provider must take place for the establishment fee to be claimed. A record of the initial meeting must be maintained and the arrangements should be formalised in the service agreement.

The monthly processing fee covers the ongoing costs a plan management provider incurs for the financial administration, payment of invoices, and monitoring of a participant's plan budget.

## 3.3 Plan management services

There are two types of services that a plan management provider can provide, including:

- the financial administration of a participant's plan, and
- plan and financial management capacity building supports.



### 3.3.2 Capacity building and training

Subject to a participant's individual circumstances, 'capacity building and training in plan and financial management' may be included in the plan as a reasonable and necessary funded support. Funding for this support is separate to funding included in a participant's plan for plan management services and is claimed at an hourly rate.

This capacity building and training support focuses on strengthening a participant's ability to undertake tasks associated with the management of their supports. This includes, but is not limited to:

- building a participant's financial and administration skills to set and monitor budgets, pay providers in line with service agreements, and gain financial organisational skills
- enhancing a participant's ability to direct their own supports including deciding who provides these supports and how they are delivered, and where possible and appropriate, developing a participant's skills to self-manage their own NDIS plan.

### 3.4 What to expect when working with an NDIS plan manager

The development of the service agreement enables a participant and a plan management provider to agree on the level of service to be provided. A participant has the right to negotiate any terms included in a service agreement.

The NDIA encourages plan management providers to first meet with a participant to discuss and agree on the mode of delivery for plan management services. Service delivery modes available for participants and plan managers include a combination of face-to-face, telephone or other technology-based solutions depending on a participant's preference and support needs.

The NDIA expects that a service agreement be in place so a participant and their plan management provider are clear about what each party has agreed to. These service agreements should reflect what has been agreed to between parties and include all terms such as pricing for NDIS services, establishment processes and dispute resolution. This service agreement will help to make sure a participant and plan management provider have the same expectations of what support will be delivered and how it will be delivered.

If a dispute arises between parties, a service agreement can often assist. Plan management providers must ensure a participant or delegated decision maker fully understands and comprehends the terms of the service agreement and has the intention, capacity and capability to meet any obligations that rest with the participant.

Providers, including plan managers, should be aware of their obligations under Australian Consumer Law when creating a service agreement with a participant. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) provide advice and [information to businesses](#), including not-for-profit organisations, regarding the supply of goods or services to consumers with disability. The ACCC also provides information on consumer rights when an NDIS participant pays for a product or service themselves.

### 3.5 Changing plan management providers

A participant can choose to change plan management providers at any time during the life of their NDIS plan, as long as a participant complies with the notice periods agreed in their service agreement.

Participants are encouraged to discuss the decision with their plan management provider prior to ending any working arrangement. In circumstances where a resolution cannot be achieved and a change of plan management provider is required, the plan management provider must assist a participant to transition to a new plan management provider.

Assistance should include providing a participant with information on whether any due or expected invoices are yet to be received and paid, and confirmation on what the plan management provider's last day is for processing invoices. Ideally all services delivered during the period should be claimed by the current plan manager prior to transition. This reduces any service disruption and ensures continuity of plan management services to a participant.

If any issues arise with provision of plan management services, a participant can make a complaint about the quality or safety of NDIS supports and services provided to the [NDIS Commission \(external\)](#).

For complaints relating to plan management providers operating in WA, complaints may be directed to the [Health and Disability Services Complaints Office \(HaDSCO\) \(external\)](#) until 1 December 2020.

### Alice's story



Alice chooses to have NDIS funded supports plan-managed. Alice has been working with a plan management provider for a few months, and has discussed with the plan manager some concerns regarding timeliness of processing invoices and responding to queries. Alice has not seen an improvement following these discussions and as a result, has decided a different plan management provider may be a better choice.

Alice contacts the current plan manager and advises her intention to change plan management providers and end the service agreement. Although disappointed, the plan manager agrees to finalise the processing of Alice's invoices for the remainder of the notice period as stated in her service agreement. The plan manager provides Alice with a statement outlining all payments to date, and details of remaining budget balances. Alice was able to provide this to the new plan manager to assist smooth transition from the previous to the new plan management provider. The new provider will begin processing invoices at the end of the notice period, ensuring continuity of service for Alice.

# 4. Plan management activities

A plan management provider is expected to manage a number of activities and tasks to ensure the effective financial administration of a participant’s NDIS plan.

The activities and tasks should be applied in a way that recognises and supports a participant’s individual circumstances.

Service establishment responsibilities	Ongoing service responsibilities
Discussion about a participant’s supports and goals as stated in the NDIS plan	Managing and monitoring a participant’s budget in accordance with applicable service agreements for the duration of the NDIS plan
Provide information about respective responsibilities to ensure supports obtained are aligned with a participant’s NDIS plan	Managing the NDIS claims and disbursing funds to providers for delivered services promptly
Provide confirmation there is sufficient NDIS funding in a participant’s plan for supports	Ensuring funds are being spent in accordance with the plan and in line with expected NDIS plan spend
Agree on a preferred method of invoicing and/or how receipts for reimbursement are exchanged	Maintaining records for a participant and producing regular (at least monthly) statements showing the financial status of a participant’s plan
Obtain a participant’s preferences regarding visibility over provider invoices sent to a plan manager	Provide information showing the financial status of a participant’s plan. This could include electronically generated statements and access to online dashboards
Walkthrough a plan manager’s process for receiving and managing invoices	Provide an end date for processing invoices
Outline responsibilities of a participant and plan management provider for ongoing monitoring and management of plan budget	Provide a statement when a participant chooses to switch plan management providers and/or at plan review. This could include electronically generated statements and access to online dashboards.
Provide information about established dispute resolution processes	Providing access to a wider range of service providers, including non-registered providers, while ensuring compliance with the price limits contained within the NDIS Price Guide – as required

## 4.1 Service establishment responsibilities

### 4.1.1 Scope of service delivery

During the initial meeting between a participant and a plan management provider, the scope of each parties roles and responsibilities should be agreed and comprise of:

- information about respective responsibilities to ensure supports obtained are aligned with a participant's NDIS plan
- confirmation there is sufficient NDIS funding in a participant's plan for supports
- a preferred method of invoicing and/or how receipts for reimbursement are exchanged
- a participant's preferences regarding visibility over provider invoices sent to a plan manager
- a plan manager's process for receiving and managing invoices
- responsibilities of a participant and plan management provider for ongoing monitoring and management of plan budget
- well defined and understood dispute resolution processes.

### 4.1.2 Understand participant's supports and goals

It is important for a participant and their plan management provider to discuss and agree on how they would like their NDIS funded supports to be managed. This includes having a clear understanding of how a participant wants to have invoices delivered to their plan management provider along with how, when and in what circumstances they would like to authorise claiming and payment for supports.

Plan management providers should discuss their own roles and responsibilities, in addition to those of the participant, regarding the engagement and payment of supports. This includes the plan management provider's role of ensuring supports adhere with the NDIS Price Guide and are in alignment with the scope of the NDIS plan.

A plan manager must also advise a participant they cannot pay for supports and services not funded by the NDIS out of their plan. These arrangements should also be reflected in the service agreement between the plan management provider and a participant.



## Natalia's story



Natalia is an NDIS participant and has chosen to plan manage her NDIS funded supports. Natalia has chosen a plan management provider

and has arranged to meet and discuss the services they are able to offer.

Natalia and the plan manager meet and discuss the supports in her NDIS plan. The plan manager explains that part of their role is to help Natalia understand how the NDIS price guide works, and discusses with Natalia the price limits for the support items she is looking to claim, together with any relevant conditions or policies stated in the price guide.

Plan management providers must support a participant to understand the types of services and supports that can be claimed from a participant's plan. A plan management provider must comply with the NDIS Price Guide using the most appropriate support items for claiming, including available support item code, how services can be used, and maximum prices that can be charged.

A plan management provider should increase a participant's awareness of the NDIS Price Guide and how support items outlined in the guide relate to a participant's plan. This will assist a participant to understand and direct their NDIS funds appropriately in order to achieve their goals, and prevent the under-utilisation of available NDIS supports or over-spending of their NDIS plan funds.

When plan management providers receive invoices or reimbursements that are not within a participant's plan funding, or a plan management provider has identified a participant has potential for plan overspend, a plan management provider must immediately raise this with a participant or their representative.

### 4.1.3 Preferred method of communication

A plan management provider should ensure they communicate using a participant's preferred communication method. For example, a financial statement of all NDIS plan transactions should be made available in an accessible and easy to understand format on a regular basis (at least monthly).

### 4.1.4 Payment assistance

A plan management provider is responsible for processing payment requests through the NDIS myplace provider portal, or via other technology options available from the NDIA such as Application Programming Interfaces. Further information is available from the [NDIA Digital Partnership Office](#).



## Muhammed's story



Muhammed lives in a rural community and engages a range of supports and services with plan managed NDIS funding, including an occupational therapist

who specialises in mental health.

The plan manager received details of the NDIS funded supports from Muhammed's support coordinator including the type and frequency of services being delivered by the occupational therapist. The plan manager allocated funds accordingly, confirming there would be sufficient funds in Muhammed's NDIS plan. Six months into Muhammed's plan, the plan manager noticed that funds were quickly being exhausted.

If the plan manager continued to process invoices, Muhammed's funding would be depleted before his scheduled plan review. In response, the plan manager contacted Muhammed to bring this to Muhammed's attention and to gain an understanding of the reasons for the potential overspend.

Through discussion with the plan manager, Muhammed explained he was attending sessions with the occupational therapist more frequently than first thought. Muhammed was able to work with the plan manager to consider a range of options regarding management of the remaining NDIS plan funds, this included adjusting the frequency of his other supports to ensure he continued to access regular occupational therapy from his budget. Muhammed's plan manager also recommended he contact his Local Area Coordinator to discuss his change in circumstance and the need to access more regular therapies.

### 4.1.5 Information regarding providers of supports

A plan management provider may be aware of available providers (including registered and non-registered providers) in a location where a participant lives and can provide this information where needed. While a plan management provider may choose to provide this information to a participant, the decision remains with a participant as to how they exercise their choice and control over the providers of the services they need.

A plan management provider is required to provide information to participants about:

- how invoices and receipts should be submitted by providers to the plan management provider for payment (refer 4.2.1 of this guide)
- any tasks required by a participant or their provider to ensure timely payment of services delivered
- the minimum information requirements for invoices or receipts (refer 4.2.1 section of this guide)
- the need for a participant to periodically confirm invoices have been correctly paid
- a participant's right to make a complaint or provide feedback on services received as it relates to the NDIS Commission's Code of Conduct (or in the case of providers in WA) the NDIS Terms of Business.

### 4.1.6 Fees

A plan management provider should explain their schedule of fees which may be documented in a service agreement and must comply with the [NDIS Price Guide](#).

For additional information regarding plan management fees refer to the NDIS Price Guide.

## 4.2 Ongoing service responsibilities

### 4.2.1 Prompt payment

While engaged as a participant's plan management provider there is an ongoing responsibility for monitoring NDIS plan funding and paying for supports delivered to a participant.

A plan management provider must validate whether invoices received from providers of services are in accordance with the plan and in line with expected NDIS plan spend within no more than five business days. This promotes efficient plan reporting and management, and ensures a provider's original invoicing terms are met.

In circumstances where an invoice or receipt is received and found to be outside the scope of a participant's funded supports, the plan management provider should discuss the invoice with a participant as soon as practicable and refer a participant to the provider for further discussion.

Tax invoices or receipts received by a plan management provider should contain clear details to enable accurate processing.

Tax invoices must include enough information to clearly determine the following details:

- that the document is intended to be a tax invoice
- the provider's identity, and their Australian Business Number (ABN)
- date the invoice or receipt was issued
- a description of service or support delivered
- the GST amount (if any) payable – this can be shown separately or, if the GST amount is exactly one-eleventh of the total price, such as a statement which says 'Total price includes GST'
- the extent to which each sale on the invoice is a taxable sale (that is, the extent to which each sale includes GST)

Where appropriate, as many of the following details are also expected to be included in an invoice:

- the participant's NDIS number, and their name
- quantity of service or support delivered
- the total cost of service delivered and invoicing amount date(s) of service or support delivered
- location of supports delivered
- NDIS support item name and number (if known) and
- details of how payment should be processed.

Participants seeking reimbursement for services must provide a plan management provider with a receipt containing the same information as the tax invoice issued from their chosen provider of supports (as stated above).

The participant and their plan management provider must discuss and agree on how to approve or authorise invoices for claiming from the NDIS. A participant may wish to give the plan management provider pre-approval to claim for some invoices, such as scheduled or regular supports and invoices that might not change much over the course of the plan period. Alternatively, a participant might wish to approve every invoice prior to claiming. This arrangement should be defined and clearly captured in the service agreement prior to commencing claiming.

The NDIS Commission publishes a compliance and enforcement actions register in accordance with the NDIS (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018, which is available on the [NDIS Commission's website](#). Plan management providers should alert participants to the existence of this register and ensure plan funds are not paid to a provider, or individual, with an active banning order issued by the NDIS Commission.

A plan management provider should arrange for a prompt payment to a service provider, or prompt reimbursement to a participant, within two business days of the plan management provider receiving payment from the NDIS.

### 4.2.2 Payment integrity

A key component of a plan manager's role is to manage and acquit the funding for supports that have been approved in a participant's plan by the Agency. This component of a plan manager's role includes paying for the supports that are identified in a participant's plan.

Ultimately, all plan managers have a legal responsibility to ensure that NDIS funds (public monies) are spent in accordance with the participant's plan. In discharging this obligation, it is important for plan managers to consider that supports in a participant's plan can either be described generally or specifically. Where supports in a plan are described generally, the participant will have a high degree of flexibility over the implementation of their supports. In contrast, supports that have been described specifically (known as 'stated' supports) will have to be purchased in the way described in the plan.

To ensure maximum choice and control, where possible the Agency's preference is to describe core supports generally so as to provide participant's with greater flexibility surrounding the supports they can purchase to move them towards their goals. However, given each participant has an individualised plan, the plan manager will need to ensure that funds have been spent appropriately having regard to the supports approved in each participant's plan.

To be clear, the role of a plan manager does not extend to determining whether supports or services which have been purchased are 'reasonable and necessary'. The participant's individualised plan will already have funding included for the reasonable and necessary supports that have been approved by the Agency at the planning stage. As stated above, the plan manager's role is to ensure that the participant's plan is being implemented as intended, which includes ensuring that funds are being spent

in accordance with the plan and in line with expected NDIS plan spend. In addition, a plan manager's role does not extend to deciding what supports a participant can access.

It may be the case that a participant is spending their NDIS plan funds faster than anticipated and there is a risk that funds will be exhausted before the participant's next scheduled review date. In these circumstances, a plan manager should engage early with the participant in relation to the effective and efficient utilisation of the approved funding throughout the expected plan period. Where a participant needs additional funding (for example, due to a change in circumstances), the participant can contact the Agency directly to discuss the options that are available to them.

Inappropriate use of government funds or fraud are serious matters. A plan manager may be liable to repay any amounts which have not been spent in accordance with a participant's plan. Additional information is available on the NDIA's [Provider Payment Assurance Program](#) which outlines expectations of providers regarding claiming.

Plan management providers must follow payments and pricing controls established by the NDIA. This includes abiding by, and not exceeding, price controls set out in the NDIS Price Guide. Plan managers are unable to pay an invoice for a support that exceeds the relevant price control, irrespective of whether a provider seeking payment is a registered or non-registered provider.

Plan managers cannot claim funds from a service booking in advance prior to supports and services being delivered to a participant. Plan managers can only claim from a participant's NDIS plan once a support has been delivered or provided, and an invoice or receipt has been raised showing the relevant information about the type of service and when a service was provided to the participant.



### 4.2.3 Plan spending information

At a minimum, a plan management provider is required to issue monthly financial statements to a participant. The statements should include:

- a report which details a participant’s NDIS plan spend since the previous issued statement
- the remaining balance of funds in a participant’s plan
- an indication of whether a participant’s plan spend is consistent with, above or below the forecasted plan spend.

Frequent plan utilisation reporting and timely payment processes both mitigate and prevent over-expenditure risks. It is best practice for a plan management provider to support a participant by providing access to real time monitoring of plan funds through a variety of communication methods that include use of an online portal or application, phone or email.

A plan management provider is expected to signal any concerns relating to over or under-utilisation of NDIS funds to a participant and their nominee, as part of the plan statement.

A participant may be responsible for any charge, and costs related to plan overspend.

Broader (non-financial) support to a participant to assist with implementation of their plan is undertaken by a support coordinator or NDIS Partner in the Community (Local Area Coordinator, or Early Childhood Partner). An NDIS Partner in the Community or support coordinator may assist a participant to resolve NDIS plan over or under-utilisation.

## Noah’s story



Noah’s first NDIS plan was recently approved. Noah’s NDIS plan included funding for group therapy and community activities.

Noah has chosen to plan-manage his funding and has engaged a plan management provider with the assistance of his Local Area Coordinator.

Two months into Noah’s plan, the plan manager notices they have not received any invoices for group therapy or community activities. The plan manager contacts Noah to discuss, and Noah explains this is the first time he has received funding for supports, and is yet to engage with group therapy or community activities. Noah also shares he is not aware of any providers in his community. The plan manager encourages Noah to speak to his Local Area Coordinator to obtain more assistance with finding and connecting with providers based on Noah’s NDIS plan goals.

### 4.2.4 Change of plan manager statement

If a participant is looking to change their plan management provider, the plan management provider should generate a financial statement outlining all payments made during the current NDIS plan and provide this to a participant. This statement will assist a participant’s transition to a new plan management provider and help to ensure the timeliness of payments, as well as ongoing supports and services.

The report must also identify a participant’s total plan spend and the current balance of funds. The statement is to be in a format that is accessible and preferred by a participant.

#### 4.2.5 End date for processing invoices

When a participant decides to end a service agreement for plan management services, a participant and a provider should agree on an end date, at which time a plan management provider will no longer provide their services. This means that any invoices issued after this end-date, and associated payments, are the responsibility of a participant and their new plan management provider to process.

A participant is required to provide details of their new plan manager, including information on where to send future invoices, to their existing providers to ensure continued prompt payment.

In any transitional arrangement a new plan manager may need to pay money spent from a participant's plan, even if the expenditure was incurred before their agreed start date. This is to ensure any late invoices issued by a provider from earlier in the plan period are able to be paid. However while this is possible, the NDIA expects payments of this kind will only be required in exceptional circumstances.

In order to process this type of payment, plan managers will need to create a 'plan managed' service booking for the entire plan period, rather than the date they commenced delivery of plan management services.

### 4.3 Duties outside the scope of plan management

A plan manager's role is to support a participant by managing the funding of supports in their NDIS plan. Their role relates specifically to the financial, plan-managed funded supports of the NDIS Plan and does not extend into supporting with day-to-day administration, management or maintenance of the entire NDIS plan. A plan manager has different roles and functions to the plan implementation support provided by an Local Area Coordinator, Early Childhood Partner, or Support Coordinator.

A plan manager is not responsible for assisting the participant to explore and connect with providers, broader systems of supports, and community supports. A plan manager is also not expected to maintain a participant's NDIS supports through rostering services, or providing disability related advocacy services.

# 5. Additional Resources

## NDIS legislation and other guidelines

This practice guide should be read in conjunction with NDIS legislation, rules and operational guidelines related to planning and plan management. NDIA decisions about funded supports in a participant's plan, including plan management are made under the following:

- **National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act 2013)**
- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (Plan Management) Rules 2013**
- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (Supports for Participants) Rules 2013**
- **Operational Guideline - Planning**

## Other relevant legislation and rules

Other legislation relevant to providing plan management services includes, but is not limited to:

- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018**
- **Freedom of Information Act 1982**
- **Privacy Act 1988**
- **Competition and Consumer Act 2010.**

The NDIA has developed additional supporting plan management guidance designed for participants and providers in the form of the **NDIS Guide to Plan Management – Easy Read**




This guide will continue to be updated and reviewed to ensure it remains up to date.

Further information on the NDIS is available with resources to support organisations to become an NDIS provider, how to work as a provider to maximise outcomes for participants, relevant NDIA Price Guides and pricing.




**For more information about the NDIS Guide to Plan Management, please contact:**

**National Disability Insurance Agency**




-  Telephone 1800 800 110
-  Find us on Facebook/NDISAus
-  Follow us on Twitter @NDIS

**[ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)**

**For people who need help with English**

 TIS: 131 450

**For people who are Deaf or hard of hearing**

-  TTY: 1800 555 677
-  For Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727
-  Internet relay: National Relay Service  
[relayservice.gov.au](https://relayservice.gov.au)