



# HOW DO I CHOOSE SOMEONE TO SUPPORT ME TO MAKE NDIS DECISIONS

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## What decisions do I need to make as part of NDIS?

If you are an NDIS participant, or you are thinking of becoming one, you might need to make decisions such as:

- What do I want to achieve in my life? What are my short-term and long-term goals that I would like to work towards?
- What type of support would help me to achieve these goals?
- Who do I want to provide me with the services that are in my NDIS plan?
- How do I want my support services to be delivered?
- Where do I want to go to purchase aids and equipment?
- How do I want to manage the funds in my NDIS plan?

## How do I know if I need some help to make these decisions?

You may need some support to make decisions if you have trouble with any of the following:

- Understanding the information that is relevant to a decision
- Weighing or assessing your options
- Understanding consequences or risks of a decision.

## What's the difference between an advocate and a substitute decision-maker?

If you feel that you might need support to make decisions, you might benefit from connecting with a disability advocate, who will act to promote and protect your rights, without making decisions for you. Advocates can support you to express your opinions and concerns, or can put forward your views for you, but will not make legal or financial decisions for you. Substitute decision-makers, such as guardians or powers of attorney, can gain an understanding of your broader values and interests, and use these to make decisions on your behalf.



This information sheet was prepared by Health & Finance Integrated in collaboration with the Summer Foundation.



## What can I expect from a person I choose to make legal and financial decisions on my behalf?

All decisions should be based on your will, preferences and rights. The person you ask to act on your behalf should be aware of the potential impact their own preferences and judgments can have on the support they provide. They should set aside their own preferences and judgments and adopt a neutral view on the costs and benefits of the decision that they are making.

## What are my rights in relation to making decisions about my life?

As a person with disability in Australia, you have the same right as other Australians to:

- Fulfil your potential for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development
- Participate in and contribute to social and economic life
- Receive the care and support you need over a lifetime
- Choose what and how your support is delivered
- Live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Determine your own best interests, and life goals. This includes the right to take reasonable risks
- Engage as equal partners in decisions that will affect your life, to the full extent of your capacity
- Have your privacy and dignity respected.

## How do I choose the best person for the job?

By law, the person who you appoint to act on your behalf must be aged over 18 and understand their role.

We encourage you to look for a person that:

- You know and trust

- Is honest in their dealings with others
- Regards you as an equal and respects your human rights, including your right to participate in all decisions about your life
- Respects your opinions and preferences
- Is committed to working with you, learning with you, and developing your decision-making skills.

## A decision-making framework

Many people can fulfil this role but they may not be the *best* person for this important job.

Talk to the person you want to represent you about their role in making decisions for you.

You can ask them to use the information you discuss to guide their decision-making for you.

## Understanding your preferred outcome

Each time a life-changing decision needs to be made, the person you have chosen to make decisions for you should make sure they ask you about your preferred outcome. These questions will support a conversation to help them understand your preferred outcome:

- What is the nature of the decision that needs to be made?
- What are the likely outcomes of this decision?
- What would you like the outcome of this decision to be?
- What has happened before that might impact on how you would make this decision?
- What are your hopes in relation to this decision?
- What are your fears and concerns in relation to this decision?
- What is really important to you?
- What do you need to feel comfortable and safe?

## Research

If you are unable to communicate your preferences in detail, the person you choose to make your decisions can research your will and preferences by asking your family and friends about your past behaviour and decisions. Understanding your culture, relationships, preferred environments and community connections will help the nominated person make decisions that reflect your will and preferences.

## Recognising constraints

All our decisions are made within constraints. The decision may need to be refined to account for the constraints. Consider:

- What types of constraints might apply to this decision?

- There will be circumstances where you can't get your preferred outcome, but your nominated person can think about how best to work towards an outcome that reflects your will and preferences.
- Is there a decision that we can make that reflects your will and preferences?

For more information about advocates, go to:

🌐 [summerfoundation.org.au/What-are-advocates-and-how-can-they-help-me](https://summerfoundation.org.au/What-are-advocates-and-how-can-they-help-me)

For information about powers of attorney, go to:

🌐 [summerfoundation.org.au/What\\_is\\_a\\_Power\\_of\\_Attorney\\_and\\_how\\_can\\_they\\_support\\_me](https://summerfoundation.org.au/What_is_a_Power_of_Attorney_and_how_can_they_support_me)

For information about guardians and administrators,

go to: 🌐 [summerfoundation.org.au/guardians-and-administrators](https://summerfoundation.org.au/guardians-and-administrators)

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