



My pathway, my choices, my goals

Information for participants



*'I want to learn more about
my Indigenous heritage and
create my own family tree.'*

Greg

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What is this booklet about?

This booklet is for DisabilityCare Australia participants and includes information about:

- accessing the scheme—including age, residency and disability requirements
- developing your individual plan
- choosing and organising your supports
- managing any funding included in your plan
- reviewing your plan and making changes if needed
- understanding your rights and responsibilities.

What is DisabilityCare Australia?

DisabilityCare Australia is a new way of providing community linking and individualised support for people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers. It provides choice and control and a whole-of-life approach to the support needed to live more independently and work towards achieving your goals and aspirations.

DisabilityCare Australia is the insurance that gives us all peace of mind to know that, if necessary, we can all have the support we need.



Who is eligible?

If you want information or need a referral

Anyone with or affected by disability, including families and carers, can contact us for information and referrals. More information about contacting us is on page 18.

If you need an individual support plan

You may be eligible to receive an individual support plan if:

- ✓ you are under 65 years of age
- ✓ you are an Australia citizen, a permanent resident, or New Zealand citizen who is a Protected Special Category Visa holder
- ✓ during the first stage of the scheme, you live in a launch area and meet the specific age requirements for that area

You also need to meet the disability requirements:

- ✓ you have a permanent impairment and
- ✓ you cannot join in activities or do things without assistive technology, equipment (other than commonly used items like prescription glasses) or home modifications or
- ✓ you usually require help from others to join in or do things.

Or you need to meet the early intervention requirements:

- ✓ you or your child have a disability that is likely to be permanent or
- ✓ your child has a developmental delay and
- ✓ there is evidence that shows getting early supports will reduce how much help you or your child need to do things in the future.

Check your eligibility

To find out what is available to you, you can:

- use *My Access Checker*
- phone us on 1800 800 110 or
- visit one of our offices in a launch area.

Some people's existing supports will move across to us automatically. Your provider will tell you if this applies to you. If you are not sure about this, contact us.

My Access Checker

My Access Checker is a tool to help you understand whether you may be able to access individual assistance from DisabilityCare Australia. If possible, you should complete *My Access Checker* before contacting us. We can help you to use it if needed.

- If *My Access Checker* shows you may be able to access individual assistance, contact us to discuss your circumstances and to complete an access request form. We will then work with you to develop your individual plan.
- If *My Access Checker* shows you may not be able to access individual assistance, you can still contact us—even if we can't provide you with an individual support plan, we can still provide information.

You can use *My Access Checker* on our website at disabilitycareaustralia.gov.au or you can ask us for a paper version.

Your pathway for support

Once you have confirmed your eligibility, your pathway for accessing support will depend on your situation, your goals and choices.

To access the supports you need to live your life, your pathway enables you to:

1. Arrange an appointment with us to confirm your eligibility
2. Develop your plan
3. Choose your supports
4. Implement your plan
5. Review your plan

More information about the pathway is provided over the next few pages.

‘I’m looking forward to thinking about my life in terms of goals and aspirations. That might sound like a small change, but it’s actually quite huge, because it’s a different way of thinking.’

Catherine

How do you become a participant?

First, we confirm whether you, or your child, are able to access the scheme. To do this, we will ask you to complete an access request form to become a DisabilityCare Australia participant.

We consider the information in your request and make a decision about your access. In some instances, you may need to be linked to a service, or to a broad community support rather than receiving individualised support from DisabilityCare Australia. If your needs change, you can talk to us again about accessing other supports.

How is your individual plan developed?

We connect you to a DisabilityCare Australia planner who first reviews your information, including existing assessments that you provided or consented for us to access when you completed your access request form. This helps make sure the planning conversation is right for you.

You then meet with a planner and start your planning conversation. A family member, carer or friend can also be involved. We will ask you to bring to this conversation information about your goals and aspirations and to have thought about what works well with the supports you currently receive. We will talk with you about:

- your goals and aspirations for the life you want to live
- your strengths, abilities and opportunities for development
- your support needs for daily living and participation
- whether specialised assessment or early intervention may be needed
- access to mainstream and community supports
- what safeguards are needed to maximise your choice and control
- what is needed to strengthen your informal care and support

Many people may not need an individual support plan, but want support to access mainstream services; DisabilityCare Australia's local area coordinators can help. They work with community and mainstream services to improve the inclusion and participation of people with disability, and support communities to make it easier for them to participate in everyday life.

- the reasonable and necessary support you need to progress towards your goals
- how you want to implement and manage your plan and when it needs to be reviewed.

We use planning and assessment tools to guide the conversation. These tools are flexible so we can focus on what is relevant to you and skip areas that are not. Questions range from open and general, such as understanding what a typical day looks like for you, to more specific questions about how much support you need for certain tasks.

Your plan will include a statement of supports that reflects your conversation with the planner. This statement then enables the plan to be put into action.

What should you consider for your individual plan?

Goals and aspirations

We talk about how you want to live your life, now and into the future. For example:

- for children, this may be about improving development opportunities and minimising the impact of a disability through early intervention
- for teenagers, it may involve thinking about what happens after school
- for adults, it could be about more independent living, getting a job, joining a club or participating in a local community activity, studying or having more opportunities to socialise
- it may be about adjusting to a recent diagnosis of a permanent disability and the changes required to continue participating in social and economic life, or the activities that help minimise or delay a decline in functioning
- it may be about additional equipment or aids that improve safety or mobility around the home.

Support needs

We talk about your strengths and what you need assistance with. We need to understand how well current supports are working for you, supports from your family and carers, what community connections would help you achieve your goals, and any things you would like to change.

Better quality of life

We talk about improving outcomes for you such as your wellbeing, independence, social and economic participation, community connections, developing and maintaining relationships, and choice and control over decisions affecting your life.

What is involved in organising your support?

You choose

You have flexibility to choose how and when supports are provided as part of developing and implementing your individual support plan. This can include accessing mainstream and community supports, choosing your support providers, choosing to change providers, and considering how your formal supports fit best with those provided informally by family, friends and other carers.

You have control

You have control over how, when and where you receive supports. You can arrange the details of your support, such as when and how you will receive your supports, directly with your chosen provider.

During the initial launch period, there may be some limitations on what is available. The move from existing block funded arrangements to individualised arrangements will provide you with more choice and control over who provides the support you need. Over time, as more people receive support through DisabilityCare Australia, the available choices will continue to expand—including through mainstream and community supports.

You can change things as you need to

Everyone's life changes over time. If you need to, you can change your goals and plan, what supports you need, how supports are provided, and who provides these supports.

You can have help if you need it

We recognise that some people want family, carers, friends or others to be part of decision-making or participate in the planning process. We can also help you participate in the planning process and to organise your supports if you wish.

Your safety is important

Your planner will talk to you and your family about the support you may need to live safely, and how to build upon the strategies that you, your family and friends, and the community already have in place. Your planner can help you identify the right kinds of supports that achieve a secure environment now and into the future.

What about existing supports?

You will continue to receive support. We will work with you and your current providers to transition your existing arrangements across to the scheme. You can review your supports with us and either keep them or change them to better meet your needs.

When do new supports start?

People will gradually enter the scheme. If new supports are identified in your plan, funding will be available when your plan is approved.



What is involved in putting your plan into action?

You decide

You choose how to manage your plan. For example you may:

- decide to manage your plan yourself
- nominate another person to manage your plan (called a plan nominee)
- choose to use a registered plan management provider
- ask DisabilityCare Australia to manage your plan for you
- want a combination of these options.

Choosing providers

Part of putting your plan into action is choosing who will provide your supports. Once you have decided, we suggest you reach an agreement with your providers. We can provide you with a format for this agreement. Some providers have similar agreements that they will ask you to sign.

Implementing and coordinating your plan

If you need some assistance, a DisabilityCare Australia local area coordinator can help you put your plan into action, including organising access to supports and community connections. Your local area coordinator can also keep in touch with you to monitor how your plan is going and whether any changes are needed.

Fixed and flexible supports

If you have fixed supports in your plan, it means you must spend the funds in your plan on those supports. Funding for other supports (not fixed) may be used more flexibly, for example you can choose to purchase more or less of the various supports (within the value of the plan) to help you work towards your identified goals. Funds can only be used for the range of supports identified in your plan.

Making payments

Managing your own plan may involve receiving and managing any funding, including making sure payments are made for the supports identified in your plan. If you choose this option, you need to open a separate bank account for this purpose.

Keeping track

We send you monthly statements to help you make sure you are being correctly billed for any support you are receiving as part of your plan. If you have a financial intermediary, they can help you with this.

Reviewing your plan

From time-to-time, your planner will contact you to check whether your plan is still helping you work towards your goals. This happens at the agreed review dates, or you can ask for a review if your circumstances have changed or if your plan is no longer working for you.

Checking your plan details

Once you are a DisabilityCare Australia participant, you can log into the secure participant portal on our website for the details of your plan.

Help is available

As well as offering assistance to develop and implement your plan, we also provide information to help you make decisions. This includes more details about what to consider when deciding how to manage your plan, the different options for managing your plan, choosing providers, managing risks in your plan, quality assurance, employing staff and complaints.

What is our commitment to you?

Guiding principles

We believe people with disability have the same right as others to develop, pursue their goals, participate in society, have respect and dignity, exercise choice and control, be equal partners in decisions that affect their lives, and be certain they will receive the support they need over their life.

Our service commitment

We will provide professional, high quality, accessible, fair and timely service. You can expect respect, choice, control, flexibility, understanding, clear and accurate information and responsive service.

Our values

Our core values are behind everything we do. They are responsiveness, respect, transparency, accountability, innovation and learning.

Your privacy

We protect the privacy of people we work with. We follow national guidelines for collecting, using and disclosing personal information.

*‘When I think of DisabilityCare,
I think of a person-centred approach.’*

Caitlyn



How can you provide feedback?

We welcome your feedback

Please tell us if we have provided a good service or helped you. You can give feedback direct to the person you are dealing with or email us at feedback@disabilitycareaustralia.gov.au or call 1800 800 110.

We want to know if you have a concern

We believe people have the right to raise a concern or make a complaint. This helps us see what is not working and how our service can be improved.

We will do our best to resolve your concerns as soon as possible.

If you are unhappy with our service please raise the issue straight away with the person you are dealing with.

If this is not appropriate or does not help, you can ask to speak with that person's supervisor or the state/territory manager.

You can make a complaint in person, by phone, email or letter to the office you are dealing with. Contact details are on page 18.

Contact us

Visit our website

disabilitycareaustralia.gov.au



Call us on 1800 800 110

Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 8.00pm Eastern Standard Time

TTY users phone 1800 555 677 and ask for 1800 800 110

Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 and ask for 1800 800 110

Internet relay users, connect to the National Relay Service at relayservice.com.au and ask for 1800 800 110



Write to us

GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601



Visit us

Details about our office locations are on our website.



Do you need help to meet with us?

If you want to meet with us but need help, call us on 1800 800 110.



Do you speak a language other than English?

If you do not speak English, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask to be connected to 1800 800 110.





'I love the thrill and danger of motocross and aim to be the next Australian Women's Motocross Champion.'

Jessica



disabilitycareaustralia.gov.au

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