



**COVID-19 and
Disabled People
and their Families**



1



This webinar **does not provide medical advice**

If you are concerned about your health, or the health of somebody you support, please seek medical attention or **contact the**

Australian Government's National Coronavirus Helpline on

1800 020 080.



2

The list

| |
|---------------------------------|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



3

Coronavirus



The Coronavirus is like a flu or bad cold.

It can make you sick with:



- Fever



- Cough



- Sore Throat



- Trouble Breathing



Some people will only get a little bit sick, but some will get very sick and need to go to hospital

How can I teach someone I love about this?

Do you and/or the person you love understand the risks and know about ways to protect yourself?



4

How can I learn more?



- understand the basics about the COVID-19 virus, including how it is spread
- describe what you can do to protect participants and your workforce
- know what to do if you develop symptoms
- know what to do if the person you are supporting develops symptoms
- tell the difference between myths and facts of COVID-19.

<https://covid-19training.com.au/login.php>



5

The list

NDIS Staff

Getting Ready

Support Workers

Essential Needs

Reducing your risk

Self Isolating

Working with providers

When it goes really pear shaped

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6

What are NDIS doing to help?

- You can request phone planning meetings
- **NDIS offices are still open** to the public
- If you're happy with your **current plan, you can renew it for up to 24 months** (not including capital)
- The NDIA might **shift capacity building funding to funding for core supports if needed**
- The NDIS is **prioritising changes of circumstances reviews** for those in most need with little funds

7

What are NDIS doing to help?

- NDIS plans will not have 28 day extensions – when a plan ends, it will automatically be **rolled over by 365 days (1 year)**
- Anyone with an NDIS plan can now use their **Core funds to purchase Support Coordination** services, or to top up exhausted SC funds
- NDIS will work to quickly **change plans to self or plan management** when requested

8

Will services cost more now?

- Providers can now charge an extra **10% COVID-19 loading** for some supports for up to six months:
 - Assistance with Daily Life (excluding Supported Independent Living) and Assistance with Social and Community Participation)
 - Improved Daily Living
- **Cancellations can now be charged at 100%** of cancelled service and the notice times will change (but only when you cancel, not if *they* cancel)
- **Your plans will not, at this stage be automatically topped up**

You can ask for a Change of Circumstances review if your funds are running out due to COVID issues

9

Help! We don't have enough money in the plan? And why aren't our plans automatically increasing?

Most participants don't use up their funds, but if you are getting close, and you need more because of rate rises, or a ADE or Day options closure, for example, as a change of circumstance, then

You can ask for a **Change of Circumstances review if your funds are running out due to COVID issues**



10

Will my next NDIS plan be smaller because I couldn't use it all because of COVID stuff?

UPDATED: If I am using less of my funding because services are being cancelled, will I get less funding in my next plan?

We understand you may not spend all your NDIS funding because some services might not be available due to coronavirus (COVID-19), and we will take this in to account at your next planning meeting.

Your funding may change in your next NDIS plan, but this is determined by your disability-related support needs, not by assessing unspent funds from your previous plan.



11



Can I use therapy funds to buy equipment now our therapists can't come?

Great question – will cover it later!



12

How can I change my NDIS plan to be more flexible?

UPDATED: Can I temporarily change my plan from Agency to Self or Plan-Managed so I have more flexibility with my funding?

Yes, however this will require a review of your plan. Special teams of planners in the NDIA are available to help make urgent changes to plans. Call us on 1800 800 110 if you need urgent assistance.



13

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



14

How can I get ready to Self-Isolate?

For everyone:

- Food
- Medicine
- Over the Counter medicine – laxatives, antihistamines
- Cleaning & Personal Hygiene products



15

How can I get ready to Self-Isolate?

For NDIS participants, using their plan funds:

- Consumables
 - continence aids
 - HENS
 - thickener
 - catheters
- PPE – gloves, sanitiser, masks, gowns, disinfectant



16

The list

| |
|---------------------------------|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



17

My workers are cancelling, what can I do?

- Find out why they are cancelling – maybe they can work for you remotely?
- Contact your Support Coordinator if you have one
- Contact other service providers
- Make sure you have an emergency plan, and know who can backup
- Know your essential/critical needs



18

How can I Find and Use New Workers?

- broaden your search to former hospitality workers
- extended family friends who may have lost jobs
- HireUp have a free assistance service and can help quickly onboard new workers
- fewer workers doing more hours may reduce risk
- you are still **NOT allowed to pay family members** from plans – but some family members may now be eligible for Carer Payment



19

The list

| |
|---------------------------------|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |




20

What are ESSENTIAL support needs?

Anything that keeps someone actually **alive**, and they cannot live without

- Eating/Drinking
- Toileting
- Hygiene
- Preventing bedsores/physical injury
- Preventing self harm/protecting mental health

21



EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

1 _____

2 _____

P _____


P _____

★ _____
POLICE DEPARTMENT

H _____
HOSPITAL

Emergency Plan

1. Current Support Agency/Workers
2. Backup Support Agency/Workers
3. Family
4. Extended family/Friends
5. Neighbours (letterbox or contact?)
6. Red Cross or similar
7. Police
8. Hospital



22

The list

| |
|---------------------------------|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



23

How can I reduce our risk?

- stay at home
- don't socialise with others in your home or out
- limit or stop shopping in person
- reduce the number of workers in your home
- keep stuff clean – including deliveries



24

How can I
reduce our
risk?

CRIP THE CORONAVIRUS

KEEPING SAFE FROM THE CORONAVIRUS

THESE PARTS OF MY WHEELCHAIR SHOULD BE DISINFECTED ANY TIME A NEW PERSON COMES INTO CONTACT WITH MY CHAIR OR WHEN I LEAVE AND RETURN TO MY HOME

OTHER AREAS:

- JOYSTICK
- HEAD CONTROLS
- MOUTH CONTROLS
- HEAD REST
- ARM RESTS
- SIDE GUARDS
- BACK OF THE WHEELCHAIR
- PUSH HANDLES

REMEMBER: DISINFECT WITH A 70% ALCOHOL BASED SOLUTION
WIPE DOWN ANYTHING YOU TOUCH, INCLUDING IN THE CAR, MEDICATIONS, EQUIPMENT AND PURSES/BACKPACKS
SUPPORT WORKERS, WEAR GLOVES DURING PERSONAL CARE

25

How is your family doing this?

- Wipe surfaces with hospital grade disinfectant – doorknobs, taps, toilet, phone, remotes, keyboards, mice, joysticks, cupboard handles, fridge handles, outside gate latch, tables and benches, steering wheel, car door handle etc
- Workers enter through side gate and wash hands at outside sink with their own labelled handtowel (washed each day)
- Workers have their own colour coded and labelled cups to use outside



26

What are some other ways I can reduce Risk?

- Have groceries and medicines delivered by workers who don't work in your house
- Put up DO NOT ENTER and handwashing signs.
- Draw or tape "Do not cross" lines
- Try to restrict workers to fewer areas of your house
- If you keep your cleaner. make sure they don't bring cloths, mops or equipment into your home from elsewhere
- Think about the NEW RULES for your home, and send them to workers, and put them up in your home
- Ask your therapists for support to help you reduce keep you learning new skills and busy

STOP

NOT VISIT IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS:



Clean your hands and help protect us from germs that can make us sick.

27

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



28

Can I have some other tips about Self-Isolating?

- loads of great food delivery options – many can use NDIS funds for delivery and prep portion
- maybe use a worker to do your laundry at their place to reduce family workloads with extra care work
- develop a routine



29

When Self-Isolating

- Do a visual schedule of your new routine, even if it is silly – include down time and exercise time
- Don't expect children (or yourself) to do a full school load

omeschooling Schedule

- 9am: Home Economics- Learn how to make me a decent Coffee.
- 10am: Engineering: How to operate the hover and washing machine.
- 11am: PE- Carrying rubbish/recycling out to bins.
- 1pm: Chemistry- How to bleach and disinfect the bathroom.
- 2pm: Geography- Lesson in where the items you have strewn across the floor REALLY live.
- 3pm: Engineering: How to find wash



30

How do I help my family member with behaviour support needs?

- ask your PBS practitioner or psychologist for support to work with isolation rules
- ask other therapists about 1:1 programs that can be done remotely or in open air (parks/beach etc)
- ask NDIS Commission and NDIS for exemption to use unregistered providers for core supports

31

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |

32

What should I expect from my providers?

- clear communications about their availability
- letting you know that they will need to prioritise
- whether their fees/cancellation charges have changed
- if they treat you badly, contact the NDIS Commission
1800 035 544



What are some ways to use Support Workers? (and can I still pay them?)



Top 31 Ways to use Support Workers while avoiding COVID-19



For some participants, personal care, lifting and other physical support needs means you can't avoid having direct contact with support workers.

There are many people in the NDIS, who don't need that physical support. If you are one of those people, you can ask your support workers to help support you but to work to not touch you or get close to you. Here are a stack of ideas. We feel free to add your own to share!

One of the most important things is to always make sure they wash their hands, really well, as soon as they arrive or meet you.

Depending on your support needs, your worker could maybe:

- take you outside and go for a walk together, keeping a few metres apart.
- go outside, 2 metres apart, and learn to play an instrument together (like Ukulele, guitar, recorder)
- fly a kite and/or fly a kite at the local park.
- take your laundry outside the front door, and ask your support worker to pick it up, take it home, wash and dry, and then return it if they're ok to do this.
- have a free skype account and talk, and read books, help prompt or direct you with something yummy, watch a TV show or movie at the same time as you, play online games together or even do your online shopping together.
- take you for a drive (with you in the back if you're not driving!) with the windows down and play the music loud and sing (this may not be a safe enough distance apart, however)
- help you find and collect some free or cheap basic gym equipment, set it up outside, and have the worker direct, from a safe distance, a great workout.
- if legal and safe, have a fire pit set up and sit either side of it and tell ghost stories, or eat lots of marshmallows
- google outdoor yard pranks and have some fun with neighbourhood friends.
- try geocaching
- sit across an outside table at home, and paint rocks, and then walk to a local park and hide them for others to find (google "painted rocks" to learn more)
- letterbox the neighbours with you and offer to walk their dogs for free or pay

- 13. do your shopping and errands without you if you are at risk, so you are less likely to be exposed
- 14. feed a free or cheap outdoor table or gumbree or Facebook, make a net from an old pair of stockings, grab some table tennis bats online and play ping pong outside in the driveway (or beer pong if you're old enough and like beer as much as my son!)
- 15. wash the car together, but always on opposite sides of the car, and wear gloves. build a garden together and grow some food, herbs or pretty flowers. have your worker help you timetable with your friends.
- 16. learn a new language together (maybe Auslan – sign language)
- 17. tennis is a low contact game, and maybe renting a couple of kayaks or going for a bike ride could work to get outside
- 18. movie art programs
- 19. have them help you sort out a home budget
- 20. check out the barrels of online learning apps and homeschool resources
- 21. some virtual tours of some of the world's greatest museums and art galleries
- 22. Fictionary or scorable by zoom
- 23. develop a daily routine and make some visual schedules together
- 24. try to do some outdoor household chores – like sweeping or picking up the dog poop
- 25. teach the dog a few new tricks – tonnes of great YouTube videos to learn this
- 26. learn a magic trick together
- 27. have a cheap binocular from the bargain bin, and see if you can borrow or score an old map projector, and set up an outdoor cinema at home for an evening – just pop those bean bags, a few metres apart
- 28. learn about botany, and collect samples from your local parks and build an album of dried leaves and flowers
- 29. make a podcast remotely together
- 30. not included links for all of these – a quick google, or even a request on this list will probably get you a bunch of good answers!
- 31. this list was compiled, in part, with some ideas from the (awesome) people in the NDIS Self-Managing Participants and Their Families' Facebook Group. Thank you for their brilliant ideas.

The list

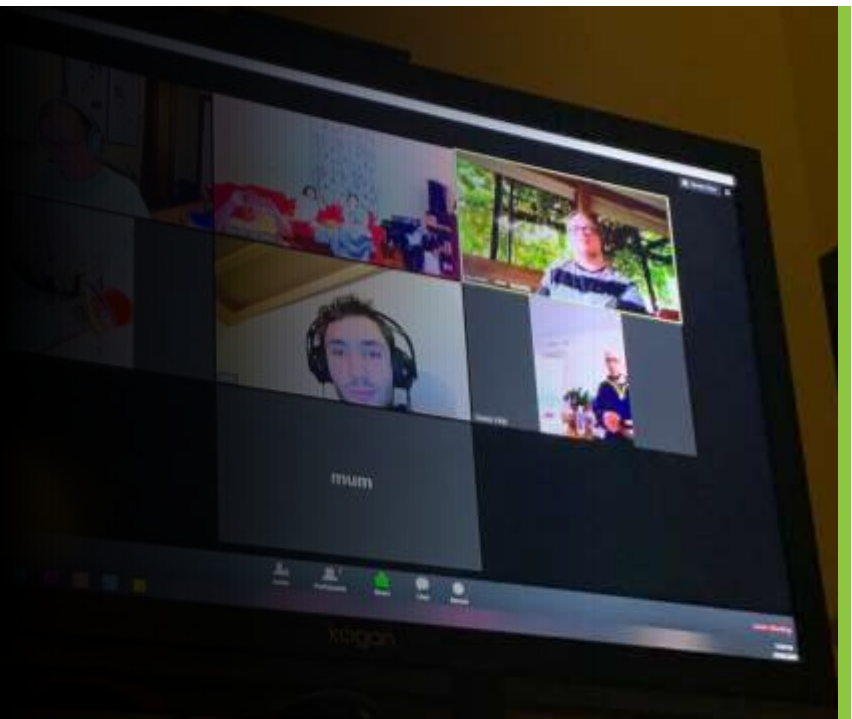
| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



35

How can I stay connected?

- Schedule facetime/skype/zoom times with friends
- Schedule a regular standard family catch up online
- Help the person you love make the schedule and put it into a visual so they know it's coming



36

Where can I connect with others?

Facebook Groups (more will surface!)

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/203265080936033>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SelfisolatingInAdelaide/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/515507852491119/>



37

What if it all goes really bad? (planning for the worst)

- Can a family member move in?
- Can a worker move in?
- Does your client have a short, clear “How to Meet my Critical Needs” list that a new, possibly untrained worker could follow?
- Can support workers work remotely when they’re sick?

38

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



39

I am so scared and worried...

- Too many brain tabs open – brain wires altered – brain is dumping non-essential services!
- Anxiety is huge – this is normal and healthy!
- Vicarious trauma – talk to someone – 20 minutes to be overwhelmed OK
- Usual strategies – exercise, good food, humour, and staying connected
- Think about professional help – remote counselling or psychology – maybe you can use NDIS funds?
- Keep busy – new hobby if you have time!
- Establish a routine – schedule in self-care!

40



41



42

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |



43

What can I Buy?

| Question | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| 1. Will the support or service help you to achieve the goals in your NDIS plan? | |
| 2. Is the cost of the support or service reasonably priced and is it best value for money compared to other supports? | |
| 3. Can you afford the support or service within your approved NDIS budget? Remember, your funding needs to last the entire period of your plan. | |
| 4. Will the support or service help you to improve how you connect to your local community and improve the relationships you have with family and friends? It should not replace supports that would usually be provided by family, friends and within your community. | |
| 5. Is the support or service something that should be funded by other government services instead? For example, dental, health or hospital services, education, housing and public transport are all provided through other government services. Remember, all communities should have facilities and activities that are inclusive and accessible to people with disability. | |
| 6. Will the support or service help you to participate in activities with friends and other members of your community, or help you to find or keep a job? | |
| 7. Is it safe? Your supports and services should not cause you any harm or put other people at risk. | |



44

Ideas to consider

- WebCam
- Long Cable
- Second computer Screen
- Increased Internet
- Extra Handtowels
- Headphones
- PPE
- Computer



45

The list

| |
|--|
| NDIS Stuff |
| Getting Ready |
| Support Workers |
| Essential Needs |
| Reducing your risk |
| Self Isolating |
| Working with providers |
| When it goes really pear shaped |
| Connection and Mental Health |
| What Can I buy? |
| I lost my income |

46

I lost my income...

- Centrelink has supports available (give them some time to sort their staffing out)
- sign up for Carer Payment or DSP if eligible
- consider support work
- small businesses eligible for some payments
- banks holding mortgage payments
- support for renters reportedly coming soon
- offer to help support those who are able to work – look after their kids, help with homeschooling
- volunteer



47

**The light seems
a long way
away, and this
is so hard, but
you're not
alone.
Be the gum, not
the birch.**



48