

# A Guide for GPs Completing an Access Request Form

### What Is The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)?

The NDIS is a major social reform offering a new way of providing support and services for people living with disability or significant impairment under the age of 65.

### What Is The Health Professional's Role?

As a health care professional, you may be asked by one of your patients to assist them to complete the Supporting Evidence section of an Access Request Form. The Access Request Form is the first form they need to complete to determine their eligibility for entry into the NDIS, and can have a major impact on the level of support they can receive from the NDIS.

### What Information Do You Need To Supply?

You will need to provide information relating to your patient's primary disability (the disability that has the greatest impact on their life), as well as any other disabilities that affect them. Providing copies of reports or assessments which illustrate your patient's level of functional impairment is also paramount.

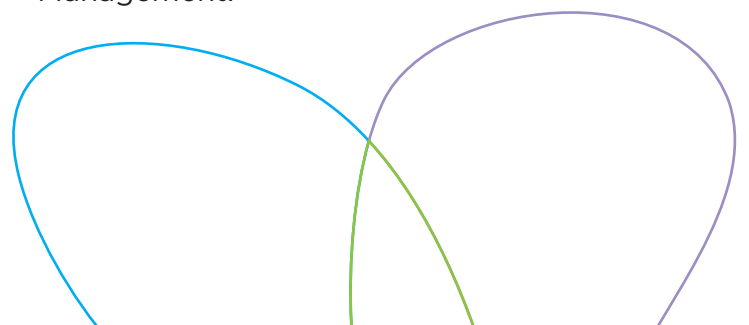
You will need to provide information about:

- the type of disability
- the date the disability was diagnosed (if available)
- how long the disability will last
- previous treatments and outcomes
- future treatment options and expected outcomes of those treatments

Importantly, you will need to assess if the condition is permanent, has been fully treated and is considered lifelong.

**Given the fluctuating nature of ME/CFS, we encourage you to make your recommendation and supporting evidence based on your patient's worst day managing their ME/CFS symptoms.**

In addition to this the NDIS wants to know how someone's disability results in substantial function impairment, including a description of how each area is impacted in each of the six key areas Mobility, Communication, Social Interaction, Learning, Self Care, Self Management.



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Mobility – their ability to walk around the home and community; do they have home modifications, use walking sticks or rely on mobility aids such as walkers, wheelchairs or scooters; do they have specialised equipment such as hospital beds, lift chairs, shower aids? Does their fatigue or lower body strength limit their ability to walk any distance before needing to rest? Is their balance or strength compromised? Are they affected by heat/cold intolerance?

Communication – ME/CFS is frequently associated with cognitive impairments. This may affect their ability to speak and write, and whether they can express their needs adequately. Do they have trouble with their speech or finding the right words in conversation?

Social interaction – their ability to interact within the local community. This section also includes the ability to manage emotions and make and keep friends. Questions to ask include whether they are socially isolated because of the condition. Do symptoms such as fatigue, cognition or heat intolerance limit their ability to maintain family and community connections?

Learning – their ability to remember, learn and practice new skills. Is their cognition affected by ME/CFS?

Self-care – their ability to be independent for example in terms of showering, getting dressed, eating and caring for their own health. Some questions to ask; are they able to clean their home, prepare and cook meals, look after other family members?

Self-management – their ability to make decisions, manage their own finances and remember to complete everyday tasks such as paying bills or getting to appointments.

**ME/CFS and the NDIS A GUIDE FOR GPs**

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