NDIS Access Submission

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing is seeking feedback on proposed reforms to improve access and eligibility to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Dietitians Australia makes the following recommendations to the NDIS Technical Advisory Group to ensure those with disability can access appropriate supports:

- Ensure Principle 3 recognises “contemporary evidence” from a range of appropriate sources, and that any assessment tool is validated for assessing functional capacity in eating, drinking, swallowing safety and food preparation before it is used for access decisions.
- Ensure that, in applying section 9B of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 to access decisions, ‘environmental and personal circumstances’ are defined so that the exclusion applies only to extrinsic circumstances and not to how an impairment presents when a person eats, drinks or prepares food.
- Require access assessments to draw on evidence of how the person eats, drinks and prepares food in their usual settings, including treating clinician reports, to inform the judgement of capacity.
- Establish an integrated assessment and reassessment framework, with referral pathways across the NDIS, Thriving Kids and Foundational Supports, including secure transfer of participant information between systems to minimise participant safety risk, duplication, and assessment burden.
- Introduce accessible communication protocols for NDIS access assessments, including flexible formats, communication aids, options for reassessment, and sufficient time for participants to communicate support needs.
- Ensure evidence guidance on permanence distinguishes treatment that can remedy an impairment from ongoing support that maintains function, consistent with Note 2 to subsection 24(5) of the Act, so that a person’s response to ongoing nutrition support is not treated as evidence that the impairment is not permanent.

Read Dietitians Australia’s full submission.