



NDIS Support Coordination and Connection Reform

Consultation Paper

September 2026



Summary

The Australian Government has announced the introduction of a new commissioned National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Support Coordination and Connection (SCC) service from 1 July 2028. This service will replace the way NDIS participants currently receive support coordination services. The SCC service reform seeks to improve quality and service consistency, encourage innovation, and be more responsive to participant needs.

Support coordinators play a valuable role in helping participants understand, access and coordinate supports. At the same time, there are opportunities to improve consistency, quality, safeguarding, and clarity about the roles of different providers.

To address these opportunities for improvement, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department) and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) have developed early ideas about how the new SCC service could work. The final design would then be a decision for the Government.

This paper seeks your feedback on the early ideas, and your views about:

- what the SCC service should do
- how SCC providers should be commissioned and the market should work
- ensuring quality and safeguarding
- how demand for SCC services could be managed
- implementation and transition to the new service.

We want to hear from:

- people with disability, their families, carers and kin
- disability representative organisations and advocates
- disability support workers
- disability service providers and associations
- other service providers or organisations who may wish to deliver the new SCC service in the future.

You can get involved by:

- making a written submission
- submitting a video (including in Auslan)

Submissions for this consultation are open until 2 October 2026.

Your feedback will help inform the design of the new SCC service.

What we are doing

There are issues with the way support coordination services are currently delivered in the NDIS, including poor and inconsistent service quality, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices.

To address these issues, the Government announced in the 2026-27 Budget that the NDIA would establish a new commissioned Support Coordination and Connection (SCC) service by 1 July 2028. The new SCC service is part of the Government's broader reforms to 'intermediary supports' in the NDIS.

What is commissioning?

Commissioning is the process of planning, funding, procuring and overseeing services to meet identified needs and achieve agreed outcomes. It includes understanding participant needs, designing services, selecting providers, monitoring performance and continuously improving service delivery.

What are intermediary supports?

In the current system, intermediary supports refer to the services some NDIS participants use to find and organise their NDIS supports. This includes services delivered by Support Coordinators and Psychosocial Recovery Coaches, Local Area Coordinators and Early Childhood Partners, and plan management providers.

The new SCC service will be designed to achieve better outcomes for participants through improved quality, consistency, and safeguarding. The service will meet the needs of participants from diverse backgrounds who may need different types of support. It will also align with other intermediary supports.

Under the new model, the NDIA would directly commission providers to deliver SCC services. This would replace the current arrangement where participants use funding in their NDIS plans to purchase support coordination services from one of the approximately 11,000 support coordinators across Australia.

Participants with support coordination who are eligible for SCC would be supported to transition to the commissioned SCC service from 1 July 2028. All participants will continue to access support coordination services under existing arrangements until that time.

Table 1: Indicative timeline for the SCC reforms

Timeframe	Reform stage
Mid to late 2026	Designing the future SCC service model in consultation with NDIS participants and the sector
2027	Commissioning (procurement) of the new SCC service providers
Early 2028	Supporting participants and providers prior to the transition to the new SCC service
From 1 July 2028	Commencement of the new SCC service

Why we are making these changes

Current context: how support coordination works now

Support coordinators currently play an important role in helping participants understand and implement their NDIS plans, connect with supports, navigate services and coordinate arrangements across multiple systems. Many participants report positive experiences and value the expertise, relationships and practical support provided by support coordinators.

However, consultation and review processes have identified a range of challenges with the way support coordination services are delivered in the NDIS, including:

- inconsistent participant experiences and service quality
- unclear role boundaries across intermediary supports
- conflicts of interest where organisations provide both support coordination and direct services
- variability in workforce capability
- participant access challenges in regional, remote and other thin markets
- inconsistent quality and oversight arrangements
- duplication and overlap across parts of the disability ecosystem
- issues with the current fee-for-service model (paying an hourly rate for support coordination) resulting in over and under servicing.

These issues can affect participant outcomes and contribute to wider challenges across the NDIS.

Building on what we have heard previously

The proposed SCC model outlines the NDIA's and the department's early thinking in response to the Government's decision to commission SCC services. The final design of the SCC model will be decided by the Government. The proposed model outlined in this paper is informed by extensive consultation and engagement over the past three years regarding 'intermediary' or 'navigation' services.

This includes:

- recommendations of the NDIS Review
- findings of the Disability Royal Commission
- recommendations from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Inquiry into Support Coordination.

From December 2024 to December 2025, the NDIA undertook a dedicated consultation and engagement process with over 370 stakeholders across more than 20 activities. This included focus groups with participants, and workshops and consultations with disability sector organisations, peak bodies, advocacy groups and service providers. These groups represent a diverse range of lived experiences, including people with psychosocial disability,

people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people in regional, rural and remote areas, and First Nations people.

Across these consultations people consistently identified the need for:

- **clearer role definitions** between support coordinators and other roles in the NDIS, and broader disability ecosystem
- **stronger quality standards** so there is consistent quality and capability across the market
- **improved participant safeguards** to reduce fraud, improve provider accountability, and overall regulatory oversight
- **a highly capable workforce** to meet participant need
- **continuity of trusted relationships** with current worker relationships and the transition to any new service
- **stronger support for people with complex and intersecting needs** to provide appropriate and tailored support
- **improved access in thin markets** particularly in regional, rural and remote areas and for specific cohorts
- **preservation of participant choice and control** in a potentially commissioned model

Proposed vision and objectives for the new SCC service

Vision

The proposed SCC service will aim to deliver high-quality, outcome-focused support that helps NDIS participants connect with the right supports at the right time and exercise meaningful choice and control about the supports they access.

Objectives

The proposed SCC model has five objectives.

- **Participant outcomes** - supporting participants to coordinate and connect to the supports they need to achieve their goals.
- **Choice and control** - supporting participants to make informed decisions and exercise choice and control over the supports they receive.
- **Equity and inclusion** - ensuring participants are supported regardless of geographic location, disability type, cultural background or personal circumstances.
- **Safety and safeguarding** - strengthening participant safeguards through SCC service quality, accountability and integrity.
- **Capability and sustainability** - building participant capability and independence in managing supports and services over time.

How the new SCC service would work

Who would be eligible for the new SCC service

Not every NDIS participant will require or be eligible for support from the new SCC service.

Participants who are not eligible for the new SCC service may be able to access other coordination supports. For example, currently, Local Area Coordinators and Early Childhood Partners also provide coordination supports.

Building a strong, integrated NDIS ecosystem of supports for participants to navigate the NDIS is an important part of the SCC reform.

The proposed model is designed to ensure participants receive the level of support that best reflects their circumstances, while recognising that support needs may change over time.

Factors that would determine who receives SCC include NDIS participants':

- decision-making capacity
- safety risk
- stability of formal and informal supports
- stability and predictability of support needs
- understanding of how the NDIS and other support systems work
- engagement with multiple support systems
- risk of disengagement.

The NDIA will implement the new SCC service based on eligibility criteria that will be agreed by the Government.

The NDIA and the department will continue to consider how these factors should apply during implementation of broader NDIS reforms, including for participants assessed through the current way of planning (known as Old Framework Planning), and those who undertake a support needs assessment under the new way of planning (known as New Framework Planning).

What the new SCC service would do

The new SCC service would have a clear set of functions. These would include:

- **Collaboration:** developing a shared understanding of a participant and their goals, and supporting participants to identify services that meet their needs
- **Connection:** building and strengthening a participant's links to community, mainstream, foundational, and NDIS supports
- **Coordination:** coordinating supports to work together to drive outcomes, implement strategies to address barriers, and escalate relevant issues to the NDIA.

SCC services would:

- connect participants with supports
- coordinate arrangements across services
- support informed decision-making
- help participants understand and implement their NDIS plans
- strengthen navigation skills and confidence
- identify emerging risks
- support service transitions
- strengthen participant support networks
- assist participants to remain connected to services and communities.

What the new SCC service would not do:

- have workers making decisions on behalf of participants
- replace supported decision-making arrangements
- provide advocacy services
- determine NDIS eligibility
- manage participant finances
- provide crisis response services
- undertake regulatory or investigative functions
- replace responsibilities held by health, housing, justice, education or other systems
- routinely provide other NDIS-funded supports.

SCC service levels

The proposed model includes two service levels.

- **SCC:** for participants who require ongoing support to connect with and coordinate supports and services.
- **SCC+:** for participants with very complex circumstances, including:
 - intensive support coordination needs
 - significant safety considerations
 - complex support environments
 - multiple interacting service systems
 - heightened risk of disengagement.

SCC+ services will be limited to a small proportion of NDIS participants, and will likely involve more contact hours and specialist workforce skills.

The NDIA will determine whether NDIS participants would be eligible to access SCC or SCC+ services based on eligibility criteria that will be agreed by the Government.

Under the new commissioned approach, SCC organisations would ensure SCC service delivery responds to changes in participants' circumstances over time. These organisations would manage necessary changes within their service capacity.

We have heard previously that support coordination and connection services must be accessible, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of participants. This includes recognising that people with disability may experience additional barriers due to intersectional factors such as culture, language, geographic location, gender, sexuality, socio-economic circumstances or interactions with other service systems.

The proposed service would provide additional support within the SCC and SCC+ service levels for people with diverse and intersectional needs.

Delivering the future SCC service

Under the commissioned SCC approach, the NDIA would contract organisations to deliver SCC services within defined geographic areas.

Potential commissioning approaches

Two commissioning approaches remain under consideration. These may include:

- **lead-organisation models:** with one provider organisation responsible for delivering or coordinating all SCC services within a service area.
- **multi-provider models:** allowing providers to pool resources and expertise across or within regions.

The approach to commissioning will balance participant outcomes, capacity to provide a quality service to eligible participants, efficiency, local responsiveness and participant choice.

The preferred model, based on early thinking, is for a lead organisation. This model would involve one organisation per region that is responsible for providing and/or contracting the SCC services required for the entire region. This is the option the NDIA considers is most likely to provide sufficient service capacity, raise quality, ensure a smooth transition, and improve safeguarding for participants.

There are a range of different options for determining SCC regions. We are considering what regions would support a nationally consistent framework made up of service areas aligned with local systems. For example, Primary Health Network (PHN) regions, Local Hospital Network (LHN) regions, regions used for Partners in the Community services, or other large geographic regions within each state and territory, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) regions.

The SCC service will be nationally consistent, while also allowing flexibility to meet local needs. SCC organisations will need to show that they have strong links with local services and supports, established referral pathways, and the ability to connect participants with the support they need.

Commissioning can support broader government priorities, including improving employment outcomes for people with disability and advancing First Nations Closing the Gap outcomes.

Table 2: Features of the SCC commissioned model compared to the current support coordination market

Current state support coordination market	Future state SCC commissioned model
• Open provider market with significant variation in service quality and delivery • Limited nationally consistent practice expectations • Variable governance, capability and oversight across providers • Participant outcomes are influenced by inconsistent service models and market capability.	• Consistent national service standards and practice requirements • Clear requirements for performance reporting through contract arrangements • Commissioned organisations operating within a defined governance framework • National consistency supported by local flexibility.

These assumptions are being tested through this paper. Your feedback will help inform future decisions about the design of the SCC service, and the NDIA's approach to commissioning and market design.

Pricing and payment model

Currently, providers are paid an hourly rate to deliver support coordination. This fee-for-service model has limitations. It can make it harder for some participants, particularly those in regional, rural and remote areas, or those with more complex needs, to access support. It can also limit incentives for efficiency, innovation and consistent service quality.

A commissioned SCC service provides an opportunity to introduce a payment model that better supports the delivery of high-quality services. This could improve outcomes for participants, support a sustainable provider market, and deliver better value for the Scheme.

When designing the payment model, we will consider how to support a sustainable workforce, maintain continuity of services, encourage innovation and quality, and ensure the type, intensity and level of support reflects participants' assessed needs. We will also consider how to avoid incentives that limit access for particular groups of participants or lead to too much or too little support.

Quality, safeguarding and workforce capability

Stakeholders have consistently identified quality and safeguarding as critical features of any future SCC model.

Potential elements include:

- workforce capability requirements and support
- minimum practice standards

- complaints and feedback mechanisms
- participant safeguarding requirements
- conflict of interest controls
- performance monitoring and reporting
- registration or accreditation requirements.

The proposed model would also support culturally safe, trauma-informed and person-centred practice.

Specialist responses and thin markets

Some participants require culturally safe, language-specific, or specialised support, or live in areas where service availability is limited. The future SCC service aims to ensure participants can access high-quality services regardless of where they live or the complexity of their needs.

Some ways providers might provide services in specialist and thin markets could include:

- partnerships and/or sub-contracting arrangements with specialist providers
- regionally tailored delivery arrangements.

We recognise the importance of existing community expertise. Disability Representative and Carer Organisations (DRCOs), Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), Remote Community Connectors and other specialist organisations have valuable experience supporting diverse participant groups and communities.

The future SCC service may draw on this expertise to ensure services remain responsive to local needs and participant circumstances and align to Closing the Gap goals.

Transition and implementation

Transitioning to a commissioned SCC service will be a significant change for participants, providers and the support coordination workforce.

Three priorities would guide future implementation planning:

- **Continuity of participant services:** maintaining service continuity and trusted support relationships with SCC providers wherever appropriate.
- **Workforce quality:** attracting, building and retaining the right expertise, capability and experience for delivery of high-quality services.
- **Provider readiness:** supporting organisations to prepare for future commissioning arrangements and service expectations.

Feedback through this consultation will help inform the NDIA's implementation planning.

What this means for NDIS participants

If you are an NDIS participant who currently receives funding for support coordination, this will change from 1 July 2028, when the new SCC service will commence. At this time, you will no longer be given funding in your NDIS plan to pay for a support coordinator. If you are found eligible for SCC, this service will be paid for by the NDIA and delivered directly by an SCC provider.

After 1 July 2028, there may be changes in who you work with if your current support coordinator isn't part of their future local SCC organisation.

Once the Government has made decisions about the future SCC model, the NDIA will work closely with participants to explain the changes, provide clear information, and support them through the transition.

Table 3: Overview of key changes

Today – support coordination and other NDIS intermediaries	Proposed future – Support Coordination and Connection service
You pay for support coordination from your NDIS plan.	You would not receive funding for support coordination through your NDIS plan budget. The NDIA would fund the SCC service.
Many different support coordination providers.	The NDIA would make an agreement with an organisation to provide the SCC service in your area, so there would be fewer approved providers.
Role of the support coordinator is not clear.	Clear roles and responsibilities to outline how the SCC worker can support you.
No consistent standards for support coordination services.	The same standards for all SCC services.
Three levels of support coordination and Psychosocial Recovery Coaching.	Two levels of support: SCC and SCC+.
Support coordinators can also provide other NDIS supports.	SCC services and workers cannot provide other NDIS supports.

What this means for support coordination providers

The NDIA commissioning the SCC service will be a significant change from the current open market for support coordination services. Under the new commissioned model, the NDIA will directly contract organisations to deliver SCC services. The NDIA expects that before the service launches in mid-2028, there will be a formal procurement process for the SCC services.

As part of the current support coordination landscape, Psychosocial Recovery Coaches support participants in a similar way to support coordinators but have an additional focus on assisting participants to identify and pursue their recovery goals. Given the alignment with the SCC reforms, this workforce group will potentially transition to provide SCC services for participants with psychosocial disability.

Some current support coordination and psychosocial recovery coaching organisations may transition to be providers of the new SCC service. Other current providers will no longer deliver these services from 1 July 2028. There may be opportunities for current support coordination staff to transition to an SCC worker role within SCC organisations.

The NDIA is committed to strong market stewardship throughout the transition and recognises the expertise, skills and relationships that exist within the current support coordination and psychosocial recovery coaching workforce.

Once final Government decisions about the future SCC model have been made, the NDIA and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission will work closely with support coordination providers to provide clear information about the changes and timelines for the transition.

Have your say

Purpose of this consultation

The department and the NDIA want to hear from NDIS participants, providers and the broader disability community about how the new SCC service should work.

Your feedback will help inform our advice to the Government about the future design of the SCC service. This includes the new SCC service's eligibility criteria, service model, market arrangements, quality and safeguarding requirements, and the NDIA's approach to implementing the service.

How to get involved

You can get involved by:

- making a written submission
- submitting a video (including in Auslan).

Consultation questions

The consultation questions are divided into two sections. You can respond to both or focus on the area where you have the most to contribute.

Questions about what participants want from the new SCC service

1. What is working well in support coordination today that you would like to see in the new SCC service?
2. What would you most like to see improved in the new SCC service?
3. When should SCC be a face-to-face service or a virtual service?
4. What participant groups will benefit most from the SCC service? What do their needs for connection and coordination of supports look like?
5. What experience, skills and knowledge do you look for in an SCC worker?
6. What would help you feel safe when receiving SCC services and encourage you to report an issue if needed?
7. What else should we consider when designing the future SCC service?

Questions about service provider models and approaches

1. What commissioning arrangements would best balance participant outcomes, quality, sustainability and choice and control?
2. What provider types would be best placed to be a lead organisation? Why do these characteristics matter?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the lead organisation model?
4. What would be appropriate regional areas to use for SCC service areas?
5. How might SCC providers manage variable need among the participants it supports? Which workforce, caseload, and service capacity factors should be considered?
6. Which payment and funding approaches would best support participant outcomes, workforce sustainability and innovation?
7. What quality, workforce and safeguarding requirements should apply to commissioned SCC organisations?
8. How can the future SCC model attract, build and retain workforce capability, including retaining participant relationships?
9. How should local knowledge and community connection be defined and assessed?
10. How can the SCC service best support participants in regional, rural and remote areas, or other thin markets, where support options may be limited?
11. How can the SCC service best support participants who face additional barriers, including those experiencing complex and overlapping support needs or requiring decision-making support?
12. What transition arrangements would minimise disruption and support successful implementation?

Submissions for this consultation are open from 7 September 2026 to 2 October 2026.

Questions?

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