

# Paediatric Care: When to Reach Out to a Dietitian

**Purpose:** This guide can be shared with families to help them understand when a dietitian may be helpful and how support can be funded. It can be provided during intake, review, or discharge to help families recognise when to reconnect if their child's needs change. This can also be provided to allied health, medical and NDIS teams to assist their understanding in when a dietitian referral can be helpful.

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## How do I know if I need support from a dietitian?

A dietitian can support your child and family when eating, feeding, or nutrition feels challenging.

This may include support with:



**Feeding and Mealtime Support**



**Nutrition and Health**



**Tube Feeding**



**Building skills for Older Children and Teens**

See flip side of this document for more information.

## Who can help me organise this?

- Dietitian & their admin team
- GP
- NDIS Support coordinator / plan manager

## Where can I get help to fund Dietitian Support?

There are a few ways to help pay for dietitian appointments. Here are the most common options for families:

**Medicare:** Your child may be able to get up to 5 dietitian visits each year with help from Medicare.

- You'll need a referral from your GP
- Medicare gives you back about \$61.35 each visit
- You may still have some out-of-pocket cost (depends on the clinic)
- Ask your clinic if they offer bulk-billing

**Private:** If your child is covered under private health (extras), you may get money back for dietitian visits.

- The amount depends on your level of cover
- You don't need a GP referral

Contact your fund to ask how much they will pay.

**NDIS:** If your child has a NDIS plan, dietitian support may be covered. You don't need a GP referral for NDIS-funded appointments.

Dietitian services are usually funded under:

- Improved Health & Wellbeing
- Improved Daily Living

Your support coordinator or plan manager can help you understand what funding you have available.

## What support does \_\_\_\_\_ (name) need:

The below table lists 4 domains that dietitians commonly work under to support children and families.

Consider each prompts and tick any items that you believe you / your family member/ your client would benefit from in the form of dietetic support.

|  <b>Feeding and Mealtime Support</b>   |  <b>Nutrition and Health</b>   |  <b>Tube Feeding</b>  |  <b>Building Skills for Older Children and Teens</b>  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Chewing or swallowing difficulties that reduce food intake</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eating only a few foods or avoiding certain textures/flavours</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or distressed at mealtimes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Learning to eat more independently</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trying new eating patterns (e.g., vegetarian/vegan)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing mealtime routines that feel calm and predictable</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adjusting food or drink textures for safety</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tummy discomfort, reflux, vomiting, or pain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty noticing hunger or fullness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Concerns or changes in growth</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Concerns or changes in what they eat</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Concerns or changes in how much they eat</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low iron or other vitamin/mineral needs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low appetite or sudden changes in eating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Constipation, diarrhoea, or other bowel concerns</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support to stay hydrated</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starting, reviewing, or adjusting tube feeding plans</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Blended tube-feeding (home-prepared formulas)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transitioning toward oral eating (if appropriate)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Managing reflux, nausea, bloating, or discomfort</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Planning feeding times to support daily activities, sleep &amp; comfort</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Training caregivers/support workers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan simple meals</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cook basic foods safely</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read and understand food labels to make independent food choices</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shop and choose foods confidently</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Budget for groceries</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Work with caregivers/support workers on food routines</li> </ul> |