19 November 2020

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Stuart Robert, has confirmed NDIS participants in South Australia have access to a range of temporary measures to ensure they can receive their disability-related supports, in line with public health advice.

In addition, with a focus on the safety of NDIS participants during the COVID-19 restrictions period in South Australia, the NDIA is reaching out to connect and check-in with vulnerable participants, to ensure they continue to have supports in place and offering phone or online planning meetings during lockdown.

Minister Robert said the government recognises that the immediate restrictions are difficult for NDIS participants and it is our priority to ensure they receive the essential supports they require.

To assist with continuation of essential supports in a COVIDSafe manner, NDIS participants and providers in South Australia will temporarily be able to directly claim the costs of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including face masks.

Temporary measures in place to assist participants in South Australia, in light of the changing circumstances, include:

- eligible NDIS participants able to use plan funding to purchase low-cost Assistive Technology, including smart devices (up to $1500);
- greater plan flexibility to ensure access to supports;
- deep cleaning of residences in the event a support worker returns a positive COVID-19 test;
- additional support, including a deep cleaning service, for participants who test positive for COVID-19 or who are required to isolate who live in a Supported Independent Living (SIL) setting;
- NDIS participants in South Australia who rely on face-to-face supports and assistance with their daily living will be able to use an existing support item (Low Cost Disability-Related Health Consumables) to claim on the cost of PPE for their own use at times their worker is with them; and
- Providers in South Australia able to claim an allowance of $1.70 per hour of support delivered in the Activities of Daily Life Support Category, to cover the cost of PPE for workers, directly from the NDIA, ensuring participant plan funds are not impacted by the use of PPE by their providers and workers.

Minister Robert said as the pandemic evolves, the NDIA and the Government will continue to review the temporary measures to ensure the health and wellbeing of participants.

‘The Commonwealth has a clear plan and will continue to respond to changing circumstances across the entire country to ensure all NDIS participants are supported and are safe during the pandemic,’ Mr Robert said.

'In March, as the threat of COVID-19 emerged, the Government outlined a number of temporary measures to ensure every NDIS participant could continue to receive the everyday supports and services they need.

'These temporary measures have proven effective and reflect our need to live our lives in a COVIDSafe society, knowing additional measures can be easily accessed if an infection, or outbreak occurs, without delay.'

The NDIS Call Centre has a dedicated referral line for COVID related queries. NDIS participants who have questions or whose circumstances may have changed are encouraged to contact the NDIA on 1800 800 110 to discuss their needs or to seek further information.

NDIS providers who have questions about delivering quality and safe supports and services to NDIS participants during the coronavirus pandemic should contact the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission on 1800 035 544.

Temporary measures, with the exception of direct claim of PPE, were announced earlier this year and are in place nationally until February 2021.

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