



# Home Modifications

Guidance for Builders and Designers

ndis



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# Introduction

The NDIS has a vital role to play in improving outcomes for participants and building more inclusive and equitable communities across the country. Our focus is on empowering and supporting participants to access activities and be more active members of family and community life.

Home modifications ranging from simple home adaptations such as a grab rail, through to more complex modifications that involve structural changes, help participants be safer and more independent in their homes. Making these changes to homes can have a big impact on how people live their lives, allowing greater flexibility and maximising participant independence and safety.

This guidance is designed to provide clarity for builders, designers, Assessors and any other associated stakeholders involved in the planning, decision making and delivery of Complex Home Modifications (CHM) for NDIS participants.

The NDIS funds a diverse range of home modifications to assist participants to achieve the goals in their plan. Home modifications vary for each participant, and are classified according to level of risk, extent of construction (non-structural or structural), cost and complexity.

## **There are three broad categories of NDIS home modifications:**

- Simple home adaptations are low cost, such as grab rails or mounted shower chairs, and are generally easy for participants to access.
- Minor home modifications are non-structural, but require experienced professional support to identify and deliver the right solution. The scope of work and associated costs are relatively low, for example, non-structural door widening.
- CHM involve structural changes, are relatively higher cost, higher risk and require a greater level of certification. CHM typically have a greater impact on participants' lives, and may involve work on a combination of different areas within the home, such as bathroom, kitchen, bedroom or access to the home.

## **This guidance aims to assist stakeholders in understanding:**

- The criteria the NDIS considers to be reasonable and necessary for CHM in a participant plan.
- The typical scope of works for NDIS complex home modifications.
- The scope of works that may exceed the reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded supports in a participant plan.

# NDIS Complex Home Modifications

**Home Modifications** are changes to the structure, layout or fittings of a participant's home that are required to enable the participant to safely access and move around their home.

The funded supports in a participant's NDIS plan need to meet each of the reasonable and necessary criteria outlined in the National Disability Insurance Agency Act 2013, section 34(1)(a)-(f) 2013 and the Supports for Participants Rules. (An extract of the relevant rules are referenced in Appendix 2).

## It is important to note:

- This guidance does not prevent a participant from contributing their own or other funding for a higher standard (and potentially more expensive) finish, or home modifications solution that achieves an equivalent outcome.
- Participants may choose to extend the scope of works beyond what is assessed as reasonable and necessary by the NDIS, via a separate service agreement with the builder.
- The service agreement between the builder and the NDIS participant will have a clear scope of works to be funded by the NDIS, prior to the home modifications commencement.
- The NDIA will support participants to explore other housing options (such as associated purchase and relocation costs) where it is clear such alternatives are likely to be more cost effective than modifying their existing dwelling.

## In addition, the following assumptions apply:

- Builders undertaking NDIS home modifications must understand and comply with the relevant building codes, standards and regulations that relate to the state and locality where the work is undertaken. In addition, where the obligations of a local authority stipulate different requirements, the builder's quote must be sufficient to achieve certification of the works in that specific locality. Any variations from standard Building Code of Australia practice should be noted and justified in the builder's quote.
- Builders will provide insurance to at least the minimum value of the modifications.

This guidance references the **Australian Standard 1428 Design for Access and Mobility Part 1 (General) (AS 1428.1)**. This standard is not specifically intended for residential dwellings and compliance is generally not mandatory, although does provide an outline for good practice in home design for people with disabilities. It is noted that local council or municipal statutory requirements are applicable and may default to AS 1428.1. Builders are expected to adhere to the design requirements for new building work, as required by the Building Code of Australia (BCA), to enable access for people with disabilities unless otherwise required to follow AS 1428.1

## Quotations

Builders' quotations for home modifications works must be sufficiently detailed to enable the NDIS to make comparisons based on the same scope of work. Appendix 1 provides an outline of the minimum required information for quoting that needs to be provided to the NDIS. Please ensure all required information is provided when submitting a quote for an NDIS participant.

# NDIS Complex Home Modifications

**Complex Home Modifications (CHM)** may be indicated by any number of factors including, the complexity of the work required, the extent of the area within the home that is to be impacted, a higher cost, the timeframe to complete the works, and requirement for multiple trades, licensed builders and project managers to undertake the scope of work.

A participant is able to access funding for Home Modifications is through the capital budget in their NDIS plan. NDIA acceptance of a quote for CHM requires an assessment and supporting evidence from a qualified Assessor (Occupational Therapist) who considers options such as the participant's environment, NDIS goals and ongoing support needs.

## Key areas of focus

There are eight major component areas included in these guidelines for CHM:

- Dwelling Access/Entrance
- Bathroom
- Bedroom
- Kitchen
- Internal Dwelling Access
- Home Automation
- New Building Modifications
- Maintenance and Upgrades

Not all of these components may be relevant to the overall scope and approval of a CHM.

**Once a CHM solution is determined, a maximum of two quotes are required by the NDIS delegate to make a reasonable and necessary decision.**



# Dwelling access/entrance

To provide NDIS participants with safe and continuous access to their home.

## Typical scope of works

### External path of travel

If supported by clinical evidence, an external continuous accessible path of travel is required for safe ingress and egress to the home. The reasonable and necessary criteria allows for the provision of a pedestrian path of travel from the front boundary or the car parking area, to one accessible entrance to the dwelling.

#### Any new path of travel is recommended to be:

- Reinforced concrete (not pattern paving, exposed aggregate, polished, stencilled or coloured concrete), but can also be constructed from other suitable cost effective products.
- 1000mm minimum width, or wider if based on clinical evidence the participant requires a wider wheelchair or mobility aid.
- A slip resistant surface, such as concrete broom finish or wooden trowel finish.

#### For an existing path of travel, it is recommended that:

- Any steps, obstructions or hazards along the designated path of travel are removed.
- In some cases, the widening of an existing path of travel may meet the NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria.

### Dwelling entrance – ramps

Access ramps are commonly used to replace steps or stairs for users of wheelchairs or mobility aids. Ramps are recommended to be:

- Timber framed (preferably structural treated pine) with a trafficable surface of timber decking type (preferably reeded treated pine) material, or
- Reinforced concrete (not pattern paving, exposed aggregate, stencilled concrete or coloured concrete) with a slip resistant surface such as concrete broom finish or wooden trowel finish.
- 1000mm minimum width between the handrails for a straight configuration (or wider if based on clinical evidence the participant requires a wider wheelchair or mobility aid), with a level landing of 1200mm wide located at the top and bottom of the ramp. Factors including the angle of approach and the position of the door need to be considered.
- No greater than 9000mm in length without an intermediate landing, and not steeper than a 1 in 14 gradient.
- A step ramp not exceeding a 1 in 8 gradient may be considered, if recommended by an Occupational Therapist for a participant. National Construction Code (2019) BCA requirements can apply in these scenarios.
- Where a ramp incorporates a 180-degree change in direction, it will have an intermediate landing of 1550mm width.

### Notes

- Specific design requirements for ramps shall be recommended by an Assessor, based on clinical evidence to facilitate the individual needs of the participant.
- Compliance of ramps to AS 1428.1 is not strictly required for residential 'Class 1' dwellings, however local council or municipal statutory requirements may be applicable and may default to AS 1428.1.
- It is noted that some local councils will allow an exemption of a development application when adherence to the standard is noted, however, some planning authorities will require a development application if the design deviates from the standard.

### Dwelling entrance – platform lift

If the internal floor level of the participant's dwelling is greater than 1000mm from the external pathway, then ramp or stair access may not be a suitable method of access to the dwelling.

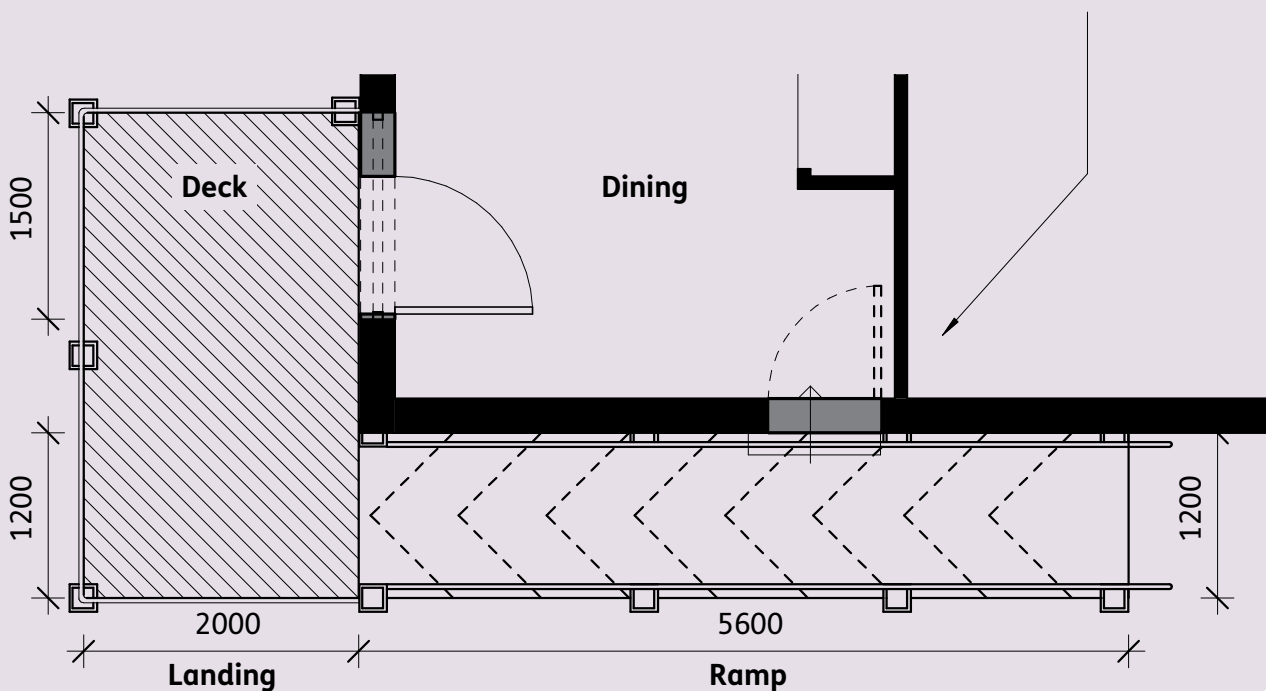
In such a case, if steps are not suitable or cannot be made safe, then installation of a vertical platform type lift may be recommended in the scope of works.

If a vertical platform lift is recommended, the product selected should be rated as suitable to be installed without weather cover.

### Illustration of ramp solution for dwelling access/entrance

Remove garage entry concrete step and fill in door.

Removal of full height window and replace with 1020mm hinged door to provide access into dining and kitchen area.





# Bathroom

To provide NDIS participants with safe and accessible amenities for personal care and hygiene.

## Typical scope of works

### Location

Typically the NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for a funded support is met with the proposal to modify one bathroom in a participant's dwelling. The bathroom may be either a shared or an ensuite type bathroom.

Where a participant's dwelling has more than one bathroom, the Assessor shall recommend which bathroom should be modified, giving consideration to its location and the existing plumbing and fixtures.

Typically, a modified accessible bathroom will contain a shower, a hand basin and toilet in the same room. However, in some circumstances the toilet may remain in a separate room.

It is preferable for the shower, toilet and hand basin to remain in their existing locations unless there is clinical or structural evidence to justify relocation of these fixtures, to increase the functionality, safety, accessibility, and/or circulation space for the participant.

An open, stepless shower is a functional solution for access. Ideally, a stepless shower should not be located adjacent to a doorway because of potential water escape, or the need to include a barrier which may reduce access. However it is acknowledged that in many domestic bathrooms it may be impractical to relocate the shower away from a doorway, due to the limited size and existing configurations of the bathroom.

Refer to **Shower Curtains** on page 11 for further information regarding open showers adjacent to doorways.

### Demolition

The builder should clearly nominate all demolition works for bathroom modifications which would typically include:

- Bathroom door and associated material (if being widened).
- Bathroom fixtures such as plumbing fixtures (bath, shower, toilet, vanity/hand basin) and bathroom fittings (toilet roll holder, towel rails, robe hooks, mirror).
- Existing shower hob.
- Existing flooring (such as vinyl or floor tiles).
- Internal section of wall, incorporating an adjacent toilet as part of an enlarged accessible bathroom.
- Sections of wall lining needed to access plumbing and installation of wall reinforcement.
- Sections of sub floor, to construct new stepless shower base. This would include a nominated section of timber flooring or structural concrete slab, to facilitate floor grades for a new stepless shower base.

### Fittings and fixtures

Where possible, existing fittings and fixtures shall be salvaged during demolition and re-used. While salvage is desirable to minimise costs, it is acknowledged that it is not always practical or achievable. Some fixtures, such as mirrors, may be fixed to surfaces with high strength adhesives which do not allow removal without damage to the fixture.

The builder should clearly list:

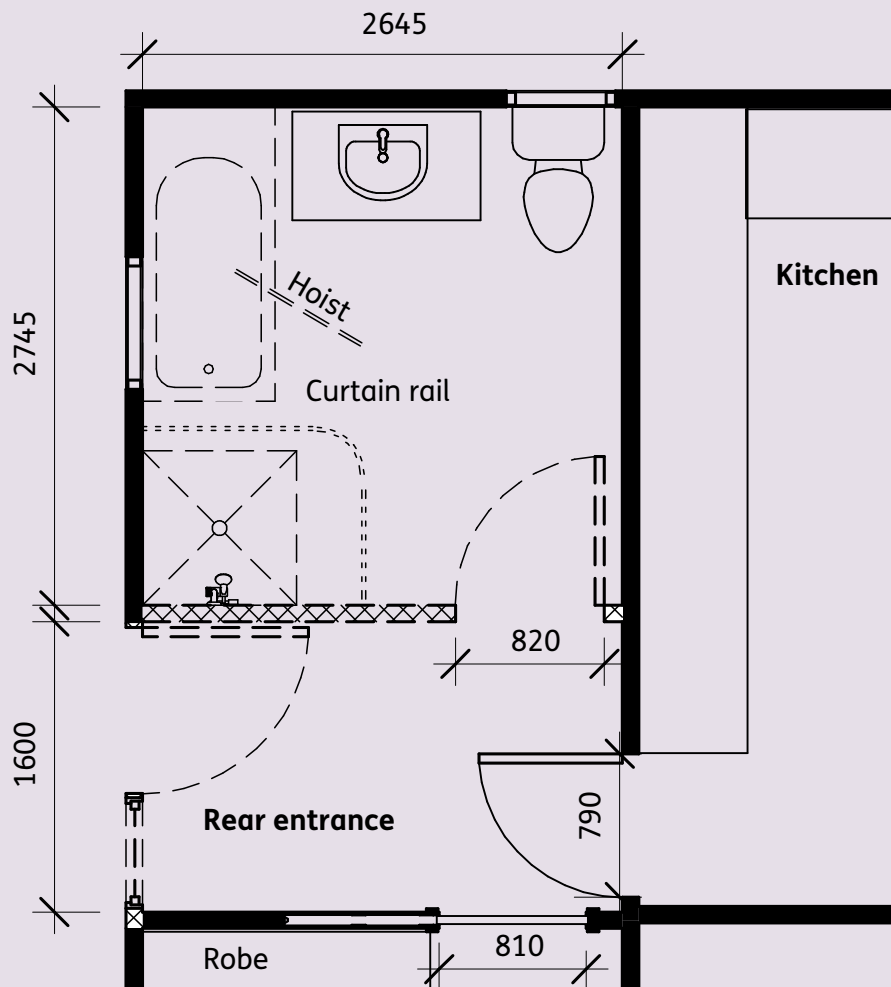
- All fittings and fixtures which are intended to be re-used, or not disturbed.
- All proposed new fittings and fixtures, for example:
  - Grab rails
  - Towel rails (which may be grab rail specification for the safety of the participant in preventing falls within the bathroom)
  - Taps, hand held shower head.
  - Plumbing fixtures (toilets, hand basins)
  - Bathroom storage cabinets, cupboards, shelving and the like
  - Shower screen/curtain.

## Plumbing

All required plumbing work associated with shower alterations must be specified, such as, new floor waste connections, water outlets and new taps/water mixers, as required.

Installation of a Thermostatic Mixing Valve (TMV) is a requirement for new works on bathrooms. Most hot water systems now deliver water to a pre-set maximum temperature, so while the provision of a TMV may meet reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports based on clinical evidence, the dwelling's existing hot water service should be checked to see if it has a pre-set maximum temperature.

Plan of proposed modifications to a bathroom, showing hoist and accessible shower



## Shower

### A. Size

A stepless shower base, nominal size 1200mm x 1200mm, is recommended.

Please note: in accordance with **AS 1428.1** the minimum size for a shower base is 1160mm x 1100mm.

### B. Waterproofing

Water proofing (to walls and floor) is specified in accordance with **AS 3740** as follows:

- For an unenclosed shower, the waterproofing shall extend a minimum of 1500mm from the wall connection of the shower rose
- Vertical flashing, which can be external or internal, is required to terminate a minimum of 1800mm above the finished floor level
- The waterproofing membrane is to be applied over the floor substrate and a minimum height of 150mm up the vertical face of the wall, above the finished floor level.

The builder must provide a certificate of waterproofing compliance.

### C. Flooring

The section of flooring removed to incorporate the new stepless shower base must be replaced and made good.

Floor grades for a stepless shower are to be between 1-in-60 to 1-in-80 to a central floor waste or lineal grate.

A suitable non-slip flooring, typically vinyl or floor tiles is to be provided. The bathroom floor – stepless shower transition should not incorporate any rims.

### D. Walls (shower)

Any disturbed sections of bathroom walls need to be re-clad with suitable wet area lining or an appropriate substrate surface for wall tiling, or the like.

Shower wall tiling (or other waterproof impervious wall finish such as vinyl or laminate sheeting) is provided to a vertical height of 1800mm above the finished floor surface, and extends beyond the shower perimeter (100mm beyond the shower base) for 1300mm in both directions (along both walls) horizontally.

Wall reinforcement to enable secure fixings of grab rails, may be provided if required. Wall reinforcement should be noggings, wall trimmers or 12mm structural plywood sheeting. The preferred method is plywood wall sheeting, extending between 600mm and 1850mm above the finished floor surface vertically, and along both walls from the corner of the shower to 900mm in both directions horizontally. This will ensure greater flexibility is provided for different types, lengths and locations of grab rails to suit the participant, both now, and in the future.

### E. Shower curtain

Where a shower curtain is to be provided, it is typically on a suspended 'L' shaped curtain track with intermediate ceiling support.

If the shower base is located in close proximity (within 300mm) to the bathroom door, it may be appropriate to provide an 'ancillary support' to the shower base. A small, fixed shower screen 'nib' (of at least 150mm wide) to preclude water splashing under the shower curtain, would protect the bathroom entrance from moisture (the shower curtain would slide along the inside of the nib).

## Toilet

Where practical, the existing toilet pan and cistern would be retained. Modifications to an existing toilet which may meet the reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports include:

- Replacement of the toilet seat.
- Addition of wall-mounted grab rails, drop-down grab rails or other assistive technology.

If a new toilet pan and cistern is required, the toilet suite would need to meet the reasonable and necessary criteria. Although an **AS 1428.1** compliant toilet pan may be clinically justified as being effective and beneficial with regard to current good practice and representing value for money, there are typically many toilet suite models that would also be suitable for the participant.

Key consideration should be given to the position and set-out of the toilet pan, which is often what makes the toilet functional, safe and accessible. Many typical toilet suite models can comply for use with a mobile shower commode.

## Hand basin

Where practical and appropriate, the existing hand basin and/or vanity would be retained. Modifications to a hand basin and/or vanity that may meet the reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports include:

- Modifications to existing vanity joinery to facilitate knee/foot clearance for a wheelchair user.
- Replacement of an existing hand basin with a new semi-recessed type hand basin, to increase accessibility for a wheelchair user (which would also most likely require a new vanity top).
- Alteration of the height of a hand basin and/or vanity for a wheelchair or a standing user, based on clinical evidence.
- Replacement of existing taps with accessible taps, such as mixer taps with lever handles (and possibly extended lever handles).

## Scope of works that may not meet NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports

The following list provides guidance on items that generally do not meet all reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded supports. The home owner or participant may choose to have these items included in the bathroom modifications, and separately fund the items with the builder.

These items may include, but are not limited to:

- Upgrade or replacement of the existing hot water system.
- Plumbing works beyond the modified bathroom.
- Replacement of taps, shower heads or plumbing fixtures that could otherwise be reused, in accordance with builder and/or plumber certification/compliance requirements (unless clinical evidence is provided to support the need for a different type of fitting).
- Upgrade or replacement of other bathroom fittings and fixtures that could otherwise be reused.

- Electrical upgrade or replacement of electrical wiring, main switchboard and circuits.
- Additional electrical fixtures, such as general power outlets (unless required on the basis of being positioned to enable accessibility or relocated as a result of the modifications).
- Folding glass shower screens.
- Baths, unless there is specific clinical evidence to support the need.

### Notes

Design requirements for accessible bathroom modifications will be recommended by the Assessor and based on clinical evidence to individually facilitate the needs of the participant.

Compliance of bathrooms (toilet and shower) to **AS 1428.1** is not strictly required for a residential 'Class 1' dwelling.

Applicable Australian Standards include:

**Plumbing Regulations 2008 and the Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA) (Volume 3 of the National Construction Code Series)**

AS 3000 – Wiring rules

AS 3740 – Waterproofing of domestic wet areas

AS 4858 – Liquid applied waterproofing membranes

#### Water-resistant Substrates:

SA 3600 – Concrete

AS 2908.2 – Fibre cement sheeting

AS 2588 – Water-resistant plasterboard sheeting

AS 3799 – Masonry

AS 1860.1 – Flooring grade particle board sheeting

AS 2269 – Structural plywood

#### Water-resistant Surface Materials:

AS 2924.1 – Thermosetting laminated sheet

AS 2908.2 – Cellulose-cement products  
- Flat sheet

# Bedroom

To provide access to the bedroom and safe transfer to and from the bed.

## Typical scope of works

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### Location

Modifications of a participant's primary bedroom within their home may meet the reasonable and necessary criteria for a funded support.

Typically, the primary bedroom will be the main bedroom on the same level as the entry door to the dwelling, which provides the greatest circulation space (particularly for a wheelchair user) and is located adjacent or as close as possible to the accessible bathroom used by the participant.

### Hoist transfer

The builder should clearly nominate all demolition. A suitable ceiling hoist structural support may be required for the roof space above the bedroom ceiling, where a participant is reliant on hoist transfers to and from their bed. The Assessor would consider the suitability of a mobile lifting hoist and also the participant's carer supports where relevant.

The ceiling hoist structural support would be determined in accordance with the hoist manufacturers or installer's recommendations regarding the proposed hoist type, point loads, structural support method and specific location. The type of roof and wall construction of the participant's dwelling would also impact on the determination of the most reasonable method of support.

### Electrical

Changes to electrical wiring, fixtures and outlets would be based on clinical evidence for the participant's requirements. The following electrical works may be required within the bedroom:

- An additional General Power Outlet (GPO) at ceiling level on or within the roof space for an overhead hoist.
- Additional GPO(s) on the bedhead wall for medical or disability related equipment (such as inflatable mattress, electric bed, respiratory equipment).
- Where the participant's welfare is at risk, additional GPO(s) connected to an uninterrupted power system, and/or suitable air conditioning within the bedroom (such as a split system).

# Kitchen

To facilitate NDIS participants goals of independent living and meal preparation in the home.

## Typical scope of works

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Typical kitchen modifications that meet the NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria can vary significantly in scope, as influenced by:

- The participant's disability.
- Existing design of the kitchen and associated appliances.
- Degree to which the participant will be able to independently use the kitchen or wants to participate in meal preparation tasks.

## Kitchen modifications

The following kitchen modifications that would typically meet the NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria, may include:

- Removal of cupboard joinery under nominated areas of kitchen benches to provide for knee or foot clearance particularly for wheelchair users. Areas of under bench clearance considered reasonable for a wheelchair user may include kitchen sink, hotplate and bench area for meal preparation tasks.
- Height adjustment of nominated sections of kitchen bench may involve new sections of joinery and alterations to existing splashback.
- Changes to nominated appliances.
- Joinery changes to facilitate an area of accessible storage.
- Additional GPO(s) within an accessible reach range.
- A mobile bench on castor wheels and manually height adjustable.

## Scope of works that may not meet NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports

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The following aspects of kitchen modifications provides guidance on items that generally would not meet all reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded support. The home owner or participant may choose to have these items included in the kitchen modifications, and separately fund the items in agreement with the builder.

These items may include, but are not limited to:

- Upgrade or replacement of the entire kitchen and/or appliances.
- Upgrade or replacement of the existing hot water system.
- Plumbing beyond the modified kitchen or appliance being altered.
- Electrical upgrade or replacement of electrical wiring, main switchboard and circuits.
- Upgrade or replacement of kitchen fittings and fixtures that can otherwise be reused and are not being replaced with a different type due to clinical evidence (such as replacement of different type of kitchen taps and joinery handles that would support independent use).

# Internal dwelling access

To enable NDIS participants access to necessary areas within the home that are restricted or prevented due to their disability.

## Typical scope of works

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### Door widening

Where participants are reliant on mobility aids or use a wheelchair, the NDIS criteria for reasonable and necessary funded supports may be met with an assessment to widen doors or entrances providing access via:

- One external entrance door (typically the main front door or door linked to the external continuous accessible path of travel).
- One bathroom door (specifically to the bathroom being modified or that contains an accessible toilet and shower).
- The entrance to at least one living area within the dwelling.
- The kitchen door.
- The participant's nominated bedroom.
- An additional external entrance door from the bedroom for the purpose of fire egress may also be considered. If under the NDIS it is determined that an additional external entrance door meets the reasonable and necessary funded criteria, then the scope of works may also require an additional connecting section for the external path of travel.
- Additional bedroom(s) where the participant requires access.

Planning authorities may require a development application to widen an external door. Builders are required to check local regulations when planning modifications.

## Scope of works that may not meet NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports

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The following items generally do not meet all reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded support. The home owner or participant may choose to have these items included in the home modifications, and separately fund the items with the builder. These items may include, but are not limited to:

- House extensions to increase circulation space of living areas or to provide additional habitable rooms. If additional floor area is required for access to a bathroom and/or bedroom, then the NDIS may consider an extension of house space.
- Conversion of garages to provide an additional habitable room.
- Replacement of floor coverings (except in circumstances where the existing floor covering severely limits mobility or where sections of flooring require replacement due to other required modifications).

## Notes

In circumstances where a participant has purchased or moved to a new home, consideration needs to be given to the chosen location and design of the proposed dwelling. Participant access needs must be considered, in particular:

- The selected site/home should be as level as possible and avoid the need for external ramps or lifts.
- The design of the newly purchased dwelling should be single storey, particularly where multi-storey or split-level designs would necessitate internal ramps, lifts or stair climbers. Council regulations may require elevated sites in certain areas, e.g. flood prone areas.
- NDIS will not be responsible for modifications that would normally not be necessary with good site/dwelling selection.





# Home automation

To provide solutions to enable greater independence in the home.

## Typical scope of works

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Where participants are reliant on physical support to undertake everyday functions like opening doors and operating lights, the criteria for reasonable and necessary NDIS funded supports may be met with home automation, as clinically assessed to meet the participant's needs, through installation of:

- Automatic door openers for main access and egress for the home, bathroom door and participant's bedroom door (with its own battery back-up pack).
- Automated lighting and power control for areas in the home commonly used by the participant.
- Automated climate control for areas in the home specifically used by the participant.
- Automated control of window fittings for areas in the home specifically used by the participant.
- Emergency call system.
- Sensor devices or pressure pads where home automation can be used to control the environment and/or medical related assistive technology.
- Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) for any medical equipment where the welfare of the participant may be at risk and is supported by clinical evidence.

## Scope of works that may not meet NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports

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The installation of the following home automation items generally do not meet all reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded support:

- Automated controls for devices that are not deemed reasonable and necessary by the NDIS, for example, entertainment devices.
- Separate UPS for devices where no clinical evidence exists.

# New building modifications

Funding of modifications for a new home plan, to accommodate a participant's disability needs.

## Typical scope of works

### Modifications to new buildings

Providing a functional and usable environment is a fundamental principle of good design.

A necessary consideration for a new build is a universal design approach that takes into account people at all life stages, to achieve accessible design solutions based on principles of usability, adaptability, accessibility, safety and lifetime value.

If NDIS funding is to be requested for the new building, participants and/or their families should consult with their NDIA planner and therapy team when deciding to relocate and build a new home.

For NDIS funding to be allocated for a new dwelling, the design attributes for access and suitability of living areas must have been considered in the planning stage, or the investment of NDIS funding may not be deemed value for money.

### Modifications areas

The NDIS will fund only reasonable and necessary modifications to a new dwelling based on the participant's needs, as assessed by an Occupational Therapist suitably qualified in new building modifications.

Funding for modifications will be based on the costs associated with any alterations to the plan that are assessed as being reasonable and necessary and relate to the participants disability.

Consideration must be given to the chosen site, location and design of the proposed new dwelling. Participant access needs must be considered, in particular:

- The selected site should be as level as possible and avoid the need for external ramps or lifts.
- The design of the new dwelling should be single storey, particularly where multi-storey or split-level designs would necessitate internal ramps, lifts or stair climbers. Council regulations may require elevated sites in certain areas, e.g. flood prone areas.
- The configuration of rooms for use by the participant should consider their need for adequate circulation space and access, for example:
  - larger rooms such as the bedroom and bathroom
  - wider corridors and doorways
  - accessibility of benchtops, power outlets and light switches.

### Reasonable Scope

The NDIS will fund the cost differential for agreed alterations in a planned home. That is, the difference in cost for the supply of a standard item and the modified item required to meet the needs of the participant.

For example, the NDIS would fund the difference between a standard door width and that of a wider door, if clinical evidence supported the need for a wider doorway.

The NDIS may utilise the expertise of a third party to assess value for money, as required for the 'reasonable' criteria for funding. A quantity surveyor may be engaged to determine cost differentials between standard items and disability related requirements.

## Scope of works that may not meet NDIS reasonable and necessary criteria for funded supports

The following items generally do not meet all reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funded support. The home owner or participant may choose to have these items and separately fund them with the builder; including but not limited to:

- Site works not related to a participant's disability, or required as a result of a poorly sourced building site.
- Upgraded items/features not related to a participant's disability.
- Lifts in planned dwellings where a multiple storey home is planned, or required as a result of an unsuitable site.



# Maintenance and upgrades

The NDIS will not fund maintenance or upgrades that are not directly related to the participant's disability.

## Typical scope of works

### Modifications area

NDIS approved and funded modifications must be confined to the immediate room or area of the participant's dwelling that requires modifications.

Builders must limit the disturbance to existing walls, floor and ceiling/roof to the greatest extent possible during the home modifications. Any disturbed areas or components of the participant's dwelling shall be made good to match existing finishes.

Areas of painting of walls, ceiling, doors or architraves must be confined to the room or area being modified.

The builder should carefully consider the areas of the dwelling which would be reasonably disturbed as a result of the works being carried out, during the initial assessment and quote.

### Structural repairs

Any necessary structural repairs need to be confined to, and directly related to, the immediate room or area of the dwelling requiring modifications (such as door widening, recessed sub-floor for a step less shower base, relocation or removal of walls).

For example, unless impacted by the home modifications scope of works, structural repair of the dwelling subfloor, walls and roof due to deterioration caused by termite attack, moisture, rot, foundation subsidence or the like, are not generally funded under the NDIS.

### Electrical

Any required electrical works funded by the NDIS need to be confined to, and directly related to, the immediate room or area of the dwelling requiring modifications (such as new or relocated lights, light switches and/or GPO's).

As a result of the home modifications, it may be necessary to extend new wiring back to the main switch board and to provide a Residual Current Device (RCD), to comply with the electrical rules.

Complete upgrade of a dwelling's electrical supply, wiring and/or main switch board is generally not considered to meet the reasonable and necessary criteria for a NDIS funded support.

### Asbestos and/or hazardous material removal

All associated and reasonable costs to detect and if necessary, remove asbestos or hazardous materials from the immediate work area impacted in the home modifications, would be considered as reasonable and necessary funded support by the NDIS.

The extent of the asbestos removal supported by the NDIS would generally be confined to those components or areas of the dwelling that are disturbed by the approved home modifications.

The home owner is responsible for the removal of any additional areas of asbestos or hazardous materials in the dwelling, which are not impacted by the home modifications scope of works.

## Non-compliance of the dwelling

Any existing areas of non-compliance associated with the participant's dwelling, such as a previous extension or re-stumping of the dwelling where a building permit was not obtained, would not meet the reasonable and necessary criteria for NDIS funding.

## Building permits

Building permits may be necessary due to the cost of the home modifications work, and/or any structural nature of works. The NDIS may consider funding reasonable costs associated with obtaining building permits in accordance with all relevant Federal, State and Local Municipality legislative requirements.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Minimum standard quote information for builders

The typical Home Modifications quote from a builder or contractor for an approved scope of works, should contain the following:

- Name, registered address, telephone and email contact details
- ABN
- Registered practitioner's number etc.
- Details of Insurances
- Contract (if applicable)
- Signing / acceptance page (if no contract)
- The Scope of Works
- Any relevant documentation, drawings, specifications
- Price breakdown
  - Price
  - GST
  - Any provisional sums
  - Prime Cost items
- Exclusions, clarification, qualifications including a list of other supplied items (e.g. building permits etc.)

## Appendix 2: Extract from the NDIS Act 2013: Reasonable and necessary supports

1) For the purposes of specifying, in a statement of participant supports, the general supports that will be provided, and the reasonable and necessary supports that will be funded, the CEO must be satisfied of all the following in relation to the funding or provision of each such support:

- a) The support will assist the participant to pursue the goals, objectives and aspirations included in the participant's statement of goals and aspirations;
- b) The support will assist the participant to undertake activities, to facilitate the participant's social and economic participation;
- c) The support represents value for money in that the costs of the support are reasonable, relative to both the benefits achieved and the cost of alternative support;
- d) The support will be, or is likely to be, effective and beneficial for the participant, having regard to current good practice;
- e) The funding or provision of the support takes account of what it is reasonable to expect families, carers, informal networks and the community to provide;
- f) The support is most appropriately funded or provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and is not more appropriately funded or provided through other general systems of service delivery or support services offered by a person, agency or body, or systems of service delivery or support services offered:
  - (i) As part of a universal service obligation; or
  - (ii) In accordance with reasonable adjustments required under a law dealing with discrimination on the basis of disability.

2) The National Disability Insurance Scheme rules may prescribe methods or criteria to be applied, or matters to which the CEO is to have regard, in deciding whether or not he or she is satisfied as mentioned in any of paragraphs (1) (a) to (f).

[www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00276/Html/Text#\\_Toc519598617](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018C00276/Html/Text#_Toc519598617)

# Further information

Further information on NDIS Home Modifications is available on the [NDIS website](#)

- [Home modifications explained](#)
- [Providing home modifications](#)
- [Operational Guideline - Home modifications](#)

## Contacting the NDIS

Providers can contact the NDIS for Complex Home Modifications issues via:

- [NDIS website](#)
- the NDIS toll free number **1800 800 110**
- their local NDIS office

## Feedback

If you have any feedback about this guidance please email [Home.Modifications@ndis.gov.au](mailto:Home.Modifications@ndis.gov.au)

Please clearly reference the area of the guidance for which you are providing feedback and describe your suggestion or issue concisely.



**For more information about the NDIS please contact:**

**[www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)**


**National Disability Insurance Agency**

 Telephone 1800 800 110

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**For people who are deaf or hard of hearing**

 TTY: 1800 555 677

 Speak and Listen: 1800 555 727