



CONDITION GUIDE

Psychosocial disability: a plain-English guide

For people living with psychosocial disability, and the families and friends who care. What it means, what people ask, what helps day to day, and how the NDIS and Kinship can support you.

Psychosocial disability is the term for disability that can come from a mental health condition. The Australian Bureau of Statistics describes it as being restricted in everyday activities because of a condition that affects thinking, emotions or behaviour.

A diagnosis on its own isn't a psychosocial disability. What matters is the impact on daily life: looking after yourself, getting out, working, keeping in touch with people. The NDIS recognises that this impact can go up and down, or come in episodes.

It's more common than many people think. In 2022, 1.7 million Australians had psychosocial disability, up from 1.1 million in 2018, and most also had another type of disability (ABS).

A note on words: we say “person with psychosocial disability” and “lived experience”, and we use each person's own words for what they're going through.

Key facts

- **1.7 million** Australians had psychosocial disability in 2022
- **6.5%** of the population, up from 4.6% in 2018
- **87.2%** also had at least one other type of disability
- **39.0%** of people aged 15–64 were employed, up from 25.7% in 2018

Figures: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Psychosocial disability in Australia, 2022 (released June 2025).



What helps, day to day

- **One familiar face.** Not having to explain yourself to someone new every week matters. Consistency is something to ask any provider about.
- **Getting out, gently.** Small steps count: a coffee, a walk, a class. Then the next one.
- **Keep your health team close.** Your GP and mental health team stay at the centre. Medicare Mental Health (1800 595 212) can help you find services.
- **Skills for independence.** Cooking, cleaning, shopping and running errands, practised with support until they're yours (NDIS).
- **Support for the people around you.** Carers and families can get free support through Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737.

How the NDIS can help

To be eligible for the NDIS you need to be younger than 65 when your application is received, an Australian citizen or permanent resident (or Protected Special Category visa holder) living in Australia, and have an impairment that's likely to be permanent and substantially reduces your ability to do everyday things.

Psychosocial impairment is one of the impairment types the NDIS considers, and the NDIS funds recovery coaches for people with psychosocial support needs. From January 2028, access changes begin for new applicants, including a more consistent assessment of permanence and of whether an impairment can be treated (NDIS).

- 1 Connect with an NDIS partner (use the office finder at [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au)) or call the NDIS on 1800 800 110.
- 2 Work with your treating health professional to gather evidence about your disability and how it affects daily life.
- 3 Complete your application with your NDIS partner, or by yourself using the access request form.
- 4 Submit it. Your NDIS partner can do this for you, or use the NDIS service hub, post it (NDIA, GPO Box 700, Canberra ACT 2601) or take it to a local office.
- 5 Wait for the decision. The NDIS tells you within 90 days once your application and all your evidence are in. You can ask for a review if you disagree.

The NDIS is changing. New NDIS laws passed in August 2026. From 1 October 2026, budgets for social and community participation and for daily living skills are being reduced as plans are reassessed or newly approved, and a new way of planning is due from April 2027. Check [ndis.gov.au](https://www.ndis.gov.au) for the latest.



How Kinship Uniting Services can help

We support people, not diagnoses. For someone with psychosocial disability, we help with everyday life, alongside your health team.

- **Daily living.** Help with the routines of home: meals, cleaning, appointments, the week ahead.
- **Community participation.** Company and support to get out and stay connected, at your pace.
- **Life skills and group activities.** Building confidence and skills in real places, with real people.
- **What we don't do.** Kinship doesn't provide recovery coaching, counselling or clinical mental health treatment. We work alongside the people who do.
- **The same face every visit.** The same support worker comes every visit, so nobody has to explain themselves to a stranger each week. Families get updates as standard.

What we don't do. Kinship doesn't provide recovery coaching, counselling, therapy or crisis support. If life is in danger, call Triple Zero (000). Lifeline: 13 11 14, 24/7.

Where to get help

- **Emergency:** Triple Zero (000) if life is in danger
- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 (24/7) or text 0477 13 11 14
- **Medicare Mental Health:** 1800 595 212
- **NDIS:** 1800 800 110
- **Carer Gateway:** 1800 422 737
- **Kinship Uniting Services:** 0437 733 744 or 0424 756 143, info@kinshipunitingservices.com, 39 Victory Road, Colebee NSW 2761

Your checklist

- ☐ Ask your treating professional for a report on how your condition affects daily life
- ☐ Write down what a good week and a hard week look like
- ☐ List the parts of daily life where you want support
- ☐ Check NDIS eligibility: under 65 when you apply, citizen or permanent resident
- ☐ Ask your NDIS partner about a recovery coach
- ☐ Keep crisis numbers somewhere easy to find: 000 and Lifeline 13 11 14
- ☐ Decide who you want your support workers to keep in the loop

Questions people ask

Is depression a psychosocial disability?

It can be, when it restricts everyday life over a long period. For the NDIS, the impairment must be likely to be permanent and substantially reduce your ability to do everyday things, usually after available treatment options have been considered (NDIS).

Can you get the NDIS for mental health?

Some people can. Psychosocial impairment is one of the six impairment types the NDIS lists. You'll need evidence from your treating professional about how it affects your daily life (NDIS).

My symptoms come and go. Can I still apply?

Yes. The NDIS says it understands the impact of an impairment can go up and down and come in episodes, and it still considers whether you're likely to need support for life.

What is a psychosocial recovery coach?

An NDIS-funded worker who helps participants with psychosocial disability in their recovery journey: building capacity, finding and organising supports, and coaching. You can choose one with lived experience (NDIS).

What does a support worker do?

Support workers can help with household tasks, personal care, daily activities and getting out into the community, and help you build skills like cooking or running errands (NDIS).

What are examples of psychosocial disability?

The ABS counts restrictions from nervous or emotional conditions, mental health concerns, memory problems or periods of confusion, and social or behavioural difficulties.

Talk to a real person. Call Kinship Uniting Services on **0437 733 744** or email

info@kinshipunitingservices.com. Deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment? Contact us through the National Relay Service: Speak & Listen 1300 555 727, TTY 133 677, SMS relay 0423 677 767.

Sources

ABS: Psychosocial disability in Australia, 2022 — <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/psychosocial-disability-australia-2022>

NDIS: What are the NDIS disability requirements —

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying/eligibility-requirements/what-are-ndis-disability-requirements>

NDIS: How to check your eligibility — <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying/eligibility-requirements/how-check-your-eligibility>

NDIS: What is a recovery coach —

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/working-providers/support-workers-and-recovery-coaches/what-recovery-coach>

NDIS: What is a support worker —

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/working-providers/support-workers-and-recovery-coaches/what-support-worker>

NDIS: How to apply — <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying/application-process/how-apply>

NDIS: Securing the NDIS for future generations (new NDIS laws) —

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-laws/securing-ndis-future-generations>



NDIS: New way of planning — <https://www.ndis.gov.au/changes-ndis/new-way-planning>

Medicare Mental Health (national phone service 1800 595 212) — <https://www.medicarementalhealth.gov.au/>

Lifeline Australia — <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

Carer Gateway — <https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>