

## **Introduction**

This document has been developed for individuals who have an amputation/s as a result of illness or injury and/or those born with congenital limb deficiencies that may be eligible for financial assistance (care and support) via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This document does not apply for those who have had an amputation due to an accident covered by a transport or WorkCover statutory body.

## **Am I eligible?**

To gain access into NDIS you will need to apply via [www.ndis.gov.au/my-access-checker](http://www.ndis.gov.au/my-access-checker) and be assessed for eligibility. Acceptance into the NDIS depends on a number of key factors such as age (under the age of 65 years) and whether or not you have a permanent disability. The NDIS is a national reform and the full national system roll-out will not commence until July 2016.

## **How do I navigate the system?**

Losing a limb/s is a daunting experience and will directly impact upon many areas of your life. In the early stages after an amputation/s you will have many questions. The NDIS has been developed to support individuals with a permanent disability and assist individuals to self-manage their care. NDIS will provide eligible participants with choice and control relating to their long-term care and the products and services which support independence.

In the early stages (following limb loss) you may find it difficult to:

- navigate your way around the healthcare system (especially if you have never been in hospital or rehabilitation before); and,
- understand what your future will look like in relation to your lifestyle and your ability to do the things you used to do.

Once you have been deemed eligible for NDIS support, it will be beneficial to discuss your treatment and care plan ('Participant Plan') with various allied healthcare practitioners who will be able to guide you through the maze of what you may or may not need. You may also choose to meet with a Peer Support Volunteer from Limbs 4 Life who has experience living with an amputation and can share the equipment and treatment needs that they required to regain their mobility and live independently. Limbs 4 Life's Peer Support Volunteers are trained individuals who have lived with an amputation for more than three (3) years.

## **Meeting with a 'NDIS Planner'**

You will need to prepare prior to meeting with your NDIS Planner. Your NDIS Planner will help you to develop your 'Participant Plan'. Your Participant Plan should take into account all of the things that you may need to achieve your goals and plan for your future.

Limbs 4 Life have developed a checklist (below) of assistive devices (aids and equipment) and services specifically for people living with limb loss.

This checklist is a general list which covers all matters related to being an amputee. This checklist takes all items into consideration to assist you to decide what you will need to regain your mobility, live independently, achieve your goals and make informed decisions based on choice and control. The checklist is broken down into sections covering assistive devices and services.

### Equipment and Service Checklist

#### Prosthetic Equipment

Prior to an appointment with your NDIS Planner you should think about your needs and meet with your prosthetic provider and discuss the following:

Prosthetic Limb/s
The type of prostheses that will help you to achieve your goals
The level of maintenance and number of prosthetic reviews you might require in the future (eg. your prosthesis may require annual maintenance checks)
Which prosthetic products you would like to trial prior to making your final decision and purchase (eg. different feet, knee units)
Whether you would like a prosthetic cover (cosmesis) for your prosthesis
Your need for funding to cover the costs of prosthetic modifications
Your need for recreational limbs and how they will support your lifestyle choices (eg. bike riding, running, water-based activities)
Your need for specialised prosthetic limbs to support specific activities (eg. shower/wet legs, hands which grip tools or 'hold onto' another device such as a bike)

You should also take into consideration the funding required to support the type of suspension system that you plan to use, along with other solutions which may support your prosthetic goals:

Prosthetic Suspension Systems	Prosthetic Solutions
Liners: Silicone or Gel ( <i>2 -3 required per year</i> )	Prosthetic lubricant spray
Stump socks ( <i>Minimum of 12 per year</i> )	Prosthetic gel
Prosthetic sleeves ( <i>for lower limb users</i> )	Prosthetic ointment
Shrinker socks ( <i>for lower limb users</i> )	Rotator (lower limb only)
Vacuum system ( <i>for lower limb users</i> )	

#### Things to consider:

1. You can trial prosthetic components (usually for up to a period of two weeks) prior to making your final decision.
2. You will require on-going reviews and modifications to your prosthesis along with a new prosthetic socket from time to time. Ensure that you allocate funding time for reviews and modifications.
3. Prosthetic components such as feet, hands, arms and knees will need to be changed or replaced, as they do not last a life-time. Consult with your prosthetic provider about how often you will require a new limb or replacement limbs.
4. Most prosthetic components usually have a warranty usually of up to two years. Find out the warranty of your products prior to accepting delivery. You should also ask about the service requirement for certain prosthetic devices (eg. microprocessor knee units) where applicable.

### Treatment Checklist

Following discharge from rehabilitation you may decide that you require support for different aspects of your life so that you can participate in your community. You may also need support to return to work. You may need assistance from the following providers and / or others who may not be on this list.

### Practitioners

Speak to the following practitioners (or others) to determine how many hours of therapy or treatment your practitioner thinks that you will require

Providers	
Occupational Therapist	Physiotherapist
Podiatrist	Prosthetist
Psychologist	Recreational physiologist
Social workers	

### Assistive Device Checklist

Assistive Technology for Lower Limb Amputees	
Home Modifications	Mobility Aids
Hand rails – entry / steps	Walking aids such as walking sticks or crutches
Wet areas – toilet / shower	Wheelchair – manual / electric
Grip bars	Wheelchair cushion
Anti-skid shower / bath mats	Orthotic shoes
Shower – seat / chair / stool	
Bath – seat / chair / stool	

Assistive Technology for Upper Limb Amputees	
Personal Aids	IT Equipment
Spoon / fork / knife	One-handed keyboards / mouse
Specifically designed chopping boards	Specialised computers
Modifications to clothing	Specialised computer programs with voice recognition
General Velcro / button replacements	

Equipment Modifications for Upper and Lower Limb Amputees	
Motor vehicles	Education and Employment
Left foot accelerator	Access to places of learning (eg. schools)
Spinner-knob	Access to places of employment
Driving lessons to support modifications	Workplace supportive devices
Hand controls	
Wheelchair lifting arm	