



# **MY THERAPY**

## **AUSTRALIA**

### **Module 4**

## **Specialist Support Coordination**

## **Policy and Procedure Manual**

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# Specialised Support Coordination Policy and Procedure

## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that participants receiving specialised support coordination:

- are provided tailored support to implement, monitor and review their support plans to reduce the risks associated with the complexity of their situation
- exercise meaningful choice and control over their supports
- maximise the value for money they receive from their supports
- receive transparent and factual advice about their support options that promote choice and control.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy guides all Specialist Support Coordinators and those relevant in providing specialist support coordination services to our participants.

## 3.0 Definitions

Support coordination is funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to strengthen the participant's ability to design and build their supports, emphasising linking to broader support systems.

Support coordination involves a tiered, capacity building approach of three levels:

Capacity building levels	Definition
Level 1 - Support connection	Assists a participant to implement their plan by strengthening their ability to connect with the broader systems of supports and understand the funded supports' purpose.

<b>Level 2 - Support coordination</b>	<p>Support coordination aims to support participants to direct their lives (not just their service). It is focused on assisting participants in building and maintaining a resilient network of formal and informal supports.</p>
<b>Level 3 - Specialist support coordination</b> <i>(Module 4 relates to this level)</i>	<p>Specialist support coordination helps participants reduce complexity in their support environment and overcome barriers to connecting with broader systems of supports and funded supports.</p> <p>Specialist Support Coordinators negotiate appropriate support solutions with multiple stakeholders and seek to achieve well-coordinated plan implementation.</p> <p>Specialist Support Coordinators will help stakeholders resolve crisis points for participants and ensure consistent service delivery and access to relevant supports during crises. Support challenges may include health, education, housing or justice services.</p> <p>Specialist support coordination is generally delivered over an intensive and time-limited period, necessitated by the participant's immediate and significant plan implementation barriers.</p>

## 4.0 Policy

My Therapy Australia understands that specialist support coordination is required where there are specific high complex needs or high-level risks relating to a participant's situation.

Specialist support coordination will be delivered by an appropriately qualified and experienced practitioner (e.g. a psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker or mental health nurse), who uses an expert or specialist approach, to meet the participant's needs.

Specialist support coordination intends to:

- assist participants reduce complexity in their support environment
- address barriers to connecting with supports

- build capacity and resilience.

When providing specialist support coordination, My Therapy Australia will ensure our participants are genuinely allowed to exercise choice and control, and we will focus on clearly identified aims, goals and benefits. Planning and coordination will include mainstream, informal, community and funded supports and will decrease the need for specialist support coordination over time.

Any specialist support coordination included within a plan must show a clear benefit to the participant and include specific goals for the plan's duration, aiming to decrease the need for high-intensity support to continue.

My Therapy Australia will provide the participant information regarding their options and plans in a communication mode and language that they are most likely to understand. Such information will include transparent and factual advice about the participant's support options and ensure that any conflicts of interest are made clear.

My Therapy Australia will make sure supports funded under a participant's plan are used effectively and efficiently and are complemented by the community and mainstream services.

## **5.0 Procedure**

### **5.1 Overview**

Specialist support coordination will be provided in line with the principles documented in our NDIS core module policies and procedures and will include:

- person-centred supports
- support for individual values and beliefs
- individual privacy and dignity
- independence and informed choice
- support planning
- responsive support provision.

Accordingly, specialised support planning will ensure that each participant is actively involved in developing their specialist support plans. My Therapy Australia will provide all participants with sufficient and appropriate information to promote choice and control.

The Director will determine, based on a participant's specific requirements, the most appropriate specialist support worker to provide the services (e.g. psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker and mental health nurse).

The Director will undertake reference checks to determine staff are qualified to deliver specialist supports to a participant. The Director is also responsible for identifying all risk assessed roles and confirming all support workers hold appropriate NDIS worker clearances before being allocated to support a participant.

## **5.2 Planning**

The Specialist Support Coordinator will work with the participant and their support network to complete all necessary assessments (e.g. Participant Goal Setting Form) and develop a Specialist Support Plan.

The Specialist Support Plan will be developed in collaboration with the participant and be tailored specifically to meet their needs. The plan will:

- be based on information sourced from a range of resources and multiple stakeholders
- be developed collaboratively with the participant
- include completion of a Participant Review Form to obtain an overview of the participant's current supports and identify any complexities relating to the administration of supports to develop an action plan that effectively manages available NDIS funding.
- include the participant's needs, support requirements, preferences, strengths and goals
- include any relevant information derived from risk assessments
- identify potential triggers to crises and appropriate strategies to treat these
- identify potential appropriate support solutions, including NDIS providers and community support networks who have appropriate skills and experience, to deliver desired supports
- seek to resolve points of crisis
- assist the participant in connecting with supports and build capacity and resilience to decrease the continued need for high-intensity support.
- work with the participant to build their capacity so that they can coordinate, self-direct and manage their supports
- help the participant better manage their budget funding to be more flexible in meeting their own needs and support requirements.

Where appropriate, and with the participant's consent, information on the Specialist Support Plan is communicated to family members, carers, advocates, other providers and relevant government agencies.

The Specialist Support Coordinator will implement strategies to provide participants and their support networks information using their preferred communication methods, including using plain language, translators, repeated information or Easy Read documents.

### **5.3 Plan implementation**

My Therapy Australia will arrange for supports and services to be utilised as per the participant's NDIS amounts directed and for the purposes intended by the participant. In achieving this, My Therapy Australia will continue to provide information to the participant in an accessible format, using suitable language and communication mode to ensure the participant fully understands their support options to make an informed decision.

The Specialist Support Coordinator will consult and negotiate proactively with multiple stakeholders to implement a well-coordinated Specialist Support Plan.

The Specialist Support Coordinator will help stakeholders resolve crisis points for participants to provide consistent service delivery and provision of relevant supports during crises.

As appropriate, participants will be supported to build their capacity to coordinate, self-direct and manage their supports and understand how to participate in their planning processes (e.g. establishing agreements with service providers and managing budget flexibility).

Referrals to and from other providers will be documented for each participant following our normal referral procedures and outcomes and interactions documented in the Support Management File Notes.

Specialist support coordination services and assistance may include:

- linking the participant with the right mainstream support and ensuring the provider meets their obligations
- engagement and networking with the participant's preferred communities
- coordination of various supports, both funded and mainstream
- resolving points of crisis with the participant
- training of support workers

- promoting safety for the participant
- building the participant's capacity and ability (and their informal supports) to understand and implement their own NDIS plan.

## **5.4 Monitoring and review**

The Director ensures the plan is implemented, effectively managed, monitored and reviewed to address all reporting obligations associated with the participant are met.

The Director will regularly review specialist support plans to ensure that:

- risks are being adequately addressed
- changes are made in response to a participant's changed circumstances
- the participant is receiving value for money
- the participant's funds are used effectively and efficiently
- any supports funded under a participant's plan are complemented by the community and mainstream services.

When working with the participant, the Director will review the requirements and provisions the participant may need.

## **5.5 Conflict of interest**

A conflict of interest exists when an organisation may benefit from managing a participant's plan and providing support coordination or other support types to a participant.

In this event, My Therapy Australia will ensure that each participant is supported (using the language, mode of communication and terms that the participant is most likely to comprehend) to understand:

- the distinction between the provision of specialised support coordination and other reasonable and necessary funded supports
- the full range of options available to them
- any choice they make about providers of other supports will not impact our provision of specialised support coordination.

For more information, see the Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure.



## 5.6 Collaborative approach

My Therapy Australia will:

- use a collaborative approach when undertaking all decision-making processes regarding support for a participant, to allow for an informed approach and can include collaboration with:
  - mainstream service providers that have appropriate skills and experience in delivering the required supports
  - involved allied health or medical practitioners
  - the participant and their support networks
- ensure the process is explained to the participant at the time of development, including how and when support will occur
- work with suitable NDIS providers (who have experience and appropriate skills required to deliver supports) that have been identified and are in-line with available funding
- work across service boundaries to provide participants with complex care needs access to a full range of services, including allied health, health and social support services
- employ team members and providers that have all the necessary skills and knowledge to make informed decisions in the development of a participant's plan
- ensure all team members continue to undertake professional development to maintain an understanding of practices that are required for their specific role
- ensure the participant is involved in the evaluation of their situation and the identification of the supports required to prevent or respond to a crisis, incident or breakdown of support arrangements, and the promotion of safety for the participant and others
- gain consent from the participant or their advocate and the participant's support network and mainstream services (as appropriate) before support coordination being implemented.

## 5.7 Documentation

My Therapy Australia support workers must record all relevant information about the progress of the support provided to a participant into the Support Management File Notes in a factual, accurate, complete and timely manner (ideally in chronological order).

To assist the documentation process, the Director will regularly undergo reviews and complete a Participant Review Form, making notations on the Support Management File Notes.

The information included in the notes may include:

- outcomes of all ongoing assessments and reassessment
- changes or redevelopment of supports including revised goals or preferences
- critical incidents or major changes in the participant's health or wellbeing
- conversations held with the participant, family members, their representative or advocate
- conversations (regarding the participant) with any other providers, agencies, health or medical professionals, family members or other individuals who have an interest in the participant
- referrals
- activities associated with participant's admission and exit.

## 6.0 Related documents

- Authority to Act as an Advocate Form
- Support Plan V2
- Participant Review Form
- Agency Referral Form
- Support Management File Notes
- Easy Read Documents and Form
- Participant Goal Setting Form

## 7.0 References

- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2020
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2020

# Management of a Participant's NDIS Supports

## 1.0 Purpose

It is the responsibility of My Therapy Australia to effectively manage our participants' NDIS support whilst also providing opportunities for participants to exercise meaningful choice and control over their supports. It is also our role to maximise the value for money participants receive from their supports.

## 2.0 Scope

The policy applies to all employees engaged in the management of NDIS supports for our participants.

## 3.0 Policy

My Therapy Australia will arrange for supports and services using the participant's NDIS amounts. Supports and services are directed by the participant and for the purposes intended by the participant.

In achieving this, My Therapy Australia provides information to the participant in an accessible format (using their preferred communication method) to fully understand the support options available to them, allowing them to make an informed decision.

## 4.0 Procedure

My Therapy Australia works collaboratively with other mainstream services within the community to provide the supports that assists participants in meeting their objectives and improving their quality of life.

My Therapy Australia will:

- support participants to build their capacity to coordinate, self-direct and manage their supports

- work closely with participants to better understand how we can assist the participant in planning their required supports and establishing agreements with service providers
- assist participants to better manage their budget funding to allow them to be more flexible when meeting their needs and support requirements
- effectively and efficiently use any supports that are funded under the participant's plan
- ensure supports and complemented by mainstream and community services.

#### **4.1 Participant review form**

When working with participants, My Therapy Australia will review the requirements and provisions the participant may need using the Participant Review Form.

The completed form provides an overview of the participant's current supports. The form also identifies the complexities involved in administering supports and the implementation steps required to address any such complexities while effectively managing available NDIS funding.

#### **5.0 Related documents**

- Easy Read Documents
- Participant Review Form
- Agency Referral Form

#### **6.0 References**

- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2020
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2020

# Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure

## 1.0 Purpose

My Therapy Australia is committed to ensuring that actions and decisions taken at all levels in the organisation are informed, objective and fair. We will ensure organisational and ethical values do not impede a participant's right to choose and control supports.

At all times, My Therapy Australia will provide the participant transparent, factual advice regarding support options available to meet their requirements.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all My Therapy Australia management, staff and contractors and any other persons associated with delivering supports to participants.

## 3.0 Definition

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal interests clash or conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of My Therapy Australia and our participants. Personal interests include direct interests and indirect interests, which involve family, friends or other organisations with which they may be involved.

Conflicts of interest present the risk that a person may make decisions based on, or affected by, the above influences rather than focusing on our participants or the organisation's best interests. A conflict of interest may be an actual, potential or perceived conflict. It may be financial or non-financial.

As a registered provider, My Therapy Australia must not constrain, influence or direct decisions made by a participant or their family by limiting access to information, opportunities, choice and control.

## 4.0 Policy

All employees, management and contractors are provided with a copy of this Conflict of Interest Policy, and Procedure and conflicts of interest are explained to our participants using the services in a language, format (e.g. Easy Read documents) or communication mode that is suitable for them to understand its importance.

My Therapy Australia will proactively manage perceived and actual conflicts of interest through regular monitoring by the Director and through the development and maintenance of appropriate organisational procedures and policies. We understand that a conflict of interest may affect how a staff member acts, the decisions they make, or the way they may vote in, or on, a group decision.

My Therapy Australia will promote and provide choice and control to our participants, and we will not allow organisational values to impede our participants' rights.

At the time of engagement, our staff are informed that any conflict of interest must be declared to allow the Director to take the necessary action to ensure personal or individual interests do not impact our services, activities, or decisions which may affect our participants.

All employees and contractors are directed at the time of engagement to always act in the best interest of My Therapy Australia and our participants. Staff must notify the Director immediately when a conflict of interest arises.

My Therapy Australia is committed to conducting our operations and support delivery in a fair and accountable manner by:

- acting impartially and without prejudice
- declaring any potential or actual conflict of interest to participants and other relevant stakeholders
- never accepting gifts or other benefits that could influence a decision

A conflict of interest could be actual, perceived or potential. It is important to discuss any conflict that exists, as it may affect someone's judgement or lead to a biased decision. A situation of conflict could include any of the following:

- close personal friends or family members are involved in decisions about employment, discipline, dismissal, service allocation or awarding of contracts

- an individual or their close friends or family members may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage
- an individual is involved with another organisation or offers services that are in a competitive relationship with My Therapy Australia and may have access to commercially sensitive information, plans or financial information
- prior agreements or allegiances bind a person to other individuals or agencies that require them to act in the interests of that person or agency or take a particular position on an issue
- being involved in the decision-making process or voting on a situation that directly affects an individual's private interest.

## 5.0 Procedure

In meeting our legal responsibilities, all known conflicts of interest must be declared in writing by staff members to the Director using the Conflict of Interest Declaration Form. The Director will then record identified conflicts in the Conflict of Interest Register for Support Coordination Staff to ensure transparency.

### 5.1 Identification, declaration and documentation

All employees, management and contractors of My Therapy Australia are required to declare any perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest as soon as they are made aware of them.

Should a conflict of interest arise, the employee must inform the Director immediately and provide formal notification in writing using the Conflict of Interest Declaration Form.

All employees must agree, in writing, to adhere to the requirements outlined in the following documents as part of their employment conditions:

- Code of Conduct Agreement
- Conflict of Interest Declaration (as required)
- Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement

It is important to outline and discuss conflicts of interest at the commencement of any decision-making process or meeting with stakeholders to ensure appropriate transparency.

## 5.2 Managing conflicts of interest

When a conflict of interest is declared or identified, the conflict will be assessed by the Director or their delegated authority. The Director or delegated authority will continue to monitor and retain awareness of potential conflicts of interest that might affect the organisation, employees or participants, to avoid them where possible.

My Therapy Australia participants will be informed of any conflicts of interest relating to their supports and services. We will inform participants that any choice they make on providers or other supports will not impact the provisions or supports currently being provided by My Therapy Australia.

If a conflict of interest exists (or there is a perception that a conflict exists), a person may be asked to:

- contribute to the discussion but abstain from voting or taking part in a decision on the matter
- observe, but not take part in, the discussion or decision-making process
- not participate or leave the meeting during the discussion and decision-making process
- arrange for an independent third party to be present to assist with any decision making.

The person may also be denied access to information, or only limited information be provided to them, where a conflict is likely to be present.

## 5.3 Informing the participant of their provider options

The Specialist Support Coordinator's role is to inform our participants of the various support provider options available. The Support Coordinator reviews and compares providers with the participant to help them select the most appropriate one.

When reviewing the various service provider options available to the participant (including our service), the Specialist Support Coordinator:

- will provide a biography and information about each service, so the participant can choose the most appropriate provider to deliver their required supports
- discuss any conflict of interest between our organisation and internal referrals
- will inform the participant that the Support Coordinator receives no monetary gain for any internal referrals, or the participant being referred to another agency



- will complete the Participant Provider Options - Conflict of Interest Declaration Form with the participant.

#### **5.4 Documentation**

All conflicts (actual, potential or perceived) are identified using a Conflict of Interest Declaration Form. These forms are collated, managed and appropriately filed by the Director or their delegated authority.

All identified conflicts of interest are documented in the Conflict of Interest Register - Support Coordination Staff to provide transparency within the organisation and inform how the conflict has been declared and resolved.

Participants are made aware that they choose their support providers. However, there may be occasions where My Therapy Australia may need to refer a participant to another provider. In this case, after discussions with the participant, an Agency Referral Form will be completed by the Director and forwarded to the potential provider.

#### **5.4 Specialist Support Coordination and other services**

It is My Therapy Australia's responsibility to make sure all participants using our service understand the distinction between the provision of specialised support coordination and other reasonable and necessary supports funded under a participant's plan. We will use the language, mode of communication and terms that the participant is most likely to understand.

### **6.0 Related documents**

- Authority to Act as an Advocate Form
- Agency Referral Form
- Code of Conduct Agreement
- Conflict of Interest Declaration
- Conflict of Interest Register – Support Coordination Staff
- Participant Provider Options – Conflict of Interest Declaration Form
- Support Coordination Conflict of Interest Declaration - Participant
- Participant Review Form
- Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement

- Easy Read – Conflict of Interest Form
- Easy Read – Authority to Act as an Advocate
- Easy Read – Participant Information Consent Form
- Participant Information Consent Form

## **7.0 References**

- NDIS (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2020
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2020