



FUTURE ALLIES
Developing tomorrow's NDIS Allied Health professionals

Future allies – student preparation

What will I learn during a placement in the NDIS?

Placements in the NDIS offer many clinical and professional benefits for Allied Health students.

In particular, the NDIS now influences many aspects of Allied Health practice. Understanding the NDIS and being able to demonstrate they know how to work within that context, can provide an advantage for graduates looking for work.

What should I expect from an NDIS placement?

Working with NDIS participants can be extremely rewarding – both professionally and personally. It is hard to find a better context in which students' skills and knowledge will create more personal impact for their clients/participants.

How can I prepare for an NDIS placement?

In many ways, preparing for a placement in the NDIS is just like preparing for any placement. Students would do well to simply make sure their clinical knowledge and basic professional skills (e.g. time management) are at the expected level.

Beyond that, the following resources help students to think specifically about the NDIS context. Working through these resources can contribute to a more successful placement.

Useful resources:

Watch 'What is the NDIS' video (02:21): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCwTJurjCoE>



Goal Setting

Get the most from your NDIS placement

Following are components of an effective goal – one that describes performance standards that will “tell us what specific achievement of the goal looks like.” The SMART acronym can help us remember these components.

Specific	The goal should identify a specific action or event that will take place.
Measurable	The goal and its benefits should be quantifiable.
Attainable	The goal should be achievable given available resources.
Realistic	The goal should require you to stretch some, but allow the likelihood of success.
Time Based	The goal should state the time period in which it will be accomplished.

Here are some tips that can help you set effective goals:

1. Develop several goals. A list of items gives you several things to work on over the beginning weeks of your placement, you will use feedback to guide your goals once these initial ones have been achieved.
2. State goals as declarations of intention, not items on a wish list. "I want to apply listening skills" lacks power. "I will apply different communication strategies when talking a patient history to find the most appropriate strategy for each client." is intentional and powerful.
3. Attach a date to each goal. State what you intend to accomplish and by when. A good list should include some short-term and some long-term goals. You may want a goal for the first week, and a couple for later weeks.
4. Be specific. "To use positive language" is too general; "to develop a list of positive statements and phrases designed to put the participant and their supporter at ease." is better. Sometimes a more general goal can become the long-term aim, and you can identify some more specific goals to take you there.
5. Share your goals with your placement educator and your NDIS provider in your first week or during your pre-placement visit. Sharing your intentions will help ensure success.
6. Write down your goals in your planning, diary or on your day book and put them where you will see them. The more often you read your goals, the more results you get.
7. Review and revise your list. Experiment with different ways of stating your goals. Goal setting improves with practice, so play around with it. Your initial goals may need revising as your placement progresses.



Writing an Effective Goal Statement

Rules for writing goal statements:

1. Use clear, specific language.
2. Start your goal statement with TO + VERB or I WILL + VERB
3. Write your goal statement using SMART Goal Criteria
4. Avoid using negative language. Think positive!

An example of a goal statement:

To run the mini marathon in May and complete the 10 mile race in under 1 hour to beat my personal best time.

Notice how the above example begins with the word “To”, includes the verb “run”, and tells what (the marathon), why (to beat personal best time) and when (May).

Struggling to start?

Work through the Activity

Activity – Writing your first goal and checking it is SMART

Write a draft of your goal here:

Now use the following worksheet to identify the specific SMART criteria you will use to write your goal statement.



Verify that your goal is SMART

S



What exactly will you accomplish?

M



How will you know when you have reached this goal?

A



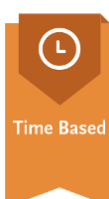
Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Have you got the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?

R



Why is this goal significant to your developing professional practice?

T



When will you achieve this goal?



Then consider the following

This goal is important because:

The benefits of achieving this goal will be:

How will I know I have achieved this goal? What evidence will I have?

Take Action!

Potential Obstacles

Potential Solutions

Who are the people you will ask to help you?

Specific Action Steps: What steps need to be taken to get you to your goal?

What?

Expected Completion Week

Now finalise your goal!



Recording and monitoring your goals

Get the most from your NDIS work placement

SMART goals are:

- Specific** The goal should identify a specific action or event that will take place.
- Measurable** The goal and its benefits should be quantifiable.
- Attainable** The goal should be achievable given available resources.
- Realistic** The goal should require you to stretch some, but allow the likelihood of success.
- Time Based** The goal should state the time period in which it will be accomplished.

SMART Goal:	Indicators/Evidence: Evidence you will have to show you achieved the goal	Actions: Sequenced steps describing the actions you will take as you work towards achieving the goal.



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Other aims you may have for the NDIS Placement:		

Student: _____

Date: _____

Placement Educator: _____

Date: _____

NDIS Provider: _____

Date: _____



10 Steps to NDIS Therapy Reports

This shift from prescribed services to a person-centred approach invites each participant to contribute in the way they wish to and are comfortable with contributing to the planning conversation.

As an Allied Health student on placement in an NDIS service some of the documentation you complete may form part of an assessment or record of an ongoing plan.

Information you collect and document needs to be detailed and accurate as it forms part of the larger, detailed picture of the participant, their disability and their support.

This checklist can be helpful for both assessments and progress reports.

Checklist

- Understand that the NDIS is different
- Start with plain language
- Provide evidence for everything
- Make clear, strong recommendations
- Understand 'reasonable & necessary'
- Explicitly respond to the reasonable & necessary criteria
- Therapies must achieve outcomes
- Stay within scope
- Focus on readability
- Be appeal ready

Disability Services Consulting. (2018). VALiD: 10 Steps to excellent NDIS therapy reports. Retrieved from <https://www.valid.org.au/sites/default/files/10-steps-to-excellent-National-Disability-Insurance-Scheme-NDIS-therapy-reports-v1.pdf>



Future Allies (5) – Reflective partnering to improve placement: Student

Reflection

NDIS providers reported that ongoing partnerships with Universities, students and NDIS participants were essential in developing and maintain successful placements. Establishing clear expectations from the beginning, good communication during the placement and finally reflecting on the placement can ensure a beneficial placement for all parties and continuous improvement for future placements.

Reflection for the student

You will be aware of the importance of reflection to facilitate deep learning – this is essential for your clinical learning. Reflection helps you to identify areas of strength and weakness in your clinical skills, and the process of critically reflecting on areas to change or improve.

- To reflect on your placement with an NDIS provider, consider the following:
- What was the most memorable moment? What did you learn from this?
- What was the worst moment? What did you learn from this?
- Consider your understanding of disability – how has this changed during your placement? What have you discovered about yourself?
- Reflect on the skills you have developed and things you have learnt in the NDIS setting. How will you transfer these skills and learnings to a different setting or workplace?



DEIP Strategy

Another widely used reflection strategy that can be adopted for all parties is the DIEP Strategy. There are four steps in this approach are to Describe an insight (new understanding), to Interpret and Evaluate it, and to Plan how it might transfer to future practice or learning. It can also be applied to answering specific, targeted questions for each of the stakeholders in a placement setting.

D – Describe

Reflect on the experience and focus objectively on what you learned and give the details of what happened.

Answer the question: 'What did I learn?'

Some suggested starting phrases: The most interesting (surprising/ important/ significant/ ...) (insight/ theory/ thing ...) I read (saw/ heard/ realised/ learned...) from this experience is that ... One thing I realise (understand ...) now is that ... A significant issue I have found ...

Continue the paragraph with details of what, where, when, etc.

I – Interpret

Interpret the insight: Explain the meaning of the insight: your understanding/ conclusion/ connection with other learning/ experiences/ questions unanswered/ etc.

Answer the questions: 'What might it mean?'

Some suggested starting phrases: This realisation may have important relevance for three reasons. First, it implies ... A possible implication/meaning of this new idea/understanding is that ... This (new) understanding of ... is likely to mean three things. It could be ...

E – Evaluate

Evaluate what you have learned or experienced. Make judgments about the value of what you have learned connected to observations you have made.

Answer the question: 'How is this useful for my deeper understanding?'

Some suggested starting phrases: This concept of ... is valuable for .../ will change the way I approach ... This understanding is important in a number of ways. First it ... This insight is connected with (theoretical approaches to .../ theories/ concepts/ Having realised that ..., I wonder if .../ I intend to develop ...

P – Plan

Plan how this learning will be applied in practice. Comment on relevance to your course, program, future profession, life...

Answer the question: 'How might this learning apply in my future?'

Use future tense in this paragraph to show transfer of knowledge to the future. A suggested starting phrase: This (new insight) will be useful in my future practice, in my future career as a ..., and in my life.



Placement Reflection Questions

For each stakeholder, pose a specific, related question.

- Educational Institute (supervisor) – Reflect on your observations of the student on their first placement experience.
- Student – Reflect on your experience of working with an NDIS Participant for the first time.
- NDIS Provider – Reflect on how the student engaged with their first NDIS participant during the appointment.
- NDIS Participant – Reflect on how your appointment went with work placement student

These questions all target the first appointment / observation. You could ask the same series of questions for subsequent appointments or broader questions across the whole placement.

For supervisors /students / providers you should require written answers but for participants you could ask for written responses or you provide choices for their responses (scale / tick boxes)

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Reflection on Placement Experiences for Allied Health Professionals

DIEP Strategy

Role: Supervisor / Student / Provider / Participant

Reflection Question _____

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Reflect on the experience and focus objectively on what you learned and give the details of what happened

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Interpret the insight: Explain the meaning of the insight: your understanding/ conclusion/ connection with other learning/ experiences/ questions unanswered/ etc

E – Evaluate

Evaluate what you have learned or experienced. Make judgments about the value of what you have learned connected to observations you have made

P – Plan

Plan how this learning will be applied in practice. Comment on relevance to your course, program, future profession, life...