

25 July 2025



Department of Social Services
National Disability Insurance Scheme Supports Rules
Via email: NDISConsultations@dss.gov.au

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME SUPPORTS RULES

The Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Social Services (the Department) consultation on the draft National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Supports Rules.

The APA is calling for the immediate correction of the NDIS Supports Lists to rectify the omission of physiotherapy and its critical role in enhancing the capacity and quality of life of people living with disability.

The exclusion of physiotherapy within the NDIS Supports Lists is a disservice to NDIS participants, plan managers and support coordinators who rely on them to inform their choices about appropriate and evidence-based supports.

Supports Lists based on an “in-and-out” approach must emphasise, not remove, critical physiotherapy services, to avoid confusion and to meet the NDIS Review’s recommendations to communicate clearly with participants to improve choice and control.¹

Physiotherapy has a critical role in ensuring that people with disabilities achieve the highest level of function, independence and mobility possible. It is fundamental to comprehensive functional assessments, early intervention, exercise prescription, pain management, injury prevention and in the prescription and adjustment of assistive technology – yet is not referenced in the Supports List.

Physiotherapists are highly skilled in the diagnosis, assessment and treatment of motor impairments and movement disorders, including the sensory, musculoskeletal and neurological contributors.

Taking a biopsychosocial approach, physiotherapists partner with participants to set goals and apply clinical reasoning to develop individualised care plans utilising evidence-based interventions.

In addition to a failure to acknowledge physiotherapy, many other critical reasonable and disability-specific supports have been omitted from the Supports Lists, increasing risk of injury and exacerbating health equity issues.

The very narrow definition on some of the support items, for example, therapy supports, excludes fundamental services, supports and equipment that are well accepted in disability care.

In particular, we note the removal of mainstream available equipment, which can no longer be purchased with consumables. This equipment is essential to achieving therapy goals and may be unaffordable for families to purchase.

Further, pool attendance and 1:1 swimming lessons – which are very effective activities for developing strength and water safety – are no longer allowable.

The NDIS is intended to empower people with disabilities with choice and control, individualised support to increase independence, physical and mental health and wellbeing, and social, cultural and workforce participation.

This can be achieved in a cost effective way with individualised assessment to meet the biopsychosocial needs of people with disability that does not depend on removing access to vital supports.

The APA seeks an urgent meeting with the Department to clarify the supports lists for participants and their families and ensure they understand the role of physiotherapy.

Please contact Katherine Utry, General Manager Policy and Government Relations, on 0405 135 334 or Katherine.Utry@australian.physio.

Yours sincerely



Rob LoPresti
CEO

ⁱ NDIS Review: Final report Working Together to Deliver the NDIS, recommendation 5, page 7