



Finding your way around with help from a navigator

The panel's vision

We want a connected system of support for people with disability. This connected system should include accessible and inclusive mainstream services, foundational supports and individual support funded through the NDIS.

We also want all people with disability and their families to have more help to navigate this system.

So we recommend creating a new role called a navigator. Navigators should have good local knowledge to support people with disability and their families to understand, find and use mainstream and community services, as well as foundational supports.

They should also help participants find, use and pay for NDIS funded services from their budgets, similar to the role of support coordinators currently.

Most importantly, navigators will be directed by people with disability, and act in their interests.

What is the problem?

We have heard how hard it is for people with disability and their families to find their way through a complex system of mainstream services. NDIS participants and their families also have to work their way through a confusing and complicated NDIS.

There are many people who are supposed to help – including Local Area Coordinators (LACs), Early Childhood Partners, support coordinators, plan managers, recovery coaches, NDIS Health and Justice Liaison officers, remote community connectors and some NDIA staff. Sometimes their roles overlap and it is not clear who should be doing what. Other times there are gaps.

LACs have high workloads and have focused on helping people with access and planning. They have not had time to connect people to activities or programs in the community. Sometimes they don't even have good local knowledge to help.

Support coordination is not available to all participants and its quality and outcomes are mixed. There is rarely enough support for participants with very complex needs who need on-going case management.

What is the solution?

Navigators should have good local knowledge and be available to all people with disability – including NDIS participants as well as those who are not eligible for the NDIS.

If you are not eligible for the NDIS, a navigator should help you find and use foundational supports and connect you to mainstream services you need. If you are an NDIS participant, the navigator should also help you find and use services using your individual NDIS budget.

There should be different kinds of navigators:

General navigator – for all people with disability to provide information, and to support access to mainstream and foundational supports. They should also help people with an intellectual disability to connect with support for decision-making. They should support NDIS participants to develop an action plan to use their budget, book and coordinate services where needed, and check-in frequently to see how things are going.

Specialist navigator – should provide higher level of support to NDIS participants with more complex support needs. For example they should help participants who interact frequently with multiple service systems such as hospitals or the child protection system. Or they should help participants with very complex support needs and circumstances.

<p>What is the solution? (continued)</p>	<p>Psychosocial recovery navigator - should help people with psychosocial disability – both NDIS participants and those not eligible for the scheme. Their job should include active outreach and assistance to connect with non-NDIS mainstream and community services. For those eligible for the NDIS, the navigator should help with the application process, help set and achieve goals, identify the right supports and connect with mental health, primary care and housing services.</p> <p>Housing and living navigator – should work with NDIS participants to identify and trial housing and living options, then help negotiate with chosen providers.</p> <p>Shared support facilitator – a specialist role who would work with participants who share housing and living supports. The job of the facilitator is to make sure everyone who is sharing support has a say about how their support is organised and delivered. Most importantly they should be independent of the support provider and property manager, so people can have a real say about their living arrangements.</p> <p>Lead practitioner – a specialist role just for children and families. Lead practitioners should be available to all children who are NDIS participants. They may also be available to some children who are not NDIS participants but who have higher support needs than can be met in foundational supports and mainstream services. Lead practitioners should support both the family and the child, because we know children do best when families feel well supported. They should identify needs, connect to appropriate foundational and mainstream supports and provide information, advice and coaching to support the child’s development. Lead practitioners who work with NDIS participants should also coordinate NDIS funded services to build a supportive team around the child and family.</p>
<p>Who will this benefit?</p>	<p>All people with disability, and their families should have access to a wider range of accessible supports that meet their needs in their community.</p>
<p>What happens next?</p>	<p>We know you might be worried about what this will mean for you.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that people with disability, their families and representative organisations are closely involved in designing and testing these changes, to make sure they work well.</p> <p>We also recommend that they are introduced gradually so everyone has time to get ready.</p>

Want more information? Read the final NDIS Review report and recommendations, NDIS Review Guide, NDIS Review fact sheets and FAQ at www.ndisreview.gov.au