



# Frequently Asked Questions

## NDIA funded interpreting via TIS National

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The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) provides interpreting services to National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) registered providers for the delivery and implementation of supports in NDIS participants' plan.

### **Who is eligible for funded interpreting under the NDIA and TIS National arrangement?**

Only NDIS registered providers are eligible to access funded interpreting services via TIS National for the delivery and implementation of supports in NDIS participants' plans.

Partners in the Community (PITC), including Local Area Coordinators (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Coordinators are not eligible for funded interpreting services. However, they can access TIS National services on a fee for service basis. [Register online](#) or contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team on 1300 655 820 or [tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au).

**Note:** A registered provider means a registered provider of supports as defined under the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)*.

### **Are there any limits to the number of requests/hours a participant can use interpreting services under the NDIA and TIS National arrangement funded interpreting services?**

No limit has been set for the duration or frequency of interpreter requests that can be made. Language services are for use by a participant to implement, funded supports in their NDIS plan when engaging an NDIS registered provider.

### **Is the funded interpreting service available for: pre-planning?**

No. Pre-planning is not an activity undertaken by NDIS service providers nor is it a support funded in an NDIS plan. NDIA staff and Partners in the Community will arrange an interpreter for pre-planning.

### **Is the funded interpreting service available for: 'connecting' with the provider?**

Yes. Where necessary, participants are able to access interpreting services via the NDIA and TIS National arrangement for interactions with their Support Coordinator and/or registered provider.

**Note:** PITC are not able to access funded interpreting services via TIS National, as they are not providing supports funded under an NDIS plan. PITCs can however register with TIS National to access interpreting services, as a fee for service client. Contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team for more information.

NDIS participants and registered providers can also access immediate phone interpreting services by calling TIS National's operator assisted service on 131 450 (within Australia). This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is useful if you have a participant or Carer drop in to the service, or call you without an interpreter already engaged.

## **Is the funded interpreting service available for: implementing the plan?**

Yes. Funded interpreting services are for use by a participant to implement funded supports in their NDIS plan when engaging an NDIS registered provider. As long as the interpreting is in conjunction with a support or product in the participants plan then funded TIS National interpreting can be used.

## **Is the funded interpreting service available for: meeting new staff?**

Yes. If meeting the new staff enables plan supports to be implemented. Interpreting services are for use by a participant to implement funded supports in their NDIS plan when engaging an NDIS registered provider. All activities associated with implementation of funded supports are covered under the arrangement.

## **Is the funded interpreting service available for: preparing for the plan review?**

If the preparation of a plan review is not related to the funded supports in the participant's plan, then interpreting services are not available through this arrangement.

## **Is the funded interpreting service available for: dealing with queries, issues or incidents?**

Yes. Interpreting services are for use by a participant to implement funded supports in their NDIS plan when engaging an NDIS registered provider.

**Note:** Where the query, issue or incident is not related to the implementation of the funded supports then interpreting services are not available through this arrangement.

## **Some NDIS registered providers may have been paying for this service due to interpreter funding being excluded from participant plans.**

### **Can providers claim retrospectively?**

Translating and interpreting services for participants who have English as a second language cannot be funded in a participants plan, as it is not disability related. There is no ability for NDIS registered providers to claim for previous interpreting provided to participants.

## **What is a genuine need for an on-site interpreter? What is an example?**

The NDIA encourages NDIS service providers to use [on-site interpreting](#) services when required. On-site interpreting is recommended when a scheduled appointment with a NDIS participant may be lengthy, complex, require specialist knowledge, or when discussing documentation.

Examples when an on-site interpreter might be appropriate includes; a physiotherapy, or speech pathology appointment.

[Pre-booking](#) a telephone interpreter is recommended for languages where less interpreters are available, for example with new and emerging languages. Additionally, if you require a specific period of time or start time for an appointment.

NDIS participants and providers can also access [immediate phone interpreting](#) services by calling TIS National's operator assisted service on 131 450 (within Australia). This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is useful if you have a participant or Carer drop in to the service, or call you without an interpreter already engaged.

## **A parent of the participant cannot speak English and a NDIS service provider needs to explain what is happening or has happened during a session. Is the NDIS service provider able to use the NDIA funded TIS National arrangement in these situations?**

Yes. The arrangement is designed to assist participants by providing them access to an interpreter to enable implementation of their funded supports. There will be cases where it is necessary for the parent or Carer to understand the supports the registered provider is giving. Primary carers who speak languages other than English who are involved in plan implementation may require interpreting services and this can be arranged through the NDIA funded TIS National arrangement.

## **Are funded interpreting services available for Indigenous languages? For example Wiradjuri?**

TIS National does not provide interpreters for indigenous languages.

Sourcing an indigenous language provider is being considered as part of the NDIA's work relating to rural and remote communities as well as supporting participants who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

If participants are engaging with the NDIA and require an interpreter who has Indigenous language skills, the NDIA will seek to source an interpreter. Participants can contact their PITC to assist with identifying service providers who are able provide indigenous language services.

## **Can a non-registered service provider use TIS National NDIA funded interpreting services to provide support to participants under the NDIS?**

All providers are encouraged to follow best practice and support the participant by any means to implement their NDIS plan. The arrangement the NDIA has with TIS National only allows registered NDIS providers to book NDIA funded interpreting services on behalf of participants. Unregistered service providers can use TIS National services, however they will be expected to fund the cost of the service and will be invoiced directly for interpreting services used.

[Register online](#) or contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team on 1300 655 820 or [tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au).

## **How do self-managed participants access interpreting services?**

If a participant wishes to use an NDIS registered provider for the provision of supports funded in their NDIS plan, the service provider will be responsible for booking the interpreter. Neither the participant nor the registered provider is charged for this service.

However, if a participant wishes to use a non-registered provider for the provision of supports funded in their NDIS plan, then the service provider will be responsible for ensuring they can provide the supports in the participants preferred language, or the participant will need to make their own arrangements for interpreting services.

## **I have a client with a disability who is not registered with the NDIS seeking to access my services. Who is responsible for interpreting services?**

The funded interpreting is only available for registered NDIS participants. If a client speaks a language other than English wants to use your services, either your agency or the client will need to pay for the interpreting service. If you do not have a fee-paying account with TIS National, you can [register](#) on the TIS National website. Contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team on 1300 655 820 and they can search for any existing accounts.

## **My client is still on the Department of Social Services (DSS) funded Better Start or Helping Children with Autism program. Can I use my NDIS TIS National client code to communicate with these clients?**

No. If you are communicating with Better Start or HCWA clients, you cannot use your NDIS TIS National funded client code. This client code is only for use with NDIS service providers for the delivery and implementation of supports in NDIS participants' plan. If you use your client codes incorrectly, you may be liable for the charges directly.

Use the appropriate TIS National client code for each funded program. You may already have a TIS National account for your Better Start or HCWA clients. Contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team on 1300 655 820 and they can search for any existing accounts.

## **Does TIS National provide translations as part of the NDIA funded arrangements?**

TIS National does not provide a document translation service and there is no arrangement in place with the NDIA to provide this service. If you require translations to implement a support in a participants plan you should contact the NDIA directly on 1800 800 110.

## **Can NDIS registered providers access funded interpreting services for participants who enquire about their services before a service agreement is signed?**

Yes. You may use this service to communicate with a non-English speaking participant or Carer prior to an agreement if you are meeting with a participant to discuss the supports and services they may require or you can offer. It is expected that NDIS registered providers register with TIS National for a client code to access NDIA funded interpreting services. This will allow them to promote to participants and carers the services and supports they offer.

## **What is the cancellation policy when using NDIA funded interpreting services with TIS National?**

Registered providers are encouraged to use best practice when using TIS National services by following the TIS National [pre-booking process and cancellation policy](#).

## **Can a registered provider request a specific interpreter when using NDIA funded interpreting services with TIS National?**

TIS National encourages clients to avoid [requesting specific interpreters](#) where possible. Such requests:

- limit TIS National's ability to supply an interpreter, particularly for urgent requests (the specified interpreter may not be available when requested); and
- May not result in allocation of the most highly credentialed interpreter available for your appointment.

TIS National may agree to fulfil a participants request for a specific interpreter where the NDIS provider can demonstrate evidence of continuity of care. Requests should be made at least three days prior to the meeting. A specific interpreter request is more likely to be successful if you can demonstrate that allocation of the nominated interpreter:

- is essential to maintaining the quality and continuity of care or service
- is of clear benefit to the participant who prefers a language other than English
- Where there is evidence to substantiate a history or continuity of care with the participant, with either your agency or another agency delivering services to the participant.



When making a specific interpreter request, please ensure you provide the name or TIS National ID of the interpreter you want allocated, as well as:

- Detailed information, which clearly articulates why the participant needs the specific interpreter to be assigned and the reasons why it would be detrimental to either the agency or client if the request were not granted.
- Ensure the reasoning provided for a specific interpreter request does not relate to a preference of dialect, an interpreter's performance, prior knowledge and rapport with your client, as these do not warrant a specific interpreter request.

Contact the TIS National Client Liaison Team with interpreting enquiries or read [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our [website](#).

**Client Liaison**

Phone: 1300 655 820

Email: [tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:tispromo@homeaffairs.gov.au)

Contact **NDIS** with NDIS enquiries: [inclusion.strategies@ndis.gov.au](mailto:inclusion.strategies@ndis.gov.au)