Decision Support Program

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has initiated a program for the provision of decision-making support for people interacting with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) who have limited decision making capacity and no other ‘viable’ decision-making support.

Why have DSS funded this program?

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), states and territories identified a cohort of people with disability who are being prevented from making access requests or proceeding through NDIS planning processes because they are unable to make informed decisions on their own and do not have any family, carers or friends to assist them with the necessary decision making.

DSS have responded to this unmet support need by initiating the Decision Support Program whereby advocates work to support eligible people to navigate the complex NDIS system.

What does “Viable” decision support mean under this program?

A person may have informal supports in their life, however, the supports may not be willing or able to support with NDIS issues as they don’t understand the system either or for other reasons.

The following questions are considered during the intake assessment when determining whether any “viable” sources of decision support are available:

Does this person (one or more must be ticked to be eligible for the decision support program):

☐ Have no other appropriate informal decision-making support (such as a family member or significant other)?
☐ Have a support(s) that may NOT be respecting the rights and choices of that individual?
☐ Have a support(s) who is no longer willing and/or able to continue to offer decision support (e.g. for health reasons, system too complex to navigate etc.)?

What does “limited decision-making capacity” mean under this program?

Formal definitions of capacity are not relevant when making a determination about “Capacity” during the intake assessment for this program. It may be that a person has decision making capacity in some areas of their life but because of the complexities of the NDIS system, their capacity is limited in navigating the NDIS Access or Planning process.
What support can be offered through this program?

The decision support MUST be for an NDIS issue that does NOT involve a request for internal review or external review at the AAT?

Decision Support can be provided for:

- NDIS Access
- Preparing for NDIS Planning meeting (goal setting, identifying and communicating support needs to NDIA)
- Support at NDIS planning meeting
- Communicating to the NDIS about a Change in Circumstance
- Making decisions around service providers (if no support coordinator)

Referrals can be made online at www.da.org.au or by phone on (02) 4708 3047 – Please mention the decision support program when making the referral.