

# Your NDIS Plan Review...



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Reviews will be coming up, very soon for some of you, so what does this mean and are you prepared?

Hopefully by now you are familiar with your plan and engaged in all the services and supports you need to lead a fulfilling

life and are working towards achieving your goals outlined in your plan.

However from the beginning there have been many delays and many NDIS participants were not able to take full advantage of their plan for many months after it was approved. Even now there are some not able to fully utilise their funding and receive necessary supports.

At the beginning the NDIS computer system failed and was plagued with issues for months and is still not a great system. The system flaws delayed plan releases and participants had difficulties using the portal with the key features not working as well as they should, such as the provider finder. This process was difficult for the people who actually have computers and an internet connection!

Many individuals struggled to understand their plan and how and where to start? Some lucky ones received Support Coordination (as long as you could find one and once you worked out what one was) and the rest of you were left to your own devices! If you needed assistance to implement your plan you were directed to speak with your Local Area Coordinator, easier said than done, as they were already under-resourced just transitioning everyone onto the scheme, let alone help you once you had a NDIS plan.

The next challenge was actually accessing supports such as therapists, especially OT's (Occupational Therapists) which are fundamental in order to access equipment or get home modifications. The Bega Valley suffers a shortage of these professionals and finding NDIS accessible therapists was even harder.

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Connections Plus Australia

1/35 Beach Street

PO Box 199

Merimbula NSW 2548

PH: 02 6495 3797

[connections@connectionsplus.com.au](mailto:connections@connectionsplus.com.au)



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Then we have the support providers who were suffering the same setbacks as the participants and dealing with the additional challenge of adapting the way we deliver services to provide supports in an NDIS world.

So after a year of NDIS in the Bega Valley, things do appear to be settling down and people are utilising their plans and accessing supports as was intended however, because of the delayed and unavoidable start many have unused funds in their plans and are likely to have a surplus at their first plan review.

During the review process, the NDIS will be looking at how you have utilised your funding and although they will be assessing your situation to develop a new plan that fulfils your needs and works towards new goals and aspirations in a "reasonable and necessary" way, they will still naturally (bureaucratically) assess your level of funding and whether a financial diet is justified.

The fear being that if you have money left over, the NDIS may consider that you were over resourced and that they could make cuts to your funding (they will be trying to save money).

This is all fine and reasonable if you were over resourced or simply haven't required the level of funding that was allocated to you and so it would be understandable that NDIS would not provide the same level of funding in your next plan.

However, if this is not the case and you genuinely need every penny allocated to your support needs but have simply not been able to access supports and services, you need to be prepared to prove this at your plan review.

Be prepared and conduct your own review prior to the NDIS official review, assess how you have utilised your plan and identify the problem areas and barriers you faced in accessing supports. Be ready to clearly communicate to the NDIS that your funding level is justified, reasonable and necessary.

If you would like to discuss any concerns or would like assistance to prepare for the review process, please contact Connections Plus (Ph: 02 6495 3797) and have a chat with **Rainer** or **Eddy**.

*Having Fun*

*Ngairé Cootes and Natasha Miles enjoyed themselves on the recent trip to Wollongong to see the 'Disney on Ice' show*



# Upcoming Courses

**Are you  
interested in  
doing ART  
CLASSES???**



*Steve Faggotter* will be holding Art Classes in the Eden area. Visual Arts has been Steve's profession for 35 years and he has taught many facets of art.

Steve's classes can cover:

- **DRAWING**
- **WATER COLOUR**
- **CLAY**
- **PHOTOGRAPHY**
- **PAINTING**



Art classes will be designed to help people discover their full potential in Visual Arts. It has been found that art has a profound therapeutic effect on anyone suffering from depression and low self esteem as well as enhancing existing abilities. Depending on interest, these classes can be held on a regular basis in the Eden area. Contact Connections Plus to register your interest. **Ph: 02 6495 3797**

**MERIMBULA**

**First Aid  
Courses  
are  
available!**



**Thursday 17th August  
9am-5pm \$175  
Wednesday 25th  
October 9am-5pm \$175**



## Computer Courses

**Excel 1:** Starts 30th  
August \$95

**Excel 2:** Starts 11th  
October \$95

**Android for Beginners:**  
3rd November \$95



## Youth Mental Health First Aid

**Merimbula**

**6th November &  
7th November**

**Cost: \$210**

This award winning, nationally accredited program teaches adults how to assist adolescents who are at risk of developing a mental health problem or are in a mental health crises. This course is aimed at adults working with or living with adolescents (aged between 12 and 18 years) who may be at risk, or be affected by, mental health problems. It may also be relevant for those assisting people in the wider community.

**Call now (02) 6495 2563**

**[www.southcoastcolleges.com.au](http://www.southcoastcolleges.com.au)**





# Connections Plus are now working with the following Services:

## 1. OT (Occupational Therapist)



**Occupational therapist** (OTs) help people of all ages to improve their ability to perform tasks in their daily living and working environments. They work with individuals who have conditions that are mentally, physically, developmentally, socially or emotionally disabling. Just Right Therapy Services are now offering Occupational Therapy Services to the local area. Justine can assist each individual to overcome limitations caused by injury, illness, disability, psychological or emotional difficulties, developmental delay or the effects of aging.

Our goal is always to assist each individual to gain more independence and self-esteem, reach personal potential, contribute to their community and have a better quality of life.

Just Right Therapy Services was founded by Justine McKeogh, a lifetime Occupational Therapist.

Justine McKeogh is a mother of 5 and having been in the profession for many years aims to combine her experiences to work with clients to embrace their goals and reach their potential.

**Phone:** 0437 143 494 **Email:** [Justine@justrighttherapyservices.com.au](mailto:Justine@justrighttherapyservices.com.au)

## 2. Dietitian Services

**Accredited Practising Dietitian** If you are looking for qualified, reliable nutrition advice, Monique Perkins is an Accredited Practising Dietitian and is now offering her services and is now available for private one on one appointments Monique specialises in various areas including:

- Weight loss
- Diabetes Management
- Heart Health
- Weight gain/malnutrition
- Stomach Health—inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, post gut surgery
- Renal
- Allergies & Intolerances
- Tube Feeding
- Sports Nutrition
- Disability & much more



Monique is a registered MEDICARE, DVA & NDIS provider. Call or email to book your appointment

**Phone:** 0429 869 973

**Email:** [dietitian@moniqueperkins.com.au](mailto:dietitian@moniqueperkins.com.au)

## 3. Speech Pathologist

**Lisa Linton** has 25+ years experience working with children and adults with communication and swallowing difficulties. Lisa can work with you to diagnose articulation, fluency, language, reading and hearing, and provide intervention to remediate these difficulties.

Lisa can be contacted on: 0409 774 648, or by email on [dlinton@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dlinton@bigpond.net.au)

