



Enabling families of children
with health and disability
needs since 1949

CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: What type of funding is available?

Information for Families



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Our vision

At Xavier, we have a vision for families of children with high support needs to have access to high quality inclusive environments in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). We believe that every child has the right to access mainstream childcare and benefit from inclusive and supportive learning environments. Children with disability who are exposed to ECEC develop skills like making friends, communicating in positive ways and developing behaviours like self-help skills.

We understand the vulnerability of children with complex needs and the challenges involved in accessing the supports necessary for providing high quality care for your child. This factsheet has been developed to facilitate access to funds for a Support Worker to assist your child in the ECEC environment.

What is Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)?

For the purpose of this factsheet ECEC includes:

- Childcare
- Early Learning Centre
- Outside School Hours Care
- Vacation Care
- Kindergarten
- Family Day Care
- In-Home Care

Does my child require a Support Worker for safe participation in childcare?

If your child requires High Intensity Daily Supports or specific personal support he or she may require a Support Worker to be with them in a ECEC environment to provide the necessary support and enable your child to participate. This may be for all or part of the day.

High Intensity Daily Supports include:

- enteral nutrition, especially naso-gastric feeding
- tracheostomy
- urinary catheter
- emergency post seizure medication
- mealtime management plans
- other specific health-related requirements.

It can also include management for diabetes, epilepsy, pressure wound and stoma care where there are other related risk factors involved.

These support needs are regarded as high risk and need to be managed by Support Workers with the necessary skills and knowledge. Under the NDIS, a child who requires High Intensity Supports must be assessed by a Health Care Practitioner who will complete a health care assessment and plan. The Health Care Practitioner will train and provide ongoing monitoring of the plan and the Support Worker. Teachers and Educators do not meet these requirements and therefore a Support Worker is required to ensure the appropriate care for your child.



What is the role of the Support Worker in ECEC?

The role of the Support Worker is to ensure that High Intensity health requirements are met appropriately. It is not the role of the Support Worker to educate or facilitate inclusion within the setting. The Support Worker may attend for 1:1 support for the duration that your child is at the ECEC, for part of the time (eg. mealtimes) or may provide support on a 1:2 or 1:3 ratio depending on whether other children who attend have high intensity support requirements and it is safe to do so.

How is the Support Worker funded?

If your child does require High Intensity Supports, you should be eligible through your NDIA package to access funding for a Support Worker to accompany your child for some or all periods of their day at the service to facilitate their health and safety needs.

How do I know how much funding to request?

It is important to calculate what you need in your package and this can be broken down into three areas.

1. How many contact hours will your child spend with the Support Worker at the service. This will be determined by your booking at the service and your child's requirements (ie at all times or just during mealtimes etc).
2. Time and funds required for a Health practitioner assessment and ongoing monitoring. Xavier can organise this and provide a quote for these costs.
3. Individual training for each Support Worker. It is best practice to have more than one Support Worker trained to support your child to ensure that there can be consistency of care. These costs are dependent upon the needs of your child. Xavier can organise this and provide a quote for these costs.

What is Inclusion Support and how is it different?

Inclusion Support is funding that can be accessed by the Childcare to support them to provide an inclusive environment for your child. This might include funding for additional resources, training and perhaps an additional Educator. The additional Educator works as a member of the team of Educators to enable a quality inclusive program for all children. Their primary role is to increase the Educator to child ratios in order to facilitate more time and attention to the provision of an inclusive educational environment. They are not funded to provide one to one support; for an individual child, for respite care, to provide therapy or early intervention and supports, to attend state funded or Kindergarten programs or to provide medical/nursing assistance. Educators in ECEC are not generally trained or monitored to safely provide the necessary supports required by a child with High Intensity support needs.

What do I do if I am informed that a Support Worker should be funded by Inclusion Support?

If you are informed by your planner that your child cannot access funding for a Support Worker to assist with meeting their High Intensity Daily Support needs, you have a right to request a review. If you require support with this process you can get in touch with Xavier, we can help you to stay informed and advocate for and with you.

Xavier's Inclusion Advisor is available to discuss your child's specific requirements and provide information and advice on all aspects of inclusion for your child with complex disability into mainstream childcare.

For more information and to talk about your individual requirements, call Angela Ebbage, Inclusion Advisor, Xavier on:

Call: 1800 XAVIER

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