PRACTICE GUIDE

THE SUPPORT COORDINATOR'S GUIDE TO THE NDIS IN 2026

A practical guide for support coordinators, specialist support coordinators and psychosocial recovery coaches: how to deliver great coordination today, and how to prepare for the NDIS reforms coming between 2026 and 2028.

Updated October 2026 · Based on the NDIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Act 2026 and the 2026-27 NDIS Pricing Arrangements

1. WHAT SUPPORT COORDINATION IS

Support coordination helps NDIS participants understand their plan, use it well and build the skills to direct their own supports. It is funded through the Capacity Building – Support Coordination budget, and the participant always makes the final choices.

Support Connection (Level 1)

Short-term help to connect with providers, community and mainstream services and to start using the plan.

Coordination of Supports (Level 2)

Helps participants understand their plan, choose providers, set up service agreements, monitor budgets and prepare for reassessment.

Specialist Support Coordination (Level 3)

For participants with high or complex needs: hospital discharge, housing crisis, justice or child protection involvement, or several services at risk.

Psychosocial Recovery Coaching

Recovery-focused coaching plus coordination of supports for participants with psychosocial disability.

What support coordinators do not do

- Provide direct supports such as personal care, transport or therapy, or act as the participant's plan manager.
- Make decisions for the participant. We inform, explain options and support their choices.
- Act as a legal representative. We help participants prepare evidence and connect them with advocacy or legal services.
- Steer participants to related services without declaring a conflict of interest and offering genuine alternatives.

2. PSYCHOSOCIAL RECOVERY COACHING

A psychosocial recovery coach supports people living with psychosocial disability to build skills, resilience and hope, while coordinating their NDIS and mainstream supports. It is funded from the Support Coordination budget and is usually chosen instead of support coordination.

	Support coordination	Psychosocial recovery coaching
Who it is for	Any participant who needs help to use their plan	Participants with psychosocial disability, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or severe depression
Focus	Connecting to and managing supports	Personal recovery, wellbeing and managing episodic change, plus coordinating supports
Approach	Plan and outcome focused	Recovery-oriented, trauma-informed and strengths-based; lived experience is valued

What a recovery coach does

1. Develops a recovery plan with the participant, in their own words, linked to their NDIS goals.
2. Coaches the participant to manage daily life, appointments and relationships, and to plan for times when they are unwell.
3. Works alongside the treating team (GP, psychiatrist, clinical mental health service) without providing clinical treatment.
4. Coordinates NDIS and mainstream supports.
5. Writes progress and end-of-plan reports that show functional impact and recovery progress.

The NDIS recommends recovery coaches hold a qualification in mental health or mental health peer work (Certificate IV or higher) and/or have at least two years' experience in the mental health sector.

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3. THE PARTICIPANT JOURNEY

Every participant moves through six stages. Each stage has a clear output that should be on file before you move to the next.

1 Referral and intake

- Contact the participant or nominee promptly and explain what support coordination is.
- Obtain signed consent to collect and share information.
- Check the plan: dates, how it is managed and the support coordination hours funded.
- Complete an initial risk screen.

2 Service agreement and first meeting

- Sign a service agreement and give the participant clear information about your service, fees and how to complain.
- Declare any conflict of interest.
- Agree how the participant wants to be contacted and who else should be involved.

3 Plan implementation

- Write a support plan against the participant's NDIS goals.
- Prepare a budget breakdown so the participant knows what each budget buys per week.
- Find providers, request quotes and set up service agreements.
- Complete risk assessments and an emergency plan where needed.

4 Ongoing coordination

- Check in at the agreed frequency and record every contact.
- Monitor spending against the budget breakdown and act early on under- or over-spending.
- Hold care team meetings when several providers are involved or risk changes.

5 Plan reassessment

- Start about three months before the plan end date.
- Collect provider and therapy reports and write your progress report.
- Prepare the participant for the reassessment or support needs assessment interview.

6 Exit or handover

- Write a handover report for the next coordinator or provider and confirm the closure with the participant in writing.

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4. WORKING WITH PROVIDERS

The participant chooses their providers. Your role is to find suitable options, check they fit the plan and budget, and keep everyone working together.

- **Referrals:** send a written referral, with consent, stating the support needed, the funding category and the plan end date. Offer more than one option where you can.
- **Quotes:** ask for hours, rates and NDIS item numbers in writing, and check them against the budget breakdown before the participant signs.

- **Registration:** from 1 July 2027, higher-risk supports such as personal care and daily living must come from a registered provider. Check registration before recommending a provider.
- **Care team meetings:** hold one after a hospital admission or discharge, after an incident, before a reassessment, or whenever several providers are involved. Share minutes and agreed actions promptly.
- **Reports:** request therapy and provider reports well before the reassessment date.

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5. BUDGET BREAKDOWNS AND NDIS PRICES

A budget breakdown shows the participant how many hours each budget buys per week. Prepare one at the start of every plan and whenever the plan or roster changes.

> **Always use the official NDIS prices.** Rates, price limits and support item numbers are set by the NDIA and change each financial year. Before you prepare a budget breakdown or check a quote, look up the current rates in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits and the NDIS Support Catalogue on the NDIS website.

How to calculate hours per day

1. Note the budget amount and the dates it must last.
2. Count the weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays in that period.
3. Find the current rate for each type of day in the NDIS Pricing Arrangements, or in the provider's service agreement if the provider charges less.
4. Work out the cost of one hour every day: weekdays × weekday rate + Saturdays × Saturday rate + Sundays × Sunday rate + public holidays × public holiday rate.
5. Divide the budget by that cost to get hours per day, and round down so the participant does not overspend.
6. Take out fixed costs first, such as sleepovers, then share the rest.

Watch for

- Weekend, evening and public holiday hours use the budget faster.
- Check how the provider charges shifts that run past 8pm on weekdays.

- Check the participant's location: remote and very remote areas have different price limits.
- From 1 October 2026, social, economic and community participation budgets are reset at plan reassessment (see section 7).

6. PLAN CHANGES, NOMINEES AND REVIEWS

Choose the right pathway first: a plan variation for a crisis or small fix, a plan reassessment for a significant and ongoing change, and a review when the participant disagrees with a decision.

Situation	Pathway	Who can request it
Crisis, emergency or fraud; short-term extra support	Plan variation	Participant, nominee or guardian, with coordinator support
Significant and ongoing change in functional capacity, or in living, work, education or informal support arrangements	Unscheduled plan reassessment (the NDIA has 90 days to decide)	Only the participant, plan nominee or guardian (from 27 August 2026)
Participant needs continuous 24-hour disability support after the budget reset	24-hour support plan variation pathway	Participant, nominee or guardian
Participant disagrees with an NDIA decision	Internal review, then the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART)	Participant; the coordinator supports but does not represent

Plan nominees

A plan nominee can act for the participant, including requesting a reassessment. Keep a copy of the nominee request and the date it was sent, and follow up with the NDIA until the nominee appears on the participant's record. Until then, requests must come from the participant.

Administrative Review Tribunal

When the Tribunal contacts you about a participant's review, confirm receipt promptly, note every deadline in the lodgement direction, help the participant gather documents and connect them with an advocate. If more time is needed, the participant can request an extension by emailing reviews@art.gov.au with their review number.

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7. NDIS REFORMS 2026 TO 2028

The *NDIS Amendment (Securing the NDIS for Future Generations) Act 2026* received Royal Assent on 20 August 2026. It changes budgets, planning, access, provider registration and how support coordination itself is funded.

> **The biggest change for coordinators:** from 1 July 2028, support coordination will no longer be funded in individual participant plans. The NDIA will directly appoint providers, through a merit-based process, to deliver a new support coordination and connection service.

27 August 2026
Tighter rules for unscheduled plan reassessments: only the participant, nominee or guardian can request one, for a significant and ongoing change. Participants keep records of claims for 3 years.

1 October 2026
Budget reset begins for new plans and reassessments: social, economic and community participation budgets are reduced by 50%, and improved daily living skills budgets by 10%. Essential daily living supports, such as personal care, eating, toileting and medication, are not reduced. Participants needing 24-hour care can request a plan variation.

1 December 2026
Claims must be made within 90 days of the support being delivered (previously 2 years).

1 February 2027
The budget reset applies to all other participants at plan renewal. Unspent funds no longer roll over, and reasonable and necessary rules become clearer.

1 April 2027
New framework planning begins: a support needs assessment with an NDIS assessor sets the plan budget.

1 July 2027
Providers of higher-risk supports must be registered, and most providers must enrol with the NDIA. Rollout completes by December 2030.

1 October 2027
Only plan managers on an NDIA-approved panel can provide plan management, with a 6-month transition.

1 January 2028
New access rules based on functional capacity. Existing participants are reassessed over 3 years.

1 July 2028
The new commissioned support coordination and connection service begins.

What coordinators can do now

- Recalculate budget breakdowns and rosters at every new plan.
- Keep evidence of functional impact current for every participant.
- Prepare participants for support needs assessment interviews.
- Explain NDIS decisions as NDIS decisions, with a link to the official source.
- Check provider registration before recommending higher-risk supports.

Dates from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, About the changes to the NDIS, as at October 2026. Dates may change; check the official page before advising participants.

8. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Case notes

Record every contact on the same day: date, time, who was involved, what was done, the NDIS goal it relates to, and next steps. Write facts, not opinions.

Billing

Bill only for time spent on the participant's supports, at the correct level, and claim within 90 days. Providers must keep payment records for 7 years.

Safeguarding

If someone is in immediate danger, call 000. Report incidents to your manager immediately; most reportable incidents must be notified to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission within 24 hours.

Consent and privacy

Share personal and health information only with people the participant has agreed to, and check recipients before you reply to all.

Communication

Use plain language, respond promptly, and put the participant's name and the topic in every email subject.

Conflict of interest

Declare any link to a recommended provider and always offer the participant genuine alternatives.

9. KEY RESOURCES

- About the changes to the NDIS – Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits – NDIA
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission – registration, Practice Standards and reportable incidents
- Administrative Review Tribunal – 1800 228 333

This guide is general information for support coordination practice, current as at October 2026. It is not legal or financial advice. NDIS rules and price limits change; always check the official NDIA and Department of Health, Disability and Ageing sources.

LUMI Support Coordination acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.