



National Disability Insurance Scheme 3-Year Pricing Workplan

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1. Introduction

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA/Agency) has shared responsibility for market stewardship across disability support markets, along with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DHDA) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS QSC). Market stewardship ensures participants can access quality supports that enable them to pursue their goals and participate fully in community life. This responsibility involves shaping market conditions where providers can sustainably deliver diverse, high-quality services while participants exercise meaningful choice and control.

Within this shared stewardship framework, participants rely on well-functioning markets to exercise choice and control. When markets develop gaps – whether in service type, geographic coverage, or quality standards – participants’ opportunities become limited. Effective market stewardship involves identifying these gaps and using coordinated policy, pricing and regulatory tools to encourage appropriate provider responses, while protecting participants from poor quality or exploitative services.

Pricing frameworks are central to effective market stewardship. Well-designed pricing balances the diversity of service options participants need while ensuring providers can deliver quality support over time. The NDIA’s pricing policy work supports broader disability system improvements, including quality enhancement initiatives and regulatory modernisation, through coordinated evidence-based approaches that complement regulatory and policy frameworks across the system.

The NDIA’s pricing work will also remain closely aligned with the NDIS QSC reforms, ensuring that pricing settings reinforce the quality, safety and regulatory uplift expected across the Scheme. Integration with quality and safeguards reform allows pricing to support improved provider practices, clearer service standards and stronger participant protections, strengthening the overall coherence of market stewardship efforts.

This three-year workplan provides clarity to the disability community, providers, and the broader sector about the NDIA’s pricing approach through 2025–2028. It outlines how systematic investigation, and evidence-based analysis will inform pricing decisions, giving participants and providers visibility of the methodology and timeframes that will guide the NDIA’s market stewardship activities. The workplan demonstrates the NDIA’s commitment to transparent, consultative processes that respond to identified market challenges while maintaining participant choice and provider sustainability.

1.1 How to read this workplan

This workplan outlines the NDIA's pricing-improvement program over a three-year horizon. Each year builds on the evidence, review activity and implementation readiness achieved in the previous year.

- Year 1 (2025–26) focusses on evidence building, including the Quality Support Pilots, targeted market analysis and the 2025–26 Annual Pricing Review (APR). This work develops the foundations for future pricing design.
- Year 2 (2026–27) focusses on formal pricing reviews and design work, guided by Terms of Reference (ToR) informed by the 2025–26 APR, pilot insights, administrative data, and targeted consultation. This is the stage where pricing approaches are designed, tested and refined.
- Year 3 (2027–28) focusses on implementation and consolidation, embedding the outcomes of major reviews, monitoring early impacts, and preparing future stewardship cycles.

The Workplan is structured so that pilots, data, and early evidence inform review questions, while formal reviews are guided by Terms of Reference and supported by structured consultation under the NDIA Pricing Review Consultation and Engagement Framework.

Detailed activities for each year – including market analysis, review processes, consultation, implementation, and monitoring – are described in the corresponding Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 sections.

1.2 Independent Pricing Committee

The Independent Pricing Committee (IPC) was established by the NDIA in 2024–25 to provide independent advice on NDIS pricing approaches and identify opportunities to strengthen the functioning of disability markets. In its final report, the IPC observed that single price limits, while effective in supporting market stability, may not always capture the diversity of service types and delivery models within the Scheme. The Committee noted that greater flexibility in how services are specified and priced could improve alignment between costs, benefits and participant outcomes.

These observations inform the NDIA's ongoing analysis of market dynamics and pricing settings as part of its broader evidence program. The NDIA will continue to consider IPC insights alongside data from the APR, Quality Support Pilots, and coordinated work with DHDA and NDIS QSC.

More information, including the IPC's final report, can be found on the [NDIS website](#).

1.3 NDIA Approach to Differentiated Pricing

The NDIA is exploring more differentiated approaches to pricing and market stewardship to better reflect the diversity of supports delivery contexts and participant needs across the NDIS. Differentiation does not mean setting multiple price limits for every service type; rather, it encompasses the broader principle that pricing, policy and regulatory settings should respond proportionately to differences in service complexity, quality, workforce capability and participant outcomes.

A differentiated approach enables the Agency to recognise where flexibility or targeted adjustments can improve market sustainability and participant experience, while maintaining fairness, transparency and choice. This may include using pricing, registration and payment mechanisms that better reflect the cost and value of delivering quality supports.

The NDIA is considering opportunities for differentiation across several areas:

- Registration and assurance requirements: recognising the compliance and quality investments required of registered providers.
- Participant complexity and intensity: accounting for additional time, skills and workforce structures needed to support participants with complex needs.
- Provider capability and quality: supporting providers who invest in training, supervision and outcomes measurement.
- Market alignment and benchmarking: ensuring NDIS prices remain responsive to broader market conditions and workforce trends.

These areas are being examined through ongoing evidence gathering, pilots and stakeholder engagement. The NDIA will continue to test and evaluate differentiated approaches before determining whether, and how, they should be incorporated into future pricing frameworks.

1.4 Annual Pricing Review: Established Process, Earlier Announcements

The Annual Pricing Review (APR) is an established part of the NDIA's market-stewardship approach. It provides consistent, evidence-based process to assess whether pricing settings continue to support a sustainable provider market.

From 2026, the NDIA's intention is to bring forward annual pricing review announcements to earlier in the year. This shift will provide participants and

providers with earlier visibility of adjustments. It is the intention of the NDIA to provide an earlier release of non-Disability Support Worker (DSW) prices. The DSW dependent prices cannot be finalised until after the Fair Work Commission's (FWC) Annual Wage Determination is handed down in June. For DSW supports, the NDIA will provide an early signal of where DSW price limits are likely to move, informed by the assumptions in the Annual Financial Sustainability Report (AFSR). The NDIA will prioritise timely and transparent communication as part of its continuous improvement approach.

This adjustment reflects the NDIA's commitment to continuous improvement in pricing transparency and alignment with other national care and support markets, where pricing updates are announced ahead of implementation.

1.5 Consultation and Engagement Framework

Consultation is a core feature of the NDIA's pricing improvement agenda. The Agency's approach is designed to obtain structured, evidence-based feedback on the direction and implementation of pricing reforms, ensuring decisions are informed by sector experience while maintaining the integrity of the NDIA's pricing functions.

The consultation program provides clear opportunities for participants, providers, workers, peak bodies and governments to test proposed direction, validate assumptions and inform implementation planning. It is focused on gathering practical feedback that improves how reforms are delivered in practice, rather than seeking open-ended commentary or problem identification.

The framework is guided by four principles:

- **Structured and purposeful engagement:** consultation is scoped around defined reform topics and timed to align with the Annual Pricing Review and major review milestones.
- **Evidence and practicality:** Feedback should draw on operational experience, data examples to inform realistic, evidence-based approaches to implementation.
- **Transparency and accountability:** The NDIA will publish consultation papers, summary reports and 'you said/we did' updates outline how stakeholder input has been considered.
- **Inclusive participation:** Engagement activities will ensure that participants, regional and remote providers, and smaller organisations have accessible avenues to contribute.

Consultation will occur through formal discussion papers, technical reference groups, pilot feedback and targeted workshops, with timing structured around each review.

This approach ensures consultation remains forward-looking and constructive process, focused on refining reform direction, testing implementation readiness, and supporting clear, evidence-based decision making across the three-year pricing reform workplan.

2. Three-Year Work Plan

The NDIA's pricing workplan sets out a sequenced, evidence-based approach to improving how pricing supports market sustainability and participant outcomes. Each year combines actions with systematic investigation, allowing the Agency to respond to immediate priorities while building the evidence base for longer-term improvements. This progressive approach balances the need to address emerging market pressures with the importance of measured, data-driven decision-making that considers system-wide impacts.

2.1 Year 1: Immediate Action and Evidence Building (2025–26)

The first year delivers targeted improvements where evidence supports early action while establishing the foundation for longer-term pricing development through systematic investigation and pilot programs. This dual approach ensures visible improvements now while building toward future enhancements based on robust evidence.

Each review and pilot activity will include engagement consistent with the NDIA Pricing Review Consultation and Engagement Framework, focusing on testing the direction of proposed reforms, validating key assumptions, and informing implementation planning. Feedback from stakeholders will be consolidated into the 2025–26 APR Consultation Report.

2.1.1 Annual Pricing Review – Core Mechanism for Stewardship

The 2025–26 APR serves as the primary mechanism for evidence-based pricing adjustments while investigating areas requiring deeper analysis. This review provides a structured mechanism for continuous improvement and launches targeted reviews where market dynamics warrant further investigation.

This APR will review and assess:

- **Disability Support Worker Related Supports:** review indexation arrangements to ensure appropriate alignment with the Fair Work Commission’s minimum wage decision, including consideration of any changes resulting from the gender undervaluation case.
- **Therapy Support:** assess pricing benchmarks against updated external health market data to determine whether adjustments are warranted.
- **Support Coordination:** analyse current price limits and market structure to assess whether arrangements continue to deliver value-for-money outcomes for participants.
- **Plan Management:** analyse current pricing approach and market structure to assess whether arrangements continue to deliver value-for-money outcomes for participants.
- **Social, Community and Civic Participation (SCCP):** conduct comprehensive market analysis and assess whether pricing differentiation may be appropriate based on emerging evidence.

2.1.2 Quality Supports Pilot – Building the Evidence Base

As part of Year 1’s focus on immediate action and evidence building, the Quality Supports Pilots support structured analysis in key markets where reform is most advanced, Supported Independent Living and therapy, to prepare for comprehensive pricing reviews in subsequent years.

The pilots are designed to test and validate the foundations for pricing improvements, generating actionable insights on how pricing settings reflect service delivery, workforce mix, and participant outcomes. They provide an essential foundation for pricing-reform work in these markets while remaining distinct from the formal review process that will follow.

The pilots provide important operational insights, but they are not intended to be the sole evidence base of future pricing reviews. Pilot findings will be considered alongside broader evidence, including the 2025–26 APR submissions, administrative and utilisation data, external benchmarks, and targeted engagement with small, regional and sole-trader providers. The pilots help refine the questions and assumptions for the formal Terms of Reference (ToR), but pricing decisions will be based on a wider and more representative base.

- **Supported Independent Living (SIL) Pilot:** The NDIA is working with 44 providers to examine how service models, workforce mix, and quality indicators align with pricing settings to inform the design of the 2026–27 SIL

Pricing Review. Insights gained through this work will also inform work being undertaken currently in relation to supporting high quality providers.

- **Support Coordination Pilot:** The NDIA is working with 3 eligible providers to collect data on financial performance, service delivery models, quality indicators, and cost structures to inform future pricing approaches.
- **Therapy Pilot:** The NDIA is working with registered providers to analyse how variation in service delivery, professional practice and participant needs are reflected in pricing, ensuring future settings promote quality and sustainability across therapy markets. This will provide the foundation for pricing reform. Analysis of costs, quality measures, and participant outcomes will contribute to the next phase of therapy-pricing work commencing in 2026.

Insights from the Quality Support Pilots will provide detailed operational data, financial information, workforce mix, service models and quality indicators. This data will help identify key cost drivers and the characteristics of different delivery models and will be used to support subsequent review and design work across SIL and Therapy.

2.1.3 Stewardship in Thin Markets – Rural and Remote Reviews

The NDIA is strengthening its stewardship in thin markets by undertaking a review of how the Modified Monash Model (MMM), Isolated Towns Policy, and related exception provisions are applied to NDIS pricing. This work aims to ensure that rural and remote communities are appropriately supported through transparent, evidence-based pricing arrangements that reflect real world service delivery constraints such as workforce shortages, higher travel costs and limited provider availability.

This review will include:

- Data analysis of provider availability, participant plan utilisation, and market depth across rural and remote communities.
- Review of the Isolated Towns Modification Policy assessing whether the current list and criteria remain appropriate and identifying areas where the policy may need updating to reflect contemporary service conditions.
- Engagement and consultation with jurisdictions, providers and participant representatives to test whether current classifications and pricing arrangements adequately reflect access challenges in rural and remote areas.
- Comparative analysis of how similar regional frameworks operate in health and aged care systems to identify alignment opportunities.
- Recommendations for refining the Isolated Towns Modification, updating exceptions, and ensuring transparent criteria for any future adjustments.

The resulting framework will define clear principles for establishing, reviewing and refining NDIS pricing arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose as communities and markets evolve.

2.1.4 Implementation Stewardship and Continuous Improvement

The NDIA is strengthening its operational market-stewardship capability to ensure pricing arrangements evolve in step with changing market conditions and participant needs. This includes closer coordination with the NDIS QSC and DHDA to ensure pricing settings reinforce quality, safety and regulatory expectations across the Scheme, supporting a more coherent and integrated stewardships approach. This ongoing stewardship function is being further developed and refined through the evidence, tools and insights generated across this three-year workplan.

Key elements include:

- Enhanced real-time market monitoring and early intervention capability, coordinated with DHDA and the NDIS QSC.
- Structured stakeholder engagement and feedback mechanisms to inform ongoing evidence gathering.
- Evidence-based adjustment processes that respond to emerging market challenges and support participant outcomes.
- Alignment with broader disability system reforms and cross-government policy development.

2.2 Year 2: Evidence-Informed Design and Targeted Implementation (2026–27)

Building on Year One foundations, the second year translates pilot evidence into systematic design and development while progressing targeted improvements where evidence supports change. This approach ensures future pricing work remains grounded in robust data while maintaining momentum toward measured system improvement.

All major pricing reviews in 2026–27 – including therapy, SIL, and intermediary supports – will be guided by detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) informed by the 2025–26 APR, pilot insights, administrative data, and targeted engagement and consultation with diverse provider types, including small, regional and sole-trader providers. These reviews will apply the NDIA Pricing Review Consultation and Engagement Framework, with consultation focused on refining reform direction and implementation design, supported by targeted discussion papers.

2.2.1 Annual Pricing Review – Progressive Implementation and Market Expansion

The 2026–27 APR will build on the methodology established in Year 1 and extend evidence-based pricing approaches to additional market segments.

- **Assistance in Daily Living (ADL) Market Review:** Expanded analysis examining pricing effectiveness across daily living supports.
- **DSW Cost Model Enhancement:** detailed review incorporating updated wage assumptions, award classifications, and provider sustainability analysis from expanded market data.
- **Therapy Pricing Integration:** Incorporate Therapy Pricing Review recommendations into operational pricing arrangements.

2.2.2 Using Pilot Evidence to Drive Reform Design

Quality Support pilots conclude in 2026 and will provide the evidence base for future pricing design and development.

- **SIL Pilot Integration:** pilot findings will inform the scope and methodology for future SIL-pricing approaches, ensuring any reforms address identified service delivery and sustainability challenges.
- **Therapy Pricing Work:** Progressive application of therapy-pilot evidence to guide refinement of therapy pricing arrangements, aligned with stakeholder consultation and implementation readiness.
- **Support Coordination:** pilot findings will inform future service specification and pricing approaches.

2.2.3 Therapy Pricing Review – Evidence Integration and Design

The therapy pricing work in 2026–27 represents the next stage of the Quality Supports Pilot, translating pilot findings into a structured evidence review and design phase. This work draws together pilot data, broader market analysis and consultation to refine how therapy pricing supports quality, sustainability and participant outcomes.

Key areas of focus include:

- Exploring differentiated pricing approaches that reflect service complexity and workforce delivery models.
- Enhancing early-childhood interventions (ECI) pricing approaches informed by pilot evidence.

- Improving billing transparency to strengthen participant understanding and system integrity.

2.2.4 Supported Independent Living Pricing Review – Integration and Design

The SIL pricing work builds directly on the Quality Supports Pilot, extending analysis and implementation already underway. Drawing on pilot evidence, market data, and ongoing stakeholder engagement, this stage focuses on refining and embedding pricing approaches that better recognise participant complexity, service delivery diversity, and quality outcomes.

Focus areas:

- Recognition of workforce mix and service delivery models within pricing.
- Enhanced approaches to participant complexity and support intensity.
- Sustainability across diverse provider models and settings.
- Integration of quality within pricing structures.

2.2.5 Intermediary supports specification and pricing

The specification of intermediary supports including Support Coordination and Plan Management functions with associated pricing approaches based on pilot evidence, market data, and ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Focus areas:

- Service model design and specification.
- Pricing approaches.
- Integration of quality within pricing structures.

2.3 Year 3: Implementation and Refinement 2027–28

Year Three focusses on implementing the outcomes of major reviews, consolidating differentiated pricing approaches where evidence supports them, and strengthening continuous market monitoring to ensure pricing settings remain aligned with service quality, participant outcomes and provider sustainability. This stage is about embedding changes, evaluating early impacts and ensuring the system is prepared for future stewardship cycles.

2.3.1 Annual Pricing Review - Integration and Ongoing Stewardship

The 2027–28 APR consolidated insights and outcomes from prior years while maintaining the review process as a central market stewardship mechanism.

- Integration of Therapy and SIL pricing outcomes into operational settings, informed by implementation evidence.
- Continuation of structured monitoring and adjustment processes.
- Ongoing benchmarking and alignment with external markets.
- Assessment of market performance and identification of emerging challenges.

2.3.2 SIL Pricing Integration and Refinement

The SIL pricing work builds on the Quality Supports Pilot, continuing the testing and refinement of approaches developed through earlier phases.

It uses accumulated evidence and stakeholder feedback to strengthen how pricing supports participant complexity, service quality and provider sustainability.

- Continuing to assess and refine differentiated pricing approaches that reflect delivery context, quality and participant complexity.
- Monitoring participant outcomes and provider viability to guide ongoing development.
- Alignment with broader supported-living and housing policy reforms.

2.3.3 Therapy Pricing Consolidation and Evaluation

Therapy pricing work focuses on evaluating differentiated-pricing approaches tested through pilot evidence and review activity and refining their design where evidence supports change.

- Assessment of complexity-recognition and ECI-specific pricing structures.
- Refinement of line items and billing requirements informed by implementation experience.
- Evaluation of market response, participant outcomes and provider sustainability to inform continuous improvement.

2.3.4 Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) Pricing Review

Scheduled comprehensive review of SDA pricing arrangements ensuring continued alignment with design standards and market development.

- Assessment of pricing assumptions and demand forecasting approaches.

- Analysis of supply incentives and development patterns.
- Integration with broader housing and accommodation policy frameworks.
- Implementation of evidence-based adjustments supporting accessible housing supply.

National Disability Insurance Agency

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