



Australian Government



Foundational
Supports

General supports for people with disability

What we heard from the community

Easy Read version



Acknowledgement of Country



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the First Peoples of Australia.



They have always looked after Country.

Country means the land, water, sky and everything within them.



We respect the important connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Country.



And we respect their elders from the past and now.

How to use this document



The Social Deck wrote this report.

They wrote it for the Australian Government
Department of Social Services (DSS).

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

Bold
Not Bold

We wrote some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There is also a list of these words on page 30.



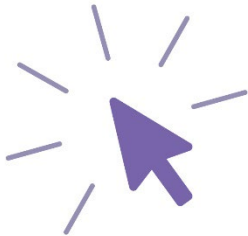
You can ask someone you trust for support to:

- read this document
- find more information.



This is an Easy Read summary of another document

It only includes some of the ideas we heard.



You can find the other document on our website.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/foundational-supports/

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What we asked about



We asked the community about how **general supports** should work.



General supports help people with disability manage their everyday lives.

They are for everyone.

General supports include services for:



- information



- advice



- **capacity building.**



Capacity building means people with disability can build skills to:

- take part in the community
- make decisions
- speak up for themselves.



General supports are a type of **foundational support**.



Foundational supports are disability supports for all people with disability.

This includes people with disability who don't take part in the **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)**.



The NDIS supports people with disability by helping them pay for supports and services they need.

Who we heard from



We heard from the disability community between
September and December 2024.



We heard from 4,174 people across Australia.

This included:



- people with disability



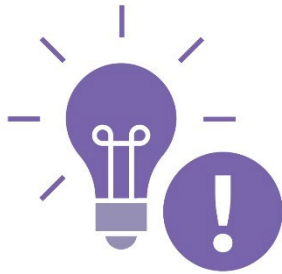
- families and carers



- **providers.**

Providers support people with disability by
delivering a service.

Important ideas



We heard some ideas that are important to a lot of people.

Organisations people can trust



People want organisations they can trust.



These organisations should share:

- information
- advice.



These organisations should also give people capacity building support.



People want more ways for organisations to work together.

This will let them:



- share ideas



- start programs that their communities need.

Stronger support programs



People want general supports to be part of the care people can get from their local services.

For example, care from:



- libraries



- **neighbourhood centres.**



A neighbourhood centre is a place in the community where people can:

- get services and supports
- take part in activities.



People want **peer support** groups that:

- more people can take part in
- get enough money to last a long time.



Peer support is when people use experiences they share to:

- feel connected
- help each other.



People want more support for **advocacy** programs.

Advocacy is when someone:

- helps you have your say
- gives you information and advice.

This includes:



- organisations that speak up for you



- programs that support you to speak up for yourself.

Better ways to find supports



People want better ways to find support.



They said local organisations should:

- share information about supports online
- run helplines to help people find supports.



This will help people to connect with local services.



People want to find out about general supports from people they:

- know
- trust.



For example:

- healthcare professionals
- schools.

Training and information



People also want programs that teach the people about what supports there are.

This includes:



- supports anyone can use in the community

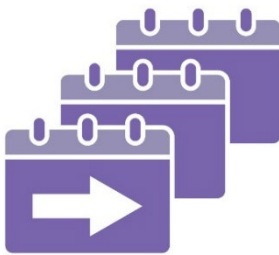


- supports for people with disability.

People want to make sure the people who give them general supports:



- have the right training



- will keep supporting them for a long time.



People want clear information about:

- what general supports are
- how general supports might work.



This includes how they work with other supports.

For example, NDIS supports.

How to create general supports



We heard ideas about how we should create general supports.

Rights



People said general supports should focus on the **rights** of people with disability.



Rights are rules about how people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.

This includes supporting people with disability to:



- have choice and control



- do things for themselves.



This also includes supporting First Nations communities to make their own decisions about disability services.

Work with the disability community



People said we need to work with people with disability when we create general supports.



This means working together to decide:

- what supports to create
- how supports should work
- what works well.



We should also include families and carers of people with disability in this work.

Give different groups the support they need



People said general supports need to meet the needs of different groups in our communities.

This includes:



- people from different backgrounds



- children and young people



- people who are part of the **LGBTIQA+SB** community.



The letters of LGBTIQA+SB stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, asexual, sistergirl and brotherboy.



The '+' is for people who are part of the LGBTIQA+SB community but don't talk about themselves using a word from this list.



This also includes people who are part of more than one of these groups.



For example, people with disability who:

- speak a language other than English
- and
- are part of the LGBTIQA+SB community.



People also said all people should have a fair chance to use general supports.

How to make sure general supports work well

We heard ideas about how to make sure
general supports:



- work well for people with disability



- are safe.

Support for workers



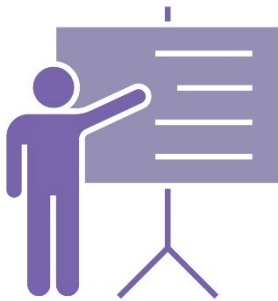
People said workers need more support to make
sure general supports work well.



This is more important in areas far away from cities and towns.

Workers in these places need better rewards.

We need to make sure support workers:



- get the right training

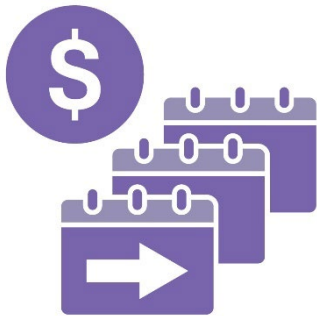


- have the chance to keep building their skills



- connect with the communities they support.

Support for services to last a long time



People said programs need money that will last a long time.

This will help organisations:



- share up to date information



- give advice that is true



- work with local programs.

Keep people safe



People said general supports must:

- work well for people
- be safe.



This means we need to check that services and programs follow the rules.



We need to have good ways for people to make **complaints**.

A complaint is when you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

We need give people with disability the chance to:



- get support to speak up



- help us check services work well.

Check if supports are working well



We need to keep checking that general supports work well.



We must work with the disability community to decide what it means for supports to work well.

Use what we already have



People said we need to use organisations that people with disability already trust.



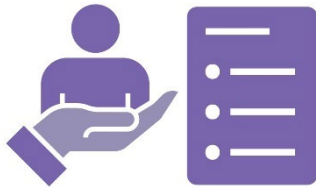
This will help participants know that they will get good services.



People said we should make sure any changes to services are clear.

This includes changes to NDIS supports.

Work well with other plans

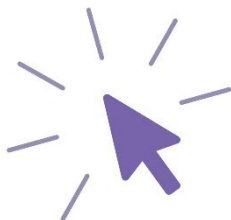


People said that general supports need to work well with other plans we are already using.



For example, Australia's Disability Strategy.

Contact us



You can visit our website to contact us.

www.engage.dss.gov.au/foundational-supports

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Advocacy

Advocacy is when someone:

- helps you have your say
- gives you information and advice.



Capacity building

Capacity building means people with disability can build skills to:

- take part in the community
- make decisions
- speak up for themselves.



Complaint

A complaint is when you tell someone that something:

- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

Foundational supports



Foundational supports are disability supports for all people with disability.

This includes people with disability who don't take part in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

General supports



General supports help people with disability manage their everyday lives.

They are for everyone.

LGBTIQA+SB



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National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS supports people with disability by helping them pay for supports and services they need.

Neighbourhood centre



A neighbourhood centre is a place in the community where people can:

- get services and supports
- take part in activities.

Peer support



Peer support is when people use experiences they share to:

- feel connected
- help each other.



Providers

Providers support people with disability by delivering a service.



Rights

Rights are rules about how people must treat you:

- fairly
- equally.



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