

# YOUR GUIDE TO SPECIALIST DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION (SDA) and SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)

Value Care is a not for profit organisation that manages its own specialist disability accommodation sites.

This guide will help you understand what SDA is and how it all works, including with your other supports.

## What is Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA?)

Specialist Disability Accommodation is a specialised type of housing. It is for participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) who want to live as independently as possible and cannot do this in a normal home even if it is modified.

It is for people who have very high support or safety needs. A place to call home.

An SDA home might be a house, an apartment (with one or more bedrooms) or another type of building.

An SDA home must be approved by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and meet their standards.

People may share their home with other NDIS participant/s, with family members or friends or they may live on their own.

## Rent

SDA is not free. Residents in SDA rent their home (they are a tenant) from an SDA Provider (the landlord) which is similar to how other people rent their homes.

For NDIS participants approved for SDA, the rent is:

- One quarter (25%) of the Disability Support Pension
- One quarter (25%) of any Pension Supplement
- All (100%) of any Commonwealth Rent Assistance

The NDIS subsidises the cost of the home.

If other people live in the home (e.g. another NDIS participant, family members, friends) they will also be charged rent.

## Who can get SDA?

Only a small number of NDIS participants are eligible for SDA.

Most people in the NDIS will need to find their own housing, just like everybody else.

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This might include private ownership (e.g. living at home with parents), owning or buying a home or renting a home (on your own or with others).

Most people with an intellectual disability or cognitive impairment who have no (or very low) physical support needs will not be eligible.

The NDIS participants who get SDA approved in their NDIS plans are generally people who, even with appropriate home modifications and/or assistive technologies, still need a high level of in-home support from a paid worker with daily activities such as:

- Getting in and out of bed
- Getting dressed
- Moving around
- Preparing meals
- Accessing the community

'Very high support needs' can mean:

- That your 'informal supports' (people who help you but don't get paid for their help; often family or friends) can't meet your personal care needs
- You have spent a long time in a group home or residential aged care (this includes people who already live in Shared Supported Accommodation / Group Homes / young people living in nursing homes etc.)
- You use behaviours that pose a risk to yourself or others.

### **What type of home?**

There are different types of SDA design types to meet different housing needs. Each type has specific features.

- Basic is a category reserved only for people who lived in a NSW FACS owned property before the start of the NDIS on 1 July, 2016. A person living in this type of home may not be a person eligible for any other type of SDA.
- Improved Access which requires a reasonable level of physical access.
- Fully Accessible have a 'high' level of physical access provision for people with significant physical impairment and have good wheelchair accessibility in the bathroom, kitchen and external areas.
- High Physical Support needs a very high-level physical access e.g. have wider than usual door openings.
- Robust has a different focus - as well as good physical access it must also be designed to be resilient and safe (e.g. the materials used must be impact resistant).

Your NDIS plan will say what type of housing have been approved for. What is included in my home?

Your home includes all the features required for the applicable design type as well as window blinds and built in wardrobes in each bedroom.

If you need equipment that is not included in the standard fit out (e.g. hoist) you will have to pay for the purchase, installation and maintenance.

## WHAT IS SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)?

Supported Independent Living (SIL) is assistance you receive from paid support workers at home. SIL includes physical supports like helping you get in and out of bed every day. It includes support for people who need help doing things by themselves. It includes keeping people safe.

NDIS participants may receive a combination of individual (1:1) supports, shared supports and irregular supports. Irregular supports are those supports that are unplanned (e.g. participant unable to attend day program due to illness so a support worker comes over to help at home that day).

SIL does not cover other types of supports such as attending day programs, community access not related to a household activity (e.g. grocery shopping), personal care while in the workplace, other government and mainstream supports, etc.... If these supports are required and approved, they will be provided elsewhere in a participant's plan.

## Who can get SIL?

NDIS participants who get SIL in their plans are people who need assistance with and/or guidance to help develop their skills to undertake tasks of daily life.

Participants receive SIL funding for things like:

- Regular support to help people build their independence skills
- Full-time active or highly frequent assistance with managing challenging behaviours that require intensive positive behaviour support or active management of complex medical needs such as ventilation

There are three levels of SIL funding:

- 'Lower needs' provides regular supervision of living arrangements.
- 'Standard needs' provides 24/7 active assistance of most daily tasks.
- 'Higher needs' provides continual and more complex active assistance to the individual.

Many people will receive SIL funding, but only some participants will receive SDA and SIL together.

SDA and SIL are different

- SDA is the specialised building you live in
- SIL is the supports you receive from people paid to help you live independently in that home.

Most people who need SIL are able to live in an ordinary home that is already available and does not need modification.

Most people who have SIL approved in their plan will not need SDA.

Because SDA and SIL are different, they are funded separately in your plan.

## SIL Funding

SIL appears in the section on Core Support under the heading 'Assistance in Shared Living Arrangements – Supported Independent Living'.

This is described as 'assistance with and/or supervising tasks of daily life in a shared living environment, with a focus on developing the skills of each individual to live as autonomously as possible. The support is provided to each person living in the shared arrangement in accordance with their need.'

The funds for your SIL are given to you:

- you can self-manage your SIL funding;
- you can have a plan manager manage your funding, or
- you can have the NDIS manage your funding.

If you self-manage, the SIL provider will invoice you for the services they provide. If you use a Plan Manager, the SIL provider will invoice them and they will pay on your behalf. If the NDIS manages your funds then the SIL provider will claim funds directly from them.

## SDA Funding

SDA will be listed separately in your plan.

The SDA funding in your plan is paid to the SDA Provider. This is to help towards the cost of building and maintaining your home.

## SDA AND SIL – WORKING TOGETHER

The SDA provider (who provides your house) and your SIL provider (the support workers that help you) will generally be different organisations but in some cases they may be the same.

They will work together to support you in your SDA home.

How Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) works with Supported Independent Living (SIL)

NDIS participant with SDA in their plans is free to choose their housing and support services from two different organisations. The home and the support are provided by two different suppliers.

## GETTING SDA

Going through the process of applying for and receiving SDA is quite complicated. If you do not have SDA approved in your plan, here are some suggested steps.

Check if your NDIS goals include housing

Housing needs to be one of your goals in your NDIS plan. If you are not happy with where you live, or it is time to leave home, it's important that you talk about this at your NDIS planning meeting.

Check whether your housing goals can be met without SDA

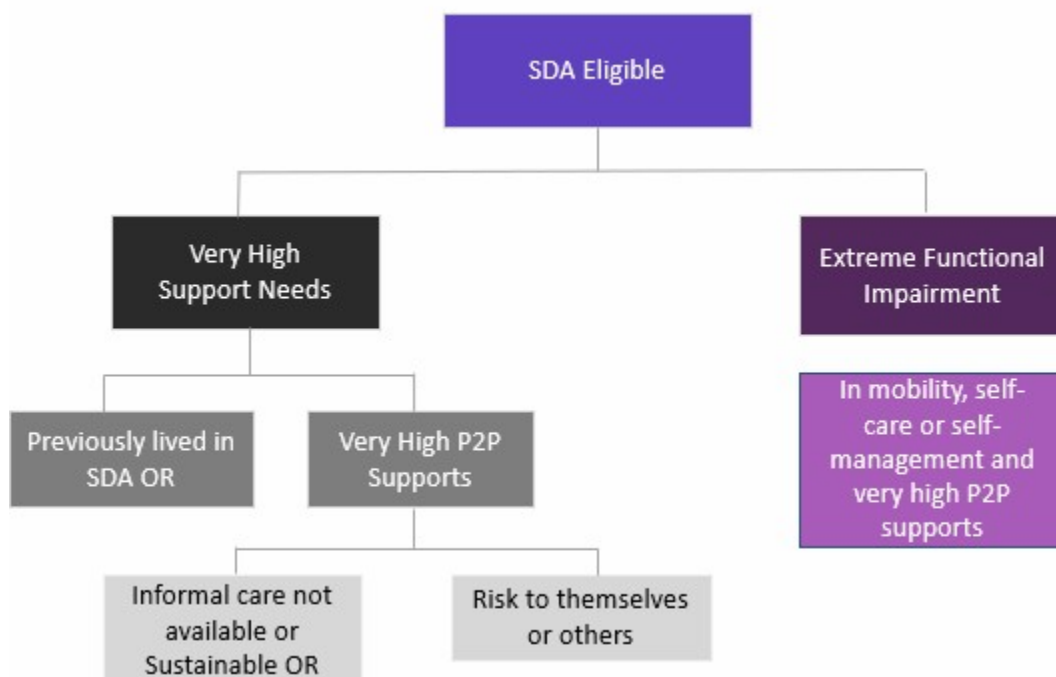
The NDIS may provide capacity building funding to explore housing options. This might help to develop your housing plan or support to assess your housing and support needs. This process helps participants work out if the housing support they need is:

- Home modifications on an existing building;
- Assistive technology;
- Just SIL, or
- SDA (with or without SIL).

The NDIS will only approve SDA if this is the only way your housing goals can be met.

Undertake a preliminary assessment

Assess if you are likely to be eligible by looking at the eligibility criteria. SDA Eligibility Criteria



Source: *Guide to SDA*

### **SDA Housing Assessment and Report and submit to the NDIA**

If you think you may be eligible, the next step is to prepare a detailed housing assessment report which may include medical reports and Occupational therapy assessments.

This report goes to the NDIS for consideration as part of your NDIS Plan or Plan review process.

You may have to pay for the SDA Housing Report. Check with your Support Coordinator if some parts of the assessment may be covered by your NDIS funding (e.g. occupational therapy report).

What happens if I am approved for SDA?

If you are approved for SDA there are still other processes to go through: Find a suitable property

Look at websites such as 'Nest' which is a website for people with a disability and their carers looking for SDA. It finds SDA properties and vacancies matched to the support, finding and personal requirements outlined in a user's profile.  
[www.gonest.com.au](http://www.gonest.com.au)

Contact Value Care. We can work with you to find a suitable property.

[www.valuecare.org.au](http://www.valuecare.org.au) Email [contact@valuecare.org.au](mailto:contact@valuecare.org.au)

The SDA Provider will give a quote for the cost of the SDA to the NDIS. Get SIL funding approved.

The funding for the SIL services you need to live in the property must be approved and organised before you move in (so that support is available from the day you move in).

Value Care has a resident SIL provider based in each of its SDA properties who can provide you with SIL services.

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

- We can talk with you about whether you might be eligible for SDA.
- We can help you with the process of getting the necessary documentation to support your application for SDA.



Phone: (02) 9635 4744



Email: [contact@valuecare.org.au](mailto:contact@valuecare.org.au)

## WORD LIST

Commonwealth Rent Assistance is extra money paid via Centrelink from the Federal (Commonwealth) Government for people that receive the DSP but need extra money to help pay their rent.

The Disability Support Pension (DSP) is money paid via Centrelink from the Federal Government that provides an income for people who have a physical, intellectual, or psychiatric condition that stops them from working, or who are permanently blind.

NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) is a national scheme designed to help improve disability services and provide greater control and decision making to people with disabilities in Australia. The NDIS supports people with a permanent and significant disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.

A NDIS participant is a person with disability who has applied for, and has been approved to, receive support from the NDIS.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) is a physical 'bricks and mortar' building. It is for people who have very high physical support or safety needs.

The SDA provider is the person or organisation that owns or operates an SDA building. The SDA provider is the landlord of the NDIS participant living in the SDA. The participant pays rent to the SDA provider.

Supported Independent Living (SIL) is assistance you receive from support workers at home that helps you live as independently as possible.

The SIL provider is the person or organisation that employs the support workers that help you live as independently as possible at home.

## REFERENCES

Introduction to SDA <http://getbuildingsda.org.au/introduction-to-sda/>