# Notes for AT Assessors using the Assistive Technology Needs Assessment Template

Check the [NDIS Assistive Technology page](https://ndis.gov.au/providers/providing-at.html) for the current version of the appropriate form.

**Using the Assistive Technology Needs Assessment Template**. To be used where the AT and home modification needs of the participant in relation to their goals and circumstances need to be clarified and described to assist the participant and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) include the right AT and home modifications in the plan (including the appropriate reasonable and necessary funding). This may occur where a participant is being discharged from the health system (hospital or rehabilitation) or where such an assessment has been requested to assist in the planning or plan implementation process, particularly for new participants. The NDIS expects AT assessors and participants to consider all options that would meet the participant’s goals, addressing the participant’s functional limitations related to their disability and overcoming the barriers identified. This could be training in the use of alternative methods, skill development, a device, vehicle modification as passenger or driver, home modification, other non-AT supports or a combination of any of these. It is important that assessors and participants consider informal, mainstream and community supports when undertaking an AT Needs Assessment (e.g. eye surgery may be more appropriate rather than specialised low vision AT when a visual impairment is the result of cataracts).

The information provided in this form will be used by NDIA to understand how the specified AT and/or home modification will support the achievement of the participant’s goal(s) and to assess whether it is reasonable and necessary with regard to the criteria in Section 34 of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (see informative extract on the following page).

**Where the funded supports for AT are already in a participant’s plan use the specific purpose forms for assessing the following types of AT:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Continence | * Nutrition Support |
| * General AT Assessment Template | * Complex Home Modifications – L4 |
| * General Prosthetics and Orthotics |  |

For low risk/low cost AT (complexity levels 1 and 2), the use of templates may assist participants to consider the range of options available but these are not required to be submitted to the NDIA to approve a particular support. The [NDIS AT Complexity Level Classification](https://ndis.gov.au/providers/providing-at.html) is also available on the NDIS website.

**AT Assessors are reminded of their obligations under the NDIS Terms of Business when providing funded supports (e.g. assessments), particularly competence to complete the assessment sought.**

**CAUTION – RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE** AT Assessors must be aware of and observe the law with regard to AT options that are likely to restrain a participant. Where an NDIS participant has a legally compliant behavioural support plan in place and the recommended option is consistent with that plan, NDIS may approve the AT but require a review when the behavioural support plan is reviewed.

**AT Assessor role regarding scope of service** Should concern arise regarding the scope of the service booking, or appropriateness of the service booking to achieve the goal(s),the AT assessor should first discuss this with the participant (and/or their support network). If necessary they should together contact the participant’s NDIS Partner in the Community or Support Plan Coordinator to discuss before proceeding with the assessment and before undertaking any work not related to the service booking.

**AT Participant Capability Framework** This initiative is part of the NDIS AT Strategy aimed at building NDIS participant skill, knowledge and resources to increase their ability to exercise choice and control over the AT evaluation and selection process. More information about this process and implementation will be made available in 2016/17.

# Extract – NDIS Act: Reasonable & Necessary Supports

***National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*** **Section 34:   Reasonable and necessary supports**

1. For the purposes of specifying, in a statement of participant supports, the general supports that will be provided, and the reasonable and necessary supports that will be funded, the CEO must be satisfied of all of the following in relation to the funding or provision of each such support:
2. the support will assist the participant to pursue the goals, objectives and aspirations included in the participant’s statement of goals and aspirations;
3. the support will assist the participant to undertake activities, so as to facilitate the participant’s social and economic participation;
4. the support represents value for money in that the costs of the support are reasonable, relative to both the benefits achieved and the cost of alternative support;
5. the support will be, or is likely to be, effective and beneficial for the participant, having regard to current good practice;
6. the funding or provision of the support takes account of what it is reasonable to expect families, carers, informal networks and the community to provide;
7. the support is most appropriately funded or provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and is not more appropriately funded or provided through other general systems of service delivery or support services offered by a person, agency or body, or systems of service delivery or support services offered:
   1. as part of a universal service obligation; or
   2. in accordance with reasonable adjustments required under a law dealing with discrimination on the basis of disability.
8. The National Disability Insurance Scheme rules may prescribe methods or criteria to be applied, or matters to which the CEO is to have regard, in deciding whether or not he or she is satisfied as mentioned in any of paragraphs (1) (a) to (f).

Additional information on how the application will be considered in the context of specific supports can be found in the [NDIS Operational Guidelines available online.](https://ndis.gov.au/Operational-Guidelines)

# PART 1 - Details

## NDIS Participant Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| DOB |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| Alternative Contact/Guardian |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| NDIS Number |  |
| Participant’s NDIS Contact (name & phone number) |  |

## AT Needs Assessor

You must be able to provide evidence of competence in assessing AT needs at this level on request from NDIS Auditor

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Position & Qualifications |  |
| Business Name |  |
| Email address |  |
| Contact telephone number |  |
| Date (s) of initial assessment |  |
| Date of Report |  |
| State Equipment Supply Scheme Prescriber Number (if relevant) |  |

# PART 2 - Participant’s goals related to AT/home modification

Refer to the statement of participants’ goal(s) and identify the goals that the participant wishes to achieve that are relevant to this request for funded AT supports.

* + 1. List of Goals

|  |
| --- |
| Please number the goals listed |

## Inform the participant about the NDIS AT support request process, how decisions are made and what participants can reasonably expect to have funded.

In this section the AT assessor should provide the following information to the participant and should sign the form to indicate that this has been done and understood:

* The report will be submitted to the NDIA who will make the decision about whether the proposed reasonable and necessary funded supports meet the requirements of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* - in particular section 34.
* The NDIS provides support to people with disabilities in meeting their goals to live an ordinary life. The NDIS website provides participants information including a video, about what an “ordinary life” means.
* The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*, the NDIS Rules and the Operational Guidelines are available on the NDIS website (under the ‘About Us’ tab). Refer any questions that can’t be answered by these resources to the participant’s NDIS contact.
* The role of the AT Needs Assessor is to provide professional advice to assess the abilities and functional limitations of the participant and the barriers to achieving their goals, assist the participant to explore the options available to best meet their goals, and prepare evidence regarding the participant’s need for reasonable and necessary funded supports where this is appropriate.
* In general, reasonable and necessary funding would meet the cost of standard level equipment, fittings or modifications necessary for the achievement of the goal in the participant’s individual circumstances.
* The participant will be provided with a copy of the report submitted to the NDIA.
* This AT needs assessment is the first step in determining the type of AT supports that a participant may require for living ‘an ordinary life’. This evidence guides participants and planners in both plan implementation and future planning. Where reasonable and necessary funding is provided in a plan for particular AT supports, further assessments for those AT supports of NDIS AT Classification Level 2 and above are usually required to guide appropriate selection and supply for the participant.
* The NDIA will inform the participant of any planning or implementation decisions in response to the AT needs assessment.

PART 3 - Evaluation / assessment

1. Background

Note participant’s circumstances including: disability; current living situation; social supports and environment in general and with regard to use of AT; if moving through life transition; if functional disability is recently acquired or has changed; coexisting medical and health conditions including behavioural status (note that NDIS can only fund AT related to participant’s disability).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Functional Assessment findings

Note current level of function related to disability and impact on life roles **\*NDIS expects relevant assessments are conducted (or sighted) where required and records held by AT assessor for NDIS audit purposes.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Goal number | Physical limitations related to current level of function important for this goal | How are these barriers to goal achievement? |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## Current supports in use: review suitability where related to goal, including environmental considerations

Describe any existing AT that the participant has, how, how often and where it is used and comment on its suitability from the participant’s and Assessors perspective for use to achieve participant’s goals. Include any home modifications that have previously been undertaken. Add rows to accommodate all AT for relevant for each goal.

### Current AT relevant to goal

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal number | Type of AT | Usage | Participant’s report of suitability | Does AT assessor recommend reassessment? |
|  |  |  |  | Y/ N  Give details |
|  |  |  |  | Y/ N  Give details |

# PART 4 - Exploration and evaluation of options

Provide a statement of all options considered, in the table below. At least two options should be considered for each goal where there are barriers to achievement for which funded supports (including AT/home modification) are being requested.

Consider the following criteria in relation to advantages and disadvantages of each option:

* Is the option compatible with other AT/supports in use?
* Does a proposed option/solution address multiple goals?
* Will the participant be able to achieve the goal independently?
* Does the option reflect best practice for this participant in their circumstances?
* Will the option facilitate both the goal achievement and increased social & economic participation?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal  number | Options | Describe potential options in relation to goal achievement. | Advantages | Disadvantages | Estimated cost |
| Goal 1 | Option 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Goal 1 | Option 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Goal 2 | Option 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Goal 2 | Option 2 |  |  |  |  |

# PART 5 – Recommended option(s)

## Recommended Option(s):

Review from perspective of participant and AT assessor and that options should include/consider the range of supports available: mainstream, community, informal and reasonable & necessary funded.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Participant preferred option and rationale | AT Assessor recommended option (with link to evidence) |
| 1 |  |  |
| 1 | Do AT Assessor and Participant agree on preferred option? | Y/ N |
| 2 |  |  |
| 2 | Do AT Assessor and Participant agree on preferred option? | Y/ N |

## Are there any other factors that need resolution in order to implement the above?

e.g. behavioural management plan for restrictive practice

|  |
| --- |
|  |

### AT Assessor

**I certify that I meet the NDIA expectations of provider suitability (including understanding of the current NDIS Act, Rules and Operational Guidelines) to assess the type of assistive technology, home modification and associated supports at the level of complexity required by this participant and will provide such evidence to the NDIA if requested.**

I confirm that I have discussed the information in [Part 2(B)](#_Inform_the_participant) with the participant.

The above specification is consistent with the preferred option agreed between the participant and the AT Assessor.

Name:       Signature:  Date: