

NDIS for People with Parkinson's

Australian health services have undergone significant change in recent years, with offerings now more user-focused, based on individual need and choice.

Whether you are considering support services, allied health options, mental health support, aids and equipment, or modifications to your home or workplace, you may be eligible for some government-subsidised support.

For those under the age of 65 and living with a permanent condition such as Parkinson's, you may be eligible to access support and services through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

What is the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)?

The NDIS was established to support and empower people with disabilities to become more independent and lead an 'ordinary' life. The NDIS enables those living with a disability to have more choice and control over the support and services they use.

People living with Parkinson's, PSP, MSA or CBS aged under 65 may benefit from support through the NDIS to achieve their lifegoals and improve their quality of life.

How is the NDIS managed?

The NDIS is managed by an independent statutory agency called the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The NDIA is responsible for decisions surrounding an individual's eligibility to access NDIS as well as the amount of funding they will receive. The legislation that established the NDIA and guides its decisions is outlined in the NDIS Act 2013.

Am I eligible to apply?

To apply for the scheme, all applicants need to be:

- under the age of 65 (or apply before age 65)
- an Australian citizen/resident/hold a permanent visa or protected special category visa
- diagnosed with a permanent and significant disability
- in need of support from a person and/or equipment to perform everyday tasks.

While applicants need to meet an eligibility criteria, service provision is not means tested.

How can the NDIS support you?

The NDIS can provide services or products to help you complete everyday activities, access your community and achieve your lifegoals.

Once a NDIS plan is developed, a personalised budget is allocated. The NDIS will fund 'reasonable and necessary' support required to

achieve your goals, which may include therapy services, daily living support, equipment or modifications.

For someone living with Parkinson's, PSP, MSA or CBS, examples of services or support the NDIS may fund include:

- Physiotherapy for maintaining strength, improving your gait/balance or establishing an exercise program
- Occupational therapy for energy conservation strategies or to improve the safety of your home/ workplace
- Speech pathology to aid your communication or swallowing ability
- A support worker to assist with cleaning, meal preparation, personal care or transportation
- Modifications to your home to improve access and safety
- Mobility aid or other assistive technology/equipment to maintain or improve your independence.

How can you apply to the NDIS?

If you meet the eligibility criteria to apply, you need to complete and submit an Access Request Form (ARF) that is available on the NDIS website. If required, an Access Request can alternatively be made verbally via telephone.

Phone 1800 800 110

NDIS website <https://www.ndis.gov.au/how-apply-ndis/what-access-request-form>

You will need to include medical information to confirm your disability (diagnosis) is permanent.

You will also clearly need to show the impact of your disability on your everyday function.

NDIS supports are not income or means tested.

The NDIS for people with Parkinson's

To be eligible, you must demonstrate significant impact in at least one of the following six domains:

- mobility
- communication
- social interaction
- learning
- self-care and
- self-management.

Evidence of your disability can be provided by having a treating professional complete the form, or by attaching relevant reports, letters or assessments. This will likely involve your Neurologist and/or GP.

An ARF may be further enhanced by other healthcare professionals already involved in your care, or who can confirm the impact of Parkinson's on your daily activities, roles and responsibilities.

Parkinson's is a complex condition, with not only physical or motor symptoms but also non-motor symptoms, many of which may be inconspicuous to others. These symptoms can still have significant impact on your daily tasks.

It is beneficial to discuss all your symptoms with your treating healthcare professionals to ensure that their influence on your daily living is accurately represented in your application.

What happens following your application?

If you are deemed eligible for NDIS support services, you will be contacted to schedule your first planning meeting to establish your goals and budget.

If you are deemed ineligible, you will have an opportunity to submit further evidence or you can request a formal review of the original ARF submitted.

Do I have to apply for NDIS?

Applying for the NDIS is optional. If you are not yet ready to receive any therapy or support, or if you don't feel that your Parkinson's has a significant impact on any of the six domains, then the NDIS is probably not an appropriate option for you at this time.

If you are approaching age 65, it is worthwhile considering applying to the NDIS, as once you turn 65, you are no longer eligible to apply. To support any future health needs you will instead be directed to the My Aged Care scheme, the entry point to government-subsidised aged care services. MAC supports are means tested and may require a co contribution.

Further information:

For more detailed information on the NDIS, go to:

Applying to access the NDIS | NDIS - www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis
www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/am-i-eligible or phone: 1800 80110

You can also contact Fight Parkinson's to discuss your individual situation on 1800 644 189 or info@fightparkinsons.org.au.

Fight Parkinson's is a leading source of specialised health information and advice services. Through research, education and support, we strive to improve the lives of people living with Parkinson's, PSP, MSA and CBS.

Any medial information provided is for general information purposes only. You should always talk to your treating doctor and qualified healthcare providers for personal medical and health-related instructions.

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