

Assistive Technology Assessments

From power beds to prosthetics –
How to tell the NDIS when you need high-tech supports

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is all about evidence. The more specific you are when explaining why you think you need one support over another to reach your goals, the easier it will be for your Planner to determine whether it's "reasonable & necessary" to unlock the required funding in your next plan.

Assistive Technology Assessment – What is this?

When it comes to more sophisticated, more expensive (over \$1,500) pieces of equipment and systems to help you manage daily tasks better – particularly when asking for them for the first time –the NDIS may want to see a detailed **Assistive Technology Assessment**. This is a report written by a professional showing why, and how, this kind of support is the most appropriate for you.

You won't need it for some pricy 'off-the-shelf' items.

Some mid-cost assistive technology (AT) ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 is fairly standard and available 'off the shelf' at specialist suppliers. Example: an electronic reading machine for vision-impaired people or a replacement part for a prosthetic leg. The agency recently changed its rules and now lets you buy select mid-cost tech equipment (see the full list [here](#)) without lengthy paperwork, provided it's not the first time you purchase this type of support and you already have the relevant capital supports funding in your plan.

Get an AT Assessor to help you with complex needs.

Anything beyond that – think specialist high-tech items custom-made for you, such as a cochlear implant or a complex home modification – will require an AT Assessment. You can get an AT Assessment from an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologist, psychologist, rehabilitation engineer. These people can help you find the right technology solution for your needs.

How do you explain it to the NDIS?

It's important you show the agency that you have considered all options when asking for a specific assistive technology. Your Planner will want to see that no other support (including non-AT supports) is as cost-effective and appropriate to help you overcome your functional limitations and get you closer to reaching your NDIS goals.

>> To help you prepare a strong Assistive Technology Assessment, read through the guiding questions on the next page. They will give you a good, basic understanding of what the NDIS will want to know. You can determine answers together with your AT Assessor.

Five questions to guide your writing

1. What specific Assistive Technology would you like to buy?

Outline all the relevant AT items required, including supplier details, quotes, GST status, delivery, set-up costs and model numbers. How often would you use this AT per day/week?

2. What is your current situation?

Describe your disability, diagnosis and prognosis:

How do you manage your day-to-day activities with formal/informal supports? Are you already using assistive technology, and if so, how?

3. Which functional limitations do you experience as a result of your disability?

Outline what, in detail, creates the need for this assistive technology. Summarise relevant assessments that you had done and that back up your functional limitations and needs.

Functional limitation	Details
Physical	
Sensory	
Communication	
Cognitive	
Behavioural	

4. Is it reasonable and necessary for the NDIS to pay for the Assistive Technology you wish to buy?

The answers you give here are critical. The agency will want to know why this particular AT, at this price, is “reasonable and necessary” for you to reach your goals and live a better life.

a) What are the NDIS goals and aspirations that this AT helps you to achieve?

b) Is this AT good value for money?

Show the agency you've considered all options. Could you hire this AT or use a loan service? Are there any comparable supports that could achieve the same outcome? Tell the NDIA about them and why you still think this is the most reasonable AT to fund.

Be as detailed as you can, including quotes.

Additional notes on cost:

The agency also wants to know whether the recommended AT substantially improves your independence and your life over the long term, which would ideally reduce the cost of funding other supports in the future.

Please give details.

Additional notes on appropriateness:

The agency is wary of funding a short-lived technology you may not use for long. Can you foresee any changes in your circumstances or in the technology that might make this AT solution inappropriate in the future?

Please give details.

c) How will this AT help you with your social and economic participation?

The agency is interested in funding supports that will help you participate in social activities and empower you to engage more in the economy. Do you have any evidence to show this AT will get you there? Be detailed.

d) Is there any evidence that this AT will indeed be effective and beneficial for you?

The agency wants to see evidence that this AT has the potential to enhance your life. Can you give examples and details (e.g. past participant experience with the same technology)?

5. How risky would it be to use (or not use) this Assistive Technology?

a) Have you had a chance to trial this AT?

If so, can you tell the agency about it in detail (date, duration, location, functional outcome)?

b) Is there any potential risk to you and/or your carer related to using this AT?

If so, describe it in detail and tell the agency how you would mitigate the risk.

c) Is there any risk for you or your carer if you DIDN'T use this AT?

This is an important consideration for the agency when determining your funding. Explain how your functional capacity, your independence and broader life circumstances might be affected without this AT.



Download official NDIS templates

The NDIS has created templates for various AT assessments. They aren't mandatory. Health professionals can also write their own reports. You can find the templates here:

- [General Assistive Technology assessment template](#)
- [Prosthetics and Orthotics AT assessment template](#)
- [Continence Related AT assessment template](#)
- [Nutrition and Dysphagia AT Supports assessment template](#)
- [Complex Home Modification assessment template](#)
- [Vehicle Modification assessment template](#)
- [Assistance Animals assessment template](#)
- [Dog Guide assessment template](#)
- [Hearing Devices & Hearing Tech assessment template](#)

Who is Provider Choice?

We are NDIS experts. We provide plan management services and easy-to-use technology for all NDIS participants.

If you have any plan management questions or queries, please get in touch with:

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