Zebra Care

Your NDIS funding management, explained.

Starting out with the NDIS, or trying to make sense of your funding once you're in it, can feel like a lot to take in.

This guide walks you through it from your first application, right through to getting your funding managed and your invoices paid.

Managing your NDIS funding doesn't have to be something you figure out alone. At Zebra Care, we handle the admin so you can focus on what matters - invoices actioned fast, real people on the phone, and no corporate queues to sit in. If you're ready for a Plan Manager who treats you like a person, not a case number, we're here to help.

Free Guide

01 Gather your evidence

- See your GP, Paediatrician or Specialist
- Collect reports from allied health professionals (Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist, Physiotherapist, Psychologist)
- Your treating health professional will need to complete Section 2 of the Access Request Form, or you can send existing reports or assessments with your completed form
- For more details: ndis.gov.au/how-apply-ndis/what-access-request-form

02 Make your access request

- Submit your completed form through the NDIS service hub, by mail to NDIA, GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601, or in person at your local office
- Apply here: ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis
- The NDIA will tell you if you're eligible within 90 days of your application and evidence being submitted
- Need help? Call the NDIA on 1800 800 110

03 Prepare for your planning meeting

- Think through your goals and support needs
- Write down your questions
- Ask what your funding management options are

04 Decide how your funding will be managed

- **Self Managed** - you, your plan nominee or child representative manage your funding
  - Positives: choice over which supports you use, who provides them, and how; flexibility to use both registered and unregistered providers; you can negotiate costs above or below the NDIS price guide
  - Negatives: you're responsible for paying providers and keeping financial records; more admin, and the NDIA can review whether you're spending funds correctly

- **NDIA Managed** - the NDIA pays your providers and keeps records
  - Positives: no admin or invoice handling for you at all
  - Negatives: you can only use NDIS registered providers, which limits choice, particularly in regional areas

- **Plan Managed** - a registered Plan Manager pays your invoices and keeps records for you
  - Positives: no admin burden, but you keep the flexibility to use both registered and unregistered providers; someone else is tracking your budget and chasing payments
  - Negatives: you're relying on your Plan Manager's speed and service quality - a slow or unresponsive one can cause real problems

- **Combination** - a mix of the above (e.g. Plan Managed for most supports, Self Managed for one category)
  - Positives: tailor the approach category by category, based on what you're comfortable handling yourself
  - Negatives: can be more complex to keep track of than a single approach

- Full guide: ndis.gov.au/participants/using-your-funding/understanding-your-ndis-funding/guide-using-your-funding

- You can request a change to how your funding is managed at any time - there's no limit on how often

05 If you want Plan Management, simply ask for it

- Say this at your planning meeting: "*I would like my applicable NDIS funding to be Plan Managed.*"
- Confirm it's been added to your plan
- Choose a Plan Manager

06 Set up your Plan Manager

- Complete registration (online, by phone, or your Support Coordinator can do this for you)
- Confirm whether your plan is PACE or the PRODA old style - your Plan Manager / Support Coordinator can check this for you
- PACE plans: call the NDIA on 1800 800 110 and confirm your chosen Plan Manager as your endorsed Plan Manager by providing them their name and registration number (For Zebra Care Pty Ltd / 4050113695)
- PRODA old style plans: your Plan Manager needs to secure a service booking before they can pay anything - ask them to confirm this is done
- Zebra Care will finalise your Onboarding

07 Tell your providers

- Let your providers know your Plan Manager has changed or been added
- Give them your Plan Manager's invoice email address (for Zebra Care it is invoices@zebracare.com.au)
- This avoids invoices going to the wrong place and being delayed

08 Understand how invoices get paid

- Provider delivers the support
- Provider sends the invoice to your Plan Manager
- Your Plan Manager checks it against your plan
- You (or your nominee) approve it, unless you've chosen auto approval
- Your Plan Manager submits the claim to the NDIA, who then release the funds - this typically takes 1 - 3 business days on the NDIA's end, though it can take longer if a claim is flagged for review
- Once funds are released, your Plan Manager pays the provider
- Ask your Plan Manager how quickly they action invoices on their end - this is the part they can control, and it's the biggest factor in how fast you'll see payments go through

09 Know what you can and can't use funding for

- Plan Management can generally allow both registered and unregistered providers, subject to NDIS requirements
- Check with your Plan Manager if you're unsure whether a support is claimable

10 Keep track of your budget

- Ask your Plan Manager how to check your remaining funds
- Review your budget regularly, not just at renewal time
- Flag it early if you think you're running low before your plan year ends

11 If something doesn't look right

- Hold or reject the invoice and ask your Plan Manager to check it
- You can query any invoice you don't recognise or think is incorrect
- Your Plan Manager should investigate before anything is paid

12 Plan renewal and changes

- Make sure your Plan Manager has your new plan details when your plan is reviewed and renewed
- If your circumstances change, you can request a plan variation
- If you want to switch Plan Managers, give the required notice - outstanding invoices and any service bookings will need to transfer as part of the process

Zebra Care

Get in touch with Zebra Care today and discover the difference a personal approach can make.

www.zebracare.com.au

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