

# Webinar Q&A

## 1. Does it include the cost of the actual activity or just supports to participate?

Activities for the participant may be funded or partially funded if the activities are considered reasonable and necessary to meet the participant's disability-related needs and goals. There may be some situations where the participant may need to pay some of the activity cost. This is very much on a case by case situation.

## 2. How does the NDIS fund activities?

- Depends - could come from Core, or Capacity.
- Activities can be also included under Short Term Accommodation
- When it doesn't exceed daily allowance

## 3. Is this true that NDIS can fund for the cost of carer accompanying the participant during the trip? Is this not considered as informal support available?

NDIS may cover for the support required during a trip. If the participant requires additional support, the cost associated with the additional support may be covered. For instance, additional support may be required from a support worker to assist the participant to board a train, assist with accessing the onboard toilet and disembark a train.

## 4. If NDIS cover the cost for carer, can you please give examples of the types of the cost that NDIS cover for the carer? airfare, hotel/accommodation?

**The NDIS may cover for the time the carer will be required to assist the participant to travel safely and comfortably, allowing the participant to access and participate in the community.**

Accommodation for the carer is generally not covered by the participant's plan. However, in some circumstances, some of the accommodation cost may be funded if the participant requires active night support.

It's highly unlikely that airfares would be covered. It would need to be specifically listed as a goal and approved by the planner.

## 5. How is swimming with dolphins a necessary disability support?

In some cases, the NDIS may fund swimming with dolphins as part of a broader therapy program. But it would not be considered a necessary support on its own. It would need to align with the participants goals, e.g., participant usually has support animals or has outlined the value to mental wellbeing that animals provide.

Swimming with dolphins can be a fun and rewarding experience for people of all abilities. Although this is an example and not a treatment for any specific disability. Something like this is a more extreme example and is usually not funded by the NDIS.

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## **6. A participant in SIL/SDA and day program activities, how would they be funded for their holiday?**

The NDIS would not directly fund holidays for participants, including in Supported Independent Living or Specialist Disability Accommodations. However, there are some circumstances where NDIS funding may be available to support holiday-related expenses for SIL/SDA residents.

## **7. Can SIL funding be used to fund the holiday?**

The NDIS would not directly fund holidays for participants. However, there are some circumstances where NDIS funding may be available to support holiday-related expenses.

## **8. Will NDIS provide support for a participant to access overseas trip especially if it is an NDIS goal? If so, how would this work eg how would you engage support workers or be able to hire equipment from overseas businesses when NDIS does not exist overseas?**

If a participant is eligible to use NDIS funding for an overseas trip, they will need to work with their planner to develop a plan for how the funding will be used. This plan should include: the specific goals of the trip, the activities that the participant will undertake, the budget for the trip, the arrangements for support workers or equipment.

Engaging a NDIS registered disability specialist travel agency can help with identifying and arranging the appropriate products and services while travelling overseas.

## **9. What is the difference between a holiday and STA? It seems what is allowed is different.**

Holiday and Short-Term Accommodation are two different things with different purposes and funding arrangements under the NDIS.

A holiday is a period of time away from work or other activities for the purpose of rest, relaxation, or pleasure. Holidays are not considered a necessary support under the NDIS and are generally not funded by the scheme. However, there may be some circumstances in which NDIS funding may be available to support holiday-related expenses for participants. Short Term Accommodation (STA) is a type of NDIS-funded support that provides temporary accommodation for people with a disability. STA is typically used for a short period of time, such as for a weekend or a week. STA can be used for a variety of purposes, such as: respite care for carers, a break from the participant's usual environment, to participate in a specific activity or event, to trial a new living arrangement...

STA is considered a necessary support under the NDIS and is funded by the scheme. The NDIS will cover the cost of STA, which can include the cost of accommodation, activities, meals, and personal care.

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## **10. Food is a variable, as the NDIS has often declined food when a stand alone disability accommodation is booked through STA. Don't they class the purchase of food as an every day expense?**

The NDIS Short Term Accommodation Guidelines clearly stipulates that STA includes personal care, accommodation, food and activities the participant and the provider agree to.

<https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/supports-you-can-access-menu/home-and-living-supports/short-term-accommodation-or-respite>

## **11. What are the short term / spontaneous holiday plan inclusion processes?**

**The process for planning a short-term or spontaneous holiday with NDIS funding under the Short Term Accommodation (STA) program involves working with your NDIS planner to develop a plan that meets your individual needs and circumstances. Here's a step-by-step guide:**

1. Discuss your holiday plans with your NDIS planner or support coordinator: Explain your desire to take a short-term or spontaneous holiday and discuss your specific needs and preferences. They will assist you in determining if your holiday plans align with your NDIS goals and objectives.
2. Identify your STA needs: Determine the type of accommodation, support services, and other resources you will require during your holiday. Consider factors such as accessibility, location, proximity to medical facilities, and the availability of support workers.
3. Engage an NDIS Register and Disability Specialist Travel Agency (like Supported Travel eXperiences) to develop a detailed STA quote and plan that align with your goals, needs and budget. This will outline the holiday itinerary, accommodation arrangements, support services, budget, and contingency plans. This plan should clearly demonstrate how your holiday aligns with your NDIS goals.
4. Seek approval from the NDIS: Submit your STA plan to the NDIS for review and approval. Your NDIS Travel Agency can assist with this process. The NDIS will assess your plan based on your individual circumstances, the reasonableness of your requests, and the availability of funding.
5. Make arrangements for accommodation and support services: Once your STA plan is approved, your NDIS Travel Agent can proceed with booking your accommodation and securing the necessary support services. This may involve contacting providers, support worker agencies, or equipment rental companies.
6. Enjoy your holiday: Relax, have fun, and make the most of your short-term or spontaneous holiday. Remember to keep track of your expenses and receipts for reimbursement purposes.

Throughout the process, maintain open communication with your NDIS planner or support coordinator. They can provide guidance, address any questions or concerns, and ensure that your holiday plans align with your NDIS funding eligibility.

## **12. What if a participant doesn't want 24/7 support that comes with STA. Could we negotiate charge rates?**

Participants should be able to negotiate charge rates for Short Term Accommodation if they do not require 24/7 support. The NDIS is committed to providing participants with choice and control over their supports, and this includes the ability to negotiate charge rates for STA that reflects their individual needs.

When negotiating charge rates for STA, participants should consider the following factors:

- The type of accommodation and support services required
- The duration of the STA stay
- The participant's individual needs and circumstances

## **13. What evidence does NDIA need to approve respite for participants?**

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) requires evidence to demonstrate the need for respite care for NDIS participants. This evidence is crucial to ensure that respite care is provided appropriately and effectively to support both participants and their carer(s). Here are the types of evidence that the NDIA may require:

- **Medical or Specialist Reports:** These reports from medical professionals, such as doctors, psychologists, or occupational therapists, can provide valuable insights into the participant's disability, its impact on their daily life, and the need for respite care. These reports should clearly document the participant's functional limitations, the level of support required, and the potential benefits of respite care.
- **Carer Statements:** Statements from the participant's carers, including family members, friends, or paid support workers, can provide firsthand accounts of the demands of caring for the participant and the need for respite. These statements should describe the carer's role, the challenges they face, and the impact that caring has on their own well-being.
- **NDIS Plan and Previous Support History:** The participant's NDIS plan and previous support history can provide context for the need for respite care. The NDIS plan may outline specific goals or challenges that respite care can address, while previous support history can demonstrate the effectiveness of respite care in the past.
- **Records of Previous Respite Care:** If the participant has received respite care in the past, records of these services can demonstrate the effectiveness of respite care and its positive impact on both the participant and their carers. These records may include feedback from the participant, carers, and support workers involved in the respite care arrangement.

The NDIA may request additional evidence depending on the individual circumstances of the participant. The NDIA's assessment process considers the participant's specific needs, the potential benefits of respite care, and the availability of funding. By providing comprehensive evidence, participants can strengthen their case for respite care and ensure they receive the support they need.

## **14. If a Support worker is travelling with a participant - who is responsible for paying for the flights, travel, accommodation and food of the support worker? And does STA funding need to be stated and applied for specifically? eg is a prior quote of the trip required?**

The responsibility for paying for the flights, travel, accommodation, and food of a support worker who is traveling with an NDIS participant depends on the specific circumstances of the support arrangement. A prior quote for the trip is not always required, but it is recommended in some cases. For example, if the participant is traveling to a remote location or requires specialised support services, a prior quote can help to ensure that the costs are reasonable and within the participant's budget.

Here is a breakdown of who is typically responsible for paying for the various expenses of a support worker traveling with an NDIS participant:

- Flights: The NDIS will typically not cover the cost of the support worker's flights if they are traveling with the participant
- Travel: The NDIS may cover the cost of the support worker's travel expenses, such as transportation to and from airports, parking fees, and tolls.
- Accommodation: The NDIS may cover the cost of the support worker's accommodation if they are staying overnight with a participant requiring active night time support.
- Food: The NDIS will not typically cover the cost of the support worker's food.

It is important to note that the specific funding arrangements for a support worker's travel will depend on the individual circumstances of the participant and the support worker. Participants should discuss their specific needs and arrangements with their NDIS planner or support coordinator.

## **15. Can STA be claimed if no support provided-just accommodation and food?**

Generally, Short Term Accommodation funding is intended to cover the cost of temporary accommodation and related support services for people with a disability. This typically includes personal care, support workers, and other services that are deemed necessary to meet the participant's specific needs. In most cases, STA funding will not be approved if no support is provided beyond accommodation and food. This is because the primary purpose of STA is to provide support to participants who require assistance with daily living activities due to their disability. However, there may be some exceptional circumstances where STA funding may be approved for accommodation and food only. For instance, if a participant requires a specialised type of accommodation that is not available in their usual environment, the NDIS may fund the cost of accommodation even if no additional support is provided. Additionally, if a participant needs to travel to a specific location for a medical appointment or therapy session, the NDIS may fund the cost of accommodation and food if these expenses are considered reasonable and necessary. To determine whether STA funding is appropriate for a situation that involves accommodation and food only, the NDIA may consider several factors, including:

- The participant's individual needs and circumstances
- The reason for the STA request
- The availability of alternative support options
- The cost-effectiveness of the proposed STA arrangement

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## **16. How do providers incorporate the cost of a \$200 concert ticket into a STA stay if they have a set amount in the STA rate?**

If a participant believes that the cost of a concert ticket should be included in their STA rate, they should discuss their specific needs with their NDIS planner. They can review the participant's NDIS plan and assess whether attending the concert aligns with their NDIS goals and whether funding for the ticket would be considered reasonable and necessary. Participants should be prepared to provide a clear justification for why attending the concert is considered a necessary part of their STA plan and how it aligns with their NDIS goals. By demonstrating the potential benefits of attending the concert and the impact it could have on their well-being, participants may increase their chances of receiving funding for the ticket. In this case, the cost of the tickets could be included in an STA as long as the overall daily cost doesn't exceed the STA daily limits as specified in the NDIS Price Guide.

## **17. If a person goes on a holiday with their family and they require accessible accommodation - bathroom and bed. Is this cost for the accessible room claimable? no support workers attending, just informal supports.**

Depending on the situation and personal circumstances, the cost of the accessible accommodation could potentially be covered by the participant's plan under Short Term Accommodation if this aligns with the participant's goals. In some occasions the cost difference between an accessible room and a standard room could be claimed.

## **18. I always understood that NDIS cover the cost of support but not the actual activities?**

Yes, this is correct. The NDIS is designed to fund supports that are considered reasonable and necessary to help participants manage their disability and participate in the community. This means that the NDIS will only fund activities that are deemed to have a direct and positive impact on the participant's well-being and ability to live an independent life.

However, some activities may be funded based on individual circumstances. Some examples could include:

- Therapy and rehabilitation services to improve physical, cognitive, or emotional functioning.
- Vocation training and employment support to prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment.
- Social and community participation supports to connect with others, build relationships, and participate in community activities.

## **19. STA covers a 24 hours of support block, what happens if a participant doesn't require the full 24 hours day? Are they still charged the full 24 hours STA rate or should this be reduced?**

See above (question 12)

## **20. How does the NDIS fund concerts, seminar etc when client does not have money to pay for it upfront?**

The NDIS does not typically fund these types of activities.

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**21. In my experience, providers book accommodation, car hire, flights, activities, etc. and calculate this to a daily cost. As long as this daily cost comes in under the STA line item unit cost, it is submitted to plan management for approval with all costs masked under the STA line item. Is this appropriate?**

The NDIS emphasises transparency and participant-centred support. To maintain this ethical framework, participants play a crucial role in ensuring that the services they receive align with their NDIS goals and that they have a clear understanding of the costs involved.

Participants are encouraged to actively seek detailed quotes from providers for any services they are considering. This proactive approach enables them to make informed decisions about their support options and ensures that they are not surprised by unexpected costs. Detailed quotes for STA should clearly outline the specific services to be provided, the corresponding costs, and any additional charges or conditions. This transparency allows participants to compare different providers and make choices that align with their individual needs and financial constraints.

As participants are the primary beneficiaries of their NDIS plans, they hold the responsibility of ensuring that the services they receive directly contribute to achieving their NDIS goals. This involves carefully reviewing the proposed services and assessing whether they effectively address their specific needs and aspirations. Participants should not hesitate to consult with their NDIS planner, LAC or ECEI if they have any questions about the alignment of proposed services with their NDIS goals.

**22. Are parking costs able to be claimed via CORE funds for STA (e.g. interstate trip for medical appointment)? Travel was not mentioned on the slide listing STA inclusions.**

Parking costs can be claimed via Core funding for Short Term Accommodation (STA) in certain circumstances, including interstate trips for medical appointments. While parking costs are not specifically listed among the standard inclusions for STA, they can be considered a reasonable and necessary expense related to the STA arrangement.

According to the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits, STA funding can be used to cover "reasonable and necessary expenses" incurred during the STA arrangement. This includes expenses directly related to the accommodation and personal care services, as well as ancillary expenses that are deemed essential to the participant's well-being and participation in the community.

In the case of an interstate trip for a medical appointment, parking costs can be considered a reasonable and necessary expense as they are directly related to the participant's ability to access the necessary medical care. Without parking costs, the participant may face difficulties in attending the appointment, potentially jeopardising their health and well-being.

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(Question 22 CONT.) To claim parking costs, participants should follow these steps:

- Gather documentation: Keep receipts or invoices for parking expenses incurred during the STA arrangement.
- Discuss with NDIS planner or support coordinator: Consult with your NDIS planner or support coordinator to determine the eligibility of parking costs for your specific STA arrangement. They can assess the circumstances and provide guidance on the documentation requirements.
- Submit claim: Include the documented parking costs along with your overall STA claim, clearly indicating that these expenses are related to the interstate medical trip.
- Provide justification: If requested, provide a clear explanation of why parking costs are considered essential for your STA arrangement and how they contribute to your overall well-being and participation in the community.
- Seek clarification: If you have any doubts or concerns about the eligibility of parking costs, don't hesitate to ask your NDIS planner or support coordinator for clarification. They are there to assist you in understanding the NDIS funding guidelines and ensuring you receive the support you need.

## **23. Where can we find all this information from the NDIS directly?**

Every situation is unique and different. It is recommended that you go directly to your NDIA planner, LAC or ECEI for information about how you can use NDIS funds to support travel.

## **24. I have a psychosocial disability. I wish to travel as part of social immersion—linked to my goals. What could be covered in this situation? Flights? Hotel? I'm self managed.**

Every situation is unique and different. It is recommended that you go directly to your NDIA planner, LAC or ECEI for information about how you can use NDIS funds to support travel.

## **25. If it all goes wrong and the NDIA deems the STA was not R&N, who is responsible/accountable - the participant or the STA provider?**

Every situation is unique, so it would depend on the specific situation as to what the outcome was. If the NDIA determines that Short Term Accommodation (STA) was not reasonable and necessary (R&N), both the participant and the STA provider may share some responsibility or accountability.

Participant Responsibility: Participants have a responsibility to ensure that the STA they receive aligns with their NDIS goals and is used in a way that is consistent with NDIS funding guidelines.

This includes:

- Understanding NDIS funding rules: Participants should familiarise themselves with the NDIS's eligibility criteria and funding guidelines for STA. This includes understanding what expenses are considered R&N and how to document and justify their requests.
- Communicating with NDIS planner: Participants should maintain open communication with their NDIS planner or support coordinator throughout the STA process. This allows them to discuss their needs, seek guidance, and ensure that their STA arrangement is compliant with NDIS requirements.



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- **Providing accurate information:** Participants should provide accurate and up-to-date information about their circumstances and needs to their NDIS planner and STA provider. This helps ensure that the STA arrangement is tailored to their specific requirements and that the NDIS can make informed decisions about funding.

STA Provider Responsibility: STA providers also have a responsibility to ensure that the STA they provide meets the NDIS's R&N criteria. This includes:

- **Understanding STA funding rules:** STA providers should have a thorough understanding of the NDIS's eligibility criteria and funding guidelines for STA. This allows them to assess whether a participant's request is R&N and to advise them on the appropriate documentation and justification requirements.
- **Assessing participant needs:** STA providers should conduct a comprehensive assessment of the participant's needs to determine the most suitable STA arrangement. This includes considering the participant's disability, goals, and individual circumstances.
- **Providing clear information:** STA providers should provide clear and transparent information to participants about the services they offer, the associated costs, and the participant's responsibilities under the NDIS. This helps avoid misunderstandings and ensures that participants make informed decisions.
- **Maintaining records:** STA providers should maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all STA-related expenses and documentation. This allows for transparent reporting and accountability in case of audits or inquiries.

Shared Responsibility and Accountability: In cases where the NDIA deems an STA arrangement to not be R&N, both the participant and the STA provider may share some responsibility or accountability. The NDIA will assess the specific circumstances of each case and determine the extent to which each party contributed to the non-compliance.

Participants may face reduced or denied STA funding in the future if their actions or decisions are found to have contributed to the non-compliance. Similarly, STA providers may face penalties, including financial penalties or loss of registration, if they are found to have repeatedly provided STA services that do not meet the NDIS's R&N criteria.

To avoid such consequences, both participants and STA providers should prioritise open communication, clear documentation, and a thorough understanding of the NDIS's funding guidelines. By working together and adhering to the NDIS's requirements, they can ensure that STA arrangements are R&N and contribute to positive outcomes for participants.

## **26. Do you have to get NDIS approval for more than 28 of STA? If so, how do we do this as the main phone number for the NDIS does say that they are not allowed to give the approval**

Yes, you need to get approval from the NDIA if you want to use Short Term Accommodation (STA) for more than 28 days in a year. Speak to your support coordinator, local area coordinator, ECEI or planner to better understand the eligibility criteria and the process for such request.

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**27. A family with 3 children all overnight active on ndis want to go on sta to sydney, they would like to book 3 rooms all together, for them and for the support workers that will be attending the sta for support. would this be approved?**

The approval of a Short Term Accommodation (STA) request for a family with three children and their support workers to travel to Sydney depends on a range of factors and requires careful consideration of the family's needs and circumstances.

In the case of the family with three children and their support workers seeking STA for a trip to Sydney, the NDIA would consider the following:

1. Purpose of the Trip: The NDIA would need to understand the purpose of the trip to Sydney and how it aligns with the children's NDIS goals. This could include educational opportunities, social inclusion activities, or family bonding experiences.
2. Reasonableness of Three Rooms: The NDIA would assess whether having three separate rooms for the family and their support workers is reasonable and necessary. They would consider the children's ages, their disabilities, and the support needs they require.
3. Cost-Effectiveness: The NDIA would evaluate the cost of booking three rooms in Sydney and determine whether it is proportionate to the benefits of the trip. They would consider factors such as the length of the stay, the time of year, and the availability of alternative accommodation options.
4. Exploration of Alternative Support Options: The NDIA would inquire about any efforts to explore alternative support options, such as staying with family or friends in Sydney. If these options are feasible and would significantly reduce the cost, the NDIA may encourage the family to consider them.
5. Individual Needs and Circumstances: The NDIA would carefully assess the individual needs and circumstances of each family member and support worker. This would include their specific disabilities, support requirements, and any potential safety concerns.

The NDIA is committed to providing support that helps families achieve their goals and live fulfilling lives. Work closely with your NDIS planner to develop a comprehensive plan that outlines the purpose of the trip, the expected outcomes, and a detailed budget.

**28. Where in the NDIS price guide or on the website that we can find information about activities being funded?**

The NDIS price guide can be found here - <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements>. It is regularly updated with changes in policy and pricing, as they are announced by the NDIA.

**29. Can a participant nominee who has been requested to vacate their property access STA or MTA if in crisis situation?**

STA cannot be used for crisis/emergency accommodation. In this type of situation, it is strongly advised that the Planner, LAC or ECEI is contacted to get their advice on how to progress with that specific set of circumstances.

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## **30. I have a client with 09 increased and social participation, but a supplier said they only bill under core and my plan manager don't want to approve? This if for a camp.**

The NDIS funding for camps or other social participation activities may be claimed under either Core or Capacity Building supports. This decision is based on the specific goals and objectives of the camp and how they align with the participant's NDIS plan.

In general, Core supports are used for everyday activities and ongoing needs related to the participant's disability, while Capacity Building supports are intended to help participants develop new skills, increase independence, and achieve their NDIS goals.

To determine whether a camp is eligible for funding under Core or Capacity Building, the NDIS considers the following factors:

- Purpose of the camp: The camp should have a clear purpose and objectives that align with the participant's NDIS goals and support their increased social participation.
- Targeted outcomes: The camp should have specific and measurable outcomes that demonstrate how it will help the participant achieve their NDIS goals.
- Individual needs and circumstances: The camp should be tailored to the participant's individual needs, disability, and support requirements.

## **31. How does Support Travel eXperiences claim for the service that is provided to the participant to assist with planning their travel?**

Supported Travel eXperiences (STX) provides comprehensive travel planning assistance to individuals with disabilities and participants, ensuring that their travel arrangements are tailored to their specific needs and preferences. Their services encompass extensive research, arrangement of services, coordination with suppliers, selection of appropriate support workers, and management of supplier payments.

STX operates under the category 116 Innovative Community Participation under Capacity Building Support within the NDIS. This categorisation recognises their innovative approach to empowering participants to engage in meaningful travel experiences. STX's fees are typically claimed under either Core or Capacity funding, depending on the nature of the travel arrangements and how they align with the participant's NDIS goals.

## **32. What if you are travelling and participant only requires 3 hours per day support, however your employer has sent support worker to travel over 24 or more.**

See above (question 12)

## **33. Does STX provide one stop shop for participants with holiday goal?**

Yes. STX is a disability specialist travel agency, and we help people with disability travel. We specialise in designing end to end and completely personalised travel experiences. This means we can arrange and coordinate any products and services required for participants and travellers to travel safely and comfortably. This can include accessible accommodation, transfers and transport, equipment rental or relocation, activities and experiences, support worker, meal delivery, therapies... Anything that is required to have a great time!