# Engage, Connect, Help & Open Opportunities

## MAINSTREAM & COMMUNITY NDIS READINESS Q&A

## Key Points

* Inclusion, access and participation
* National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
* National Disability Insurance Agency
* (NDIA)
* Mainstream and Community Organisations
* Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC)

## Quick Important Definitions

Inclusion – the process whereby every person who wishes to can access and participate fully in all aspects of an activity or service in the same way as any other member of the community.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – The funding available for eligible people with disability to purchase disability and support services.

National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) – The National Agency responsible for administering the NDIS.

Organisation: An organised group of people with a particular purpose. For this readiness survey, this term is used to covers the diverse 13 mainstream and community service sectors. It includes all levels of government, not-for-profit, private businesses, peak bodies and community clubs.

Information, Linkages and Capacity (ILC) – A component of the NDIS that creates connections between people with disability and the communities they live in. Unlike the rest of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), ILC doesn’t provide funding to individuals. ILC provides grants to organisations to build capacity.

Project ECHO works to **E**ngage, **C**onnect, **H**elp and **O**pen opportunities for Tasmanian organisations (mainstream services, community groups and local governments); to include all Tasmanians with disability in their services and in the broader community.

Completing this Mainstream & Community Q&A will check your readiness to be a more inclusive service as we fully transition into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). An inclusive service has worked to remove the barriers for people to access and participate.

The NDIS aims to improve and support the lives of people with disability.

This Q&A finds out how much you already know about this national scheme and the opportunities for your organisation.

Your answers will help identify the gaps in understanding about the NDIS and the types of information and resources that would help your organisation be more inclusive.

Question 1: A disability is a condition that only restricts a person’s sensory or mobility functions.

Answer 1 = False

Restriction of mental functions is also a type of disability. Therefore, a disability is a condition that restricts a person’s mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, significant or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible. Disability groups are a broad categorisation of disabilities in terms of underlying health condition, impairment, activity limitations, participation restrictions and environmental factors. The primary disability is the disability that most clearly expresses the experience of disability by a person. It can also be considered as the disability group causing the most difficulty to the person. A person may have more than one disability. Intellectual, Autism, Psychosocial disability, cerebral Palsy, Other neurological, development delay, other physical, acquired Brain Injury, Hearing impairment, Visual impairment, other sensory/Speech, Multiple Sclerosis, Global Development Delay, Spinal Cord Injury, Other [1].

[1][Disability Categories adopted by the NDIS](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

Question 2: Around 25,000 Tasmanians have a disability.

Answer 2 = False

National surveys estimate that one in five Australians have a disability that affects their function to varying degrees and in different ways. In Tasmania this number is one in four or 132,000 people. [2] Of these, an estimated 10,600 people have disability that is permanent and significant. The expanding market for services and supports for this group of people is the focus of a number of initiatives including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

[2] [ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016 (Core Activity Need for Assistance module)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Core%20Activity%20Need%20for%20Assistance~27)

Question 3: Accessible Island: Tasmania’s Disability Framework for Action 2018-2021 will be phased out and replaced by the new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Answer 3 = False

Accessible Island: Tasmanians’ Disability Framework for Action 2018-2021 is the third stage of a whole-of-government approach to ensure that all government agencies implement socially just policies and practices. The First stage is the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The Second stage is the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (currently under refresh). The stages cascade down from International, National to State-wide action plans.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) exists within the broader framework of all three stages to help individual people with disability live an ordinary life in Australia.

The NDIS complements and contributes to the respective actions plans from each of all three stages.

For further information:

[Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/the-convention-in-brief.html)

[National Disability Strategy](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf)

[Accessible Island Disability Framework for Action 2018-2021](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/364212/Accessible_Island_Disability_Framework_for_Action_2018-2021.pdf)

Question 4: The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides block funding to agencies and community organisations.

Answer 4 = False

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) moves away from the previous system of providing block funding to agencies and community organisations. As an insurance scheme it provides direct funding for individuals. The NDIS is designed to help people with a significant and permanent disability to be more independent and engage more socially and economically. In Tasmania, people have transitioned into the NDIS since 2013 and the full scheme will commence from 1 July 2019.

Question 5: The NDIS covers all the services and supports needed by all people with disability.

Answer 5 = False

The NDIS provides support and services to eligible people with permanent and significant intellectual, physical, sensory, cognitive and psychosocial disability. Early intervention supports can also be provided for eligible people with disability or children with developmental delay. A permanent disability is lifelong. A significant disability has a substantial impact on the ability to compete everyday activities.

People who have a disability and are aged 65 years or over are not eligible for the NDIS. The Disability Support Pension (DSP) is separate to the NDIS. Receiving the DSP is not automatic eligibility criteria for NDIS. Similarly, NDIS funding, will not impact any income support such as the DSP or Carers Allowance.

Question 6: The NDIS covers all government, private and community services for people with disability.

Answer 6 = False

The NDIS does not replace, duplicate, or directly fund government or community services.

Each person eligible under the NDIS will have a plan and a budget to purchase supports and services. These NDIS funded supports and services are in addition to those that every Australian can access.

Other government and community services continue to be responsible for providing support and services to all Australians, and ensuring their services are inclusive and accessible for people with disability.

Other government services include local councils, hospitals, libraries, health centres, public transport or schools.

Community services and activities include community groups, sporting clubs and charities within your local community.

Businesses also have an important role to play in providing a welcoming and accessible environment for everyone, and this includes cafes, workplaces and shopping centres.

Question 7: The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) decides if a person with disability is eligible under the NDIS.

Answer 7 = True

The NDIA makes decisions about whether a person is eligible to become an NDIS Participant and, if so, how much funding they will receive. This is based on legislation called the NDIA Act 2013 which sets out what supports, and services are considered reasonable and necessary for the NDIS to fund.

Question 8: Local Area Coordinators (LAC’s) help people with disability and their families and carers to access the NDIS; and to develop and to use their NDIS plans.

Answer 8 = True

For most people with disability and their families and carers, the Local Area Coordinator will be their main point of contact when they enter the NDIS. LACs work with people aged 7 years and older.

Specialist Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Coordinators help children aged 0-6 years.

Question 9: All providers of supports and services specified in a Participants’ NDIS plan are required to adhere to the NDIS Code of conduct.

Answer 9 = True

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Rules set requirements for quality and safety. All NDIS providers and workers must abide by the NDIS Code of Conduct, which sets out expectations for behaviour, culture and service delivery. Providers who register with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission must meet the NDIS Practice Standards, including requirements for quality and safety of the services and supports they deliver. Providers that provide support to people with have a self-managed NDIS plan are, not required to be registered, but still must adhere to the NDIS Code of Conduct. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission’s quality and safeguards system also includes requirements for complaints management, incident management, worker screening, behaviour support and use of restrictive practices.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission works with providers and provides education and training to help them understand their obligations. Where providers or workers don’t meet their requirements, the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission can take educative, corrective or enforcement action.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission commences operation in Tasmania from 1 July 2019.

[For further information: NDIS Commission](https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/registered-provider-responsibilities)

The NDIA is responsible for regulating the quality and safety of services and supports delivered under a Participants’ NDIS plan.

Answer 10 = False

The NDIA is the National Disability Insurance Agency. The agency manages the operation of the NDIS. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is a separate, independent government body that works to improve the quality and safety of NDIS services and supports, investigates and resolves problems, and strengthens the skills and knowledge of providers and Participants. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:

• Registers and regulates NDIS providers and oversees provider quality;

• Monitors compliance with the NDIS Practice Standards and NDIS Code of Conduct;

• Responds to concerns, complaints and reportable incidents;

• Advises providers on in-house complaints management and supporting Participants to make a complaint;

• Advises providers on incident management systems and how to report serious incidents to the NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission;

• Works with people with disability, NDIS providers and workers to improve their skills and knowledge, monitors the use of restrictive practices and educates providers and Participants about behaviour support strategies;

• Works with states and territories to design and implement nationally consistent NDIS worker screening;

• Provides market oversight by monitoring changes in the market that need attention; and

• Shares information with other regulatory bodies.

[For further information: NDIS Commission](https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/registered-provider-responsibilities)

Question 11: The role of the NDIA is limited to supporting the subset of people who are eligible for an NDIS plan.

Answer 11 = False

The NDIS exists within a broader framework of the National Disability Strategy to support all people with disability to live an ordinary life. For this reason, the NDIS also invests in initiatives that strengthen mainstream services and communities to actively include all Australians with disability. This investment is made under the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building framework of the NDIS.

People who are not eligible for the NDIS can still get help to access community and other government services. The NDIS can provide information and help connect all people with disability and their families and carers to their community, and with government and other services. For many people, this will be all the support they need.

Question 12: The principle of the ILC component of the NDIS is that people with disability access and participate in society through mainly disability-specific supports and services.

Answer 12 = False

The principles of NDIS ILC align with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[1] The focus of the NDIS ILC is to work to improve the alternative pathways to an ordinary life for people with disability particularly by building the capacity of non-Participants to achieve their goals outside of specialist disability services. The five goals for a person with disability are:

1. Have the information needed to make their own decision and choices;

2. Are connected to the right disability AND mainstream supports;

3. Have skills and confidence to be an active member of the community;

4. Use the same mainstream services as everybody else;

5. Take part in the same community activities as everybody else.

Australian governments have agreed on principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other service systems. Australian governments and the NDIA have been working together to improve the operationalisation of these principles to clarify the relationship between NDIS and mainstream sectors. The role of mainstream sectors has been delineated through bilateral negotiations and multilateral agreement for transition to a full scheme NDIS. It is important that all governments maintain their effort with respect to the implementation of the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020. The Strategy was agreed by all Australian governments in 2011 and provides the framework for disability reform in Australia. While improvements in the provision of disability specific supports, such as the NDIS, are an important component, the Strategy has a particular focus on improving the performance of mainstream service systems to ensure that people with disability have equal access. Mainstream sectors have an ongoing responsibility to address structures and systems that are barriers to access, including responsibility to put in place adaptations that meet the needs of people with disability. These are enshrined in Commonwealth and State and Territory policies and laws (for example, The Disability Discrimination Act 1992). These responsibilities have not changed with the roll out of the NDIS.

[1] [United National Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html)

Question 13: One-third (35.1%) of women and over one-quarter (28.1% of men aged 15 years and over regularly avoid situations because of their disability.

Answer 13 = True

The barriers to equal social and economic participation by people with disability in Australia are significant. Many of these barriers are not related to the person’s functional ability to participate. For example: Almost one in 12 Australians with disability (281,100 people or 8.6%) reported they had experienced discrimination or unfair treatment because of their disability. Young people with disability (aged 15 to 24 years) were more likely to report the experience of discrimination (20.5%) than those aged 65 years and over (2.1%). (Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2015)

Question 14: Social exclusion of people with disability is due to the functional limitations of the individuals and is not due to the failures in society, communities or services to meet the needs of people with disability.

Answer 14 = False

Disability discrimination is when a person with disability is treated less favourably than a person without a disability in the same or similar circumstances. For example, it would be “direct discrimination” if a restaurant refused a person entry because they are blind and have a guide dog.

It is also discrimination when there is a rule of policy that is the same for everyone but has an unfair effect on people with a particular disability. It would be “indirect discrimination” if the only way to enter a public building is by a set of stairs because people with disability who use wheelchairs would be unable to enter the building.

Social exclusion exists because of direct and indirect discrimination. In many cases the discrimination is unintentional, inadvertent and due to absence of information, awareness and education about disability. This is an individual and society challenge.

The National Disability Discrimination Act 1992 protects a person from discrimination in many areas of public life, including employment, education, accommodation, getting or using services and accessing public places. It is against the law to discriminate.

It is recognised that work is required to realise a fully inclusive society for all people – regardless of their disability. Project ECHO is part of this work.

For further information about [Equal Opportunity Tasmania (The office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner)](https://equalopportunity.tas.gov.au/home/search?mode=results&queries_include_all_query=Disability)

Question 15: An NDIS participant has all their health care and mental health care needs provided and funded under their NDIS plan.

Answer 15 = False

To achieve equal social and economic participation by people with disability, all governments, non-government organisations, businesses and the wider community have a role to play. In establishing the NDIS, governments agreed the broad principles that determine the understanding about whether the supports and services required by people with disability are covered by NDIS and or mainstream services. These principles are now becoming operational and will be regularly reviewed to ensure the increasing effectiveness of the interface between the NDIS and mainstream and community services and supports.

The correct answer is that people with disability – regardless of their NDIS participant status will access the same health services as every other person – together with specialised health services as required.

Specifically, the NDIS funds: Home modifications, personal care and development of skills to help a person become more independent. Allied health and other therapy needed because of a person’s disability, including occupational therapy, speech therapy or physiotherapy. Prosthetics and artificial limbs (surgery remains the responsibility of the health system). Aids and equipment such as wheelchairs, adjustable beds or hearing aids related to a person’s disability. Therapeutic and behavioural supports for people with psychosocial disability. Public health systems fund: Diagnosis and assessment of health conditions, including mental health conditions and disabilities. Medication, general medical and dental services and treatment, specialist services, hospital care, surgery and rehabilitation. Clinical care for mental health conditions. Palliative care, geriatric and psychogeriatric services. Sub-acute, rehabilitation and post-acute care, including treatment of wounds by a nurse.

Question 16: A person with disability can only access education through disability-specific education organisations.

Answer 16 = False

The correct answer is that people with disability – regardless of their NDIS participant status will access the same education services as every other person TOGETHER with specialised education services as required.

Specifically, the NDIS funds: Self-care at school related to the student’s disability, such as assistance with eating. Specialised training of teachers and other staff about the specific personal support needs of a student with disability. Specialist transport required because of the student’s disability (not a substitute for parental responsibility). Transportable equipment such as a wheelchair or personal communication devices. Therapies that a family and school have agreed may be delivered during school time but are not for educational purposes.

Education systems fund: Teachers, learning assistants and other supports such as Auslan interpreters. General support, resources and training for teachers, tutors and other staff. Therapy delivered in schools for education or training purposes, such as allied health practitioners helping teachers and trainers adjust curriculums. Aids and equipment to make curriculums accessible, such as modified computer hardware, software and Braille textbooks. Adjustments to buildings such as ramps, lifts and hearing loops. Transport for educational or training activities such as excursions, field trips and sporting carnivals. Day-to-day supervision of students at school, including behavioural support.

Question 17: A person with disability can access employment services and supports through both mainstream and disability-specific services.

Answer 17 = True

The aim is for people with disability to choose to access the same employment services as every other person.

Recognising the current low level of employment participation by people with disability, a number of development programs and initiative are underway across Australia.

Together these programs support both the employers and the employees to remove the barriers to developing work-related skills, to find and maintain employment, to access reasonable workplace adjustments, aids and equipment to enable job performance and communication.

The costs of the required services and supports are met through a range of sources, depending on the person’s individual circumstances and may include personal funds, targeted employment programs and NDIS participant plans.

Further development is required.

Question 18: A person with disability can choose to live in private or public residential properties.

Answer 18 = True

The aim is for people with disability to have the choice to live in the community as independently as is possible through the access to services and supports.

Such services and supports include:

• Supports that build people's capacity to live independently in the community, supports to improve living skills, money and household management, social and communication skills and behavioural management

• Home modifications to the participant's own home or a private rental property and on a case-by-case basis in social housing

• Support with personal care, such as assistance with showering and dressing

• Help around the home where the participant is unable to undertake these tasks due to their disability, such as assistance with cleaning and laundry.

Most Participants will continue to access housing in the private market - rental or home ownership - or through social housing. This includes:

• Social and community housing

• Homelessness and emergency accommodation services

• Commonwealth Rent Assistance, a payment through the Department of Human Services that assists eligible Participants with the cost of housing

The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) that is creating additional affordable rental properties.

The costs of the required services and supports are met through a range of sources, depending on the person’s individual circumstances and may include personal funds, accommodation programs and NDIS participant plans.

Further public and private accommodation development is required.

Question 19: All people with disability have access to specialised taxi services to support their travel to appointments and activities.

Answer 19 = False

Not all people with disability need access to specialised taxi services. However not all people who need these services have access. Reliable and equal access to all forms of public transport remain a challenge and there are a number of options that are potentially available to meet the public transport needs for people with disability.

Further public and private transport development is required.

Question 20: The NDIA invests in the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) component of the NDIS across four specific programs named:

1. National Information

2. Individual Capacity Building

3. Mainstream Capacity Building

4. Economic and Community Participation

Answer 20 = True

The NDIS is providing short term catalyst investments (grants) in initiatives that work under the 4 programs:

1. National Information - To improve information, linkages and referrals.

2. Individual Capacity Building - To build the capacity of people with disability and their carers and families.

3. Mainstream Capacity Building - To build the capacity, knowledge, skills, practices and cultures of mainstream services so they have the skills to meet the needs of people with disability through short term catalyst investments. Targeting access and improving use of mainstream services by people with disability, to improve life outcomes.

4. Economic and Community Participation - To connect people with disability to activities, employment and community supports and opportunities, helping communities and employers to be inclusive and responsive to people’s needs locally, and nationally.

Question 21: When selecting proposals for investing in Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC), the NDIA will prioritise initiatives from Tasmanian organisations that focus on the Tasmanian community only.

Answer 21 = False

The ILC purpose is to invest in creating more inclusive services, communities and workplaces across Australia.

The NDIS ILC has 5 investment principles for activities and these are:

1. Evidence based where possible delivering defined outcomes

2. Led by and for people with disability and their families

3. Replicable and scalable to national impact

4. Support a sustainable NDIS

5. Supportive of important groups

Initiatives that are designed for potential national replication are important to supporting national consistency.

Question 22: The NDIA has identified only one group for additional Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) investment to create more inclusive services, communities and workplaces. These are people with disability in remote communities.

Answer 22 = False

All people with disability are important, however additional focus is required for certain populations. The NDIS-ILC has identified 4 community groups for additional investment and these are:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders

2. Culturally and Linguistically diverse backgrounds

3. Remote communities

4. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender people (LGBTI)

For detailed information about the [NDIS](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

For detailed information about the [NDIS-ILC program and capacity building investments](https://https:/www.ndis.gov.au/community/information-linkages-and-capacity-building-ilc)

For detailed information about the [NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission](https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/registered-provider-responsibilities):

For detailed information about the [NDIS principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other service systems](https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/communique/NDIS-Principles-to-Determine-Responsibilities-NDIS-and-Other-Service.pdf)

[Project ECHO resources available here](http://www.nds.org.au/resources/echo)