



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

The Disability Support Pension

Changing the Impairment Tables

A guide to our questions

Easy Read version



How to use this guide



The Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) wrote this guide.

When you see the word 'we', it means DSS.



We wrote this guide in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold
Not bold

We wrote some words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 20.



This Easy Read guide is a summary of another document. This means it only includes the most important ideas.



You can find more information on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au



You can ask for help to read this guide.
A friend, family member or support person may
be able to help you.



We have a lot of questions for you.



You don't have to read them all at once.
You can take your time.

What's in this guide?

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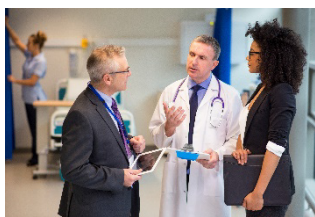
What is this guide about?



The **Disability Support Pension (DSP)**

is a government payment.

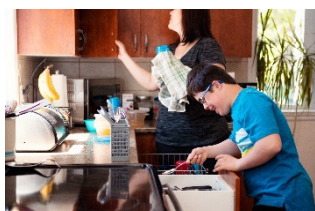
It supports people who have a disability that affects how much they can work.



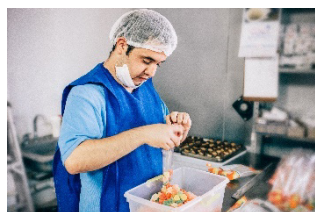
To apply for a DSP, your doctor must tell us about:

- your disability
- what treatment you get.

We use this information to find out how your disability affects:



- your day-to-day life



- what work you can do.



We use a tool called the Impairment Tables to:

- look at this information
- decide who can get the DSP.



At the moment there are 15 Tables.

Each Table rates how much your disability affects a part of your life.



We've been using the Tables for 10 years.

Along the way, a lot has changed.



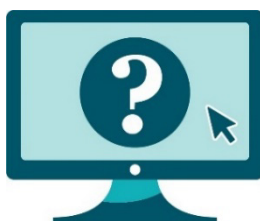
We want to check what parts of the Tables:

- still work well
- need to change.

In this guide we explain:



- what we want to change



- the questions on our website.

How to tell us what you think



We have some ideas about how to change the Tables.

And we want to know what you think.



We have some questions for you.



You can answer our questions on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au



You don't have to answer all our questions at once.

You can save your answers and come back later.

What are our questions?



First we ask some questions about you, like:

- your name
- your email address.



We ask if you are:

- a person with disability
- someone else from the community.

Or if you are from an organisation that works with people with disability.



We also ask what state or territory you live and work in.



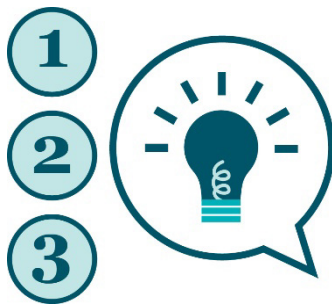
And we ask if you answered our last survey.



After this, we ask you some questions about our ideas.



We have 16 ideas about how to change parts of the Tables.



We ask what the 3 most important ideas are for you.



And then we ask you if you agree with our ideas.

There is also a box where you can tell us what you think for each idea.



On the following pages we explain each of these ideas in more detail.

Parts of the Impairment Tables we want to change

The words we use



We used better words to explain who can get DSP.



The new words will show that your doctor doesn't have to finish helping you before you can get a DSP.

They just have to do as much as they can.



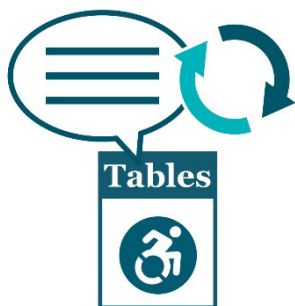
We also changed the words we use to talk about your disability.

We want to make it clear that your disability doesn't have to last your whole life.

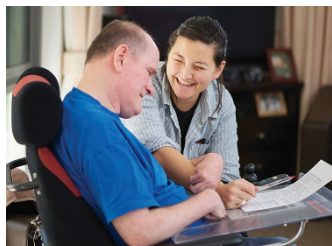


You only have to prove that your disability will affect you for the next 2 years.

How the Tables work



We changed some words in the Tables to make them easier to understand.



When we say 'assistance', we want it to mean help from another person.

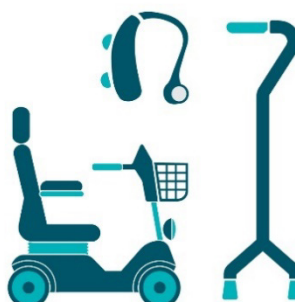


When we say 'condition', we want it to include a:

- medical condition
- disability
- disorder.



We also made sure we use the right medical words to talk about conditions.



We made sure we have examples of **assistive technology**.

Assistive technology might be an aid or piece of equipment that can:

- make it easier to do things
- keep you safe.

For example, a hearing aid or walking stick.



We also included more examples of tasks your disability might affect.

Alcohol and drugs



We moved the information about how drugs and alcohol affect you.

Now it's in the Tables about your mental health and your brain.



This means we need to change the numbers of the Tables.

Medicine and treatment



We added more information about how medicine and treatment can keep affecting you.



For example, if you have a **side effect**.

A side effect is something that sometimes happens to people after they:

- take medicine
- get treatment.



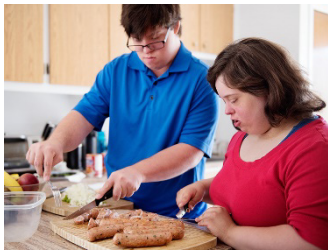
We also included more examples of medicines and treatments that can give you side effects.

Pain

We added more examples of:



- conditions that cause you pain



- how this affects what tasks you can do.

Chronic illness

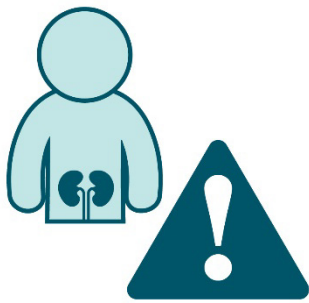


When an illness will last for a long time, we call it a **chronic illness**.



We added more examples of chronic illnesses to the Tables.

Renal conditions



When a condition affects your kidneys, we call it a **renal** condition.



We added an example of a condition called renal failure.

Fatigue



When you feel tired and weak all the time, we call it **fatigue**.



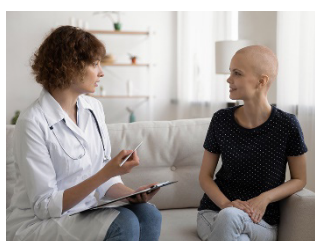
We added new examples of fatigue to the Tables.



We also added more information about how fatigue can affect you.

This includes how you take care of yourself, such as showering or getting dressed.

Cancer



We included more examples of cancer in different parts of the Tables.

This makes it clearer how cancer fits into the Tables.

Evidence



Evidence is proof that something is true.



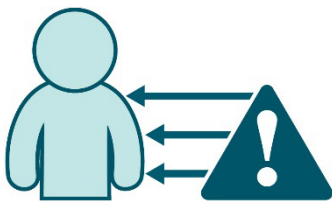
We added more types of evidence that doctors can share with us.



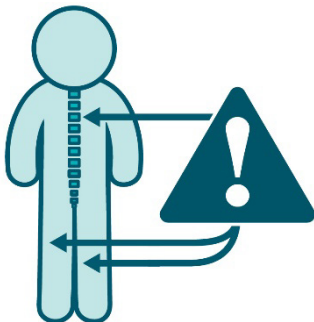
We also added more example of health care professionals who can share evidence.

Bones, muscles and skin

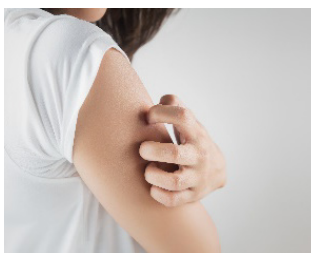
We added more information about how it can affect your life when it's hard to use your:



- arms
- hands
- shoulders.



We also added more information about how it can affect your life when it's hard to use your legs or back.

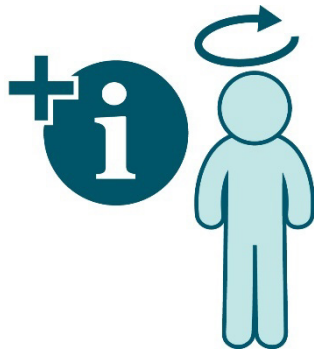


And we added more examples of conditions that affect your skin.

Balance



We added more information about how people stand and balance.



We also added more information about how dizziness can affect your balance.

Psychologists



Psychologists are health care professionals who support you with your:

- mental health
- behaviour.



We added more types of psychologists that can give us evidence.

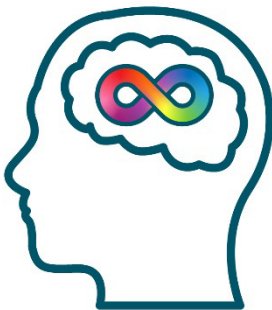
Mental health



We updated the words we use to work better with other rules about health care services.

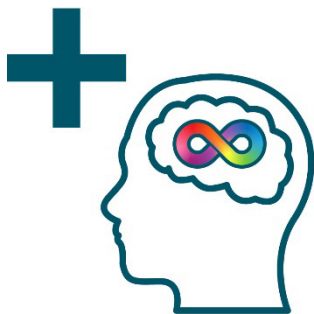
This includes documents from the World Health Organization.

Being neurodiverse



When someone is **neurodiverse**:

- they think in a different way
- their brain works in a different way.



We added more examples to include people who are neurodiverse.



For example, when you have autism.

Or when loud noises and bright lights affect you.



We added social skills as an area that can affect your day-to-day life.

This includes how you interact with other people.



Now you need 2 things from the list of areas to get a rating in this Table.

Working with people from different cultures



Your **culture** is:

- your way of life
- what's important to you.



We added more information about respecting people from different cultures.

This includes when health care professionals work out how your disability affects your life.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words mean.



Assistive technology

Assistive technology might be an aid or piece of equipment that can:

- make it easier to do things
- keep you safe.

For example, a hearing aid or walking stick.



Chronic illness

When an illness will last for a long time, we call it a chronic illness.



Culture

Your culture is:

- your way of life
- what's important to you.



Disability Support Pension (DSP)

The DSP is a government payment.

It supports people who have a disability that affects how much they can work.



Evidence

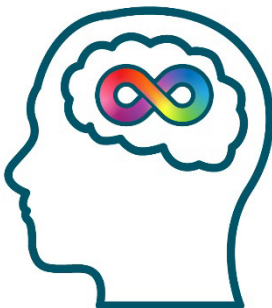
Evidence is proof that something is true.

zzz



Fatigue

When you feel tired and weak all the time, we call it fatigue.



Neurodiverse

When someone is neurodiverse:

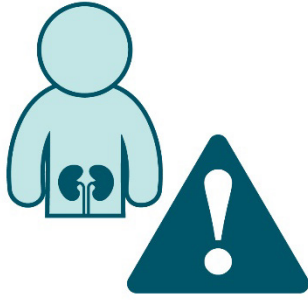
- they think in a different way
- their brain works in a different way.

Psychologist

Psychologists are health care professionals who support you with your:

- mental health
- behaviour.





Renal condition

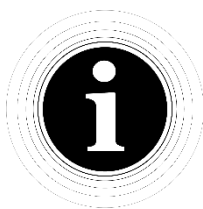
When a condition affects your kidneys, we call it a renal condition.



Side effect

A side effect is something that sometimes happens to people after they:

- take medicine
- get treatment.



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