

Why does Autism SA increase their prices?

Autism SA aligns its pricing to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits (previously the NDIS Price Guide).

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) updates its pricing arrangements at least once each year following its Annual Pricing Review. NDIS pricing is also subject to change by the NDIA throughout the year. The recently announced pricing updates are the 8th pricing update announced by the NDIA in 2022. In the 2020-2021 financial year the NDIA announced 7 pricing updates and 9 in 2019-2020.

Price regulation is how the NDIA controls prices for supports and services in the NDIS. The price limits set by the NDIA are the maximum prices that registered providers can charge participants for specific supports (services), regardless of how much it costs your provider to deliver those services.

Effective from 1 July 2022, the NDIA increased its price limits across a range of provider services, recognising that the cost to providers for delivering supports has been even higher than anticipated during the last year, as a result of ongoing COVID-19 impacts and quality and safeguarding requirements regulated by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.

When does the new pricing come into effect for Autism SA clients?

The price increases announced by the NDIS came into effect on 1 July 2022. Autism SA increased the pricing of some services to align with the NDIS price increase, from 1 July 2022.

Who do the NDIS pricing arrangement changes affect?

The NDIS pricing arrangements affect anyone that accesses NDIS services undertaken by a Disability Support Worker, including those who access these services and support from Autism SA.

The NDIA also announced a commitment to increase participant plans to cover the NDIS pricing changes.

Will the price of all of Autism SA services increase?

The cost of some Autism SA services will increase by 9% in line with the NDIS Pricing Arrangements increase to pricing limits.

Services delivered by disability support workers will increase by 9%. This includes a 2% temporary loading in 2022-2023 that the NDIA will review annually.

Price limits for therapy supports have been maintained at 2021 price limits. Support coordination price limits have also been maintained at 2021 levels.

Autism SA has also elected to apply the NDIA's Temporary Transformation Payment (TTP). The TTP is a loading on the base rate price limit for eligible services.

The TTP was designed by the NDIS to assist providers with the transitional costs to fully implement the NDIS and continue to provide participants with high quality supports. The TTP replaced a temporary support for overhead costs that was previously available to service providers. This is the first time that Autism SA has applied the TTP.

The NDIA introduced the TTP loading in 2019-2020 at 7.5% for specific supports for a 5-year period with loading decreasing by 1.5% each year.

A number of supports in the Assistance with Daily Living Support Category and the Social, Economic and Community Participation Support Category are in scope for the TTP. This means that these supports have a base price limit (or non-TTP price) and a TTP price limit that from 1 July 2022 will be 3% higher than the base price limit.

If this is applicable to your services it will mean that your invoice for services will include the letters T and TTP at the end of the line item charged for your service. For example:

For example, instead of:

01_011_0107_1_1 Assistance With Self-Care Activities - Standard - Weekday Daytime

Your invoice will show:

01_011_0107_1_1_T Assistance With Self-Care Activities - Standard - Weekday Daytime – TT

Autism SA meets the specific eligibility criteria to claim the TTP from 1 July 2022.

This price increase seems significant – why?

The 9% increase announced by the NDIA recognises cost pressures on providers including Autism SA from:

- Changes resulting from the Fair Work Commission's recent wage decision (changes to the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS) Industry Award conditions from 1 July 2022)
- Ongoing costs of managing the COVID-19 pandemic
- NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission regulatory requirements and continuous improvement impacts and
- Superannuation Guarantee charge increase.

Will there be any changes to my existing service or my current Service Agreement I have with Autism SA?

There will be no changes to the service level or quality you currently receive from Autism SA as agreed in your service agreement. Your service agreement may remain in place until your NDIS Plan is renewed because it is documented in your agreement that Autism SA may adjust pricing for services in line with any NDIS pricing arrangement changes.

Will the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) adjust my plan to allow for these price changes?

There will be no changes to the service level or quality you currently receive from Autism SA as agreed in your service agreement. Your service agreement may remain in place until your NDIS Plan is renewed because it is documented in your agreement that Autism SA may adjust pricing for services in line with any NDIS pricing arrangement changes.

Will the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) adjust my plan to allow for these price changes?

The NDIA announced that all current NDIS plan budgets including supports delivered by disability support workers will be automatically increased to account for the 9% price increase to these services.

The NDIA has not made any announcements about adjusting plans generally.

If you have any concerns about your plan funds, please contact your NDIA contact for a plan review.

Are any changes being made to the Autism SA cancellation policy?

The NDIS pricing arrangements and price limits permit us to claim 100% for short notice cancellations or no shows.

A short notice cancellation is when a scheduled service is cancelled by you at Short Notice (or you do not show up) and we are able to claim from the NDIS 100% of the agreed fee associated with the activity. This recognises that we may be unable to find alternative billable work for the relevant worker at short notice and we are still required to pay the worker for the time that would have been spent providing the support.

The NDIS pricing arrangements and price limits that apply from 1 July 2022 set out that a cancellation is a short notice cancellation if the participant:

- Does not show up for a scheduled support within a reasonable time to the agreed place or
- Has given less than seven (7) clear days' notice of cancellation for a support.

Autism SA will continue to apply a requirement for only two (2) business days' notice for all services other than Group supports. This means that if your service is scheduled on a Monday you must contact us to cancel your service appointment before 5pm on the Wednesday before your appointment or you will be charged 100% of the cost for your scheduled service. Business days means Monday to Friday.

The Autism SA Cancellation Policy which is available from the Autism SA website.

What if I need to cancel my group appointment?

Autism SA will apply the 7-day short notice cancellation conditions allowed by the NDIS pricing arrangements for cancellations for Group services, except for group services under a Program of Support.

This NDIS pricing arrangements recognises that we may not be able to find another participant to attend in your place.

This means that you must give us 7 clear days' notice of cancellation for your service and includes the weekend days in that period.

The Autism SA Cancellation Policy which is available from the Autism SA website.

What if I need to cancel my 1:1 therapy support?

Autism SA hasn't made any changes to the existing Autism SA cancellation policy for therapy services. We understand in these uncertain times it is hard to know well in advance if an appointment needs to be cancelled. We continue to require only two business days' notice for the cancellation of all services other than Group supports.

This means that if your service is scheduled on a Monday you must contact us to cancel your service appointment before 5pm on the Wednesday before your appointment or you will be charged 100% of the cost for your scheduled service. Business days means Monday to Friday.

Why do I get charged for all phone calls now? And/or Why did Autism SA stop allowing me a free phone call of up to 15 minutes?

The time your Autism SA therapist spends on Non-Face-to-Face activities is time spent assisting you to meet your goals and deliver the supports that are in your Plan. Phone calls may be part of this activity and the way we deliver some of this support. We are committed to keeping these costs to reasonable levels and ensuring these are about you and your supports. We ask that you acknowledge that the time spent on the phone with our therapists providing you with Non-Face-to-Face support for your benefit is time they are not able to spend with another client.

The NDIA recognises that Non-Face-to-Face activities including phone calls can result in value to you and be a best use of your funds by permitting providers to charge for Non-Face-to-Face activities that assist you. Chargeable Non-Face-to-Face activities also include report writing

I have questions – who do I contact?

If you have any questions, we'd love to hear from you. There is a live chat feature on the Autism SA website which is open from 9am to 4pm each day to answer your queries. You can also ring our pathway consultants on **1300 AUTISM (1300 288 476)** during these times.