

# NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORTS

## 2026-2031

An agreement between:

- The **Commonwealth of Australia** and
- The **States and Territories**, being:
  - New South Wales
  - Victoria
  - Queensland
  - Western Australia
  - South Australia
  - Tasmania
  - The Australian Capital Territory
  - The Northern Territory

This agreement will support the establishment, implementation and delivery of a nationally consistent and inclusive system of Foundational Supports designed to improve access to inclusive and sustainable supports for people with disability who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

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## OVERVIEW

1. The Foundational Supports National Agreement is subject to the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR)* and should be read in conjunction with the IGA FFR and its Schedules, which outline the conditions for Commonwealth financial assistance, monitoring, reporting and payment arrangements.
2. Bilateral agreements with initiative detail will be developed separately. These will be bilateral agreements to this National Agreement.
3. This Agreement falls under the Heads of Agreement on Health and Disability Reforms with each State and Territory (the States), and the shared commitment of the Commonwealth and the States to achieve disability reform outcomes.

## Purpose

4. The Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments (the Parties) will jointly fund and deliver additional supports to those that are delivered through the NDIS and mainstream services. These Foundational Supports seek to strengthen the broader support system outside of NDIS.
5. In entering into this Agreement, the Parties agree:
  - a. people are at the core of all systems of support.
  - b. there is a collective responsibility to ensure Australians have equitable access to appropriate, safe, high-quality disability support.
  - c. to share responsibility to make care and support systems more inclusive, accessible and safe for people with disability, informed by ongoing engagement with the disability community, families, providers, workers and experts.
  - d. they have a mutual interest in creating an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential, as equal members of the community.
  - e. the need for reforms to secure the future of the NDIS, ensuring it can continue to provide supports to enable social and economic participation for current and future generations of Australians with significant and permanent disability.
  - f. supports outside the NDIS that have an important role in enabling community access and participation.
  - g. In addition to Foundational Supports, all governments will continue to be responsible for ensuring mainstream services and the NDIS are inclusive and accessible.
6. Rollout of Foundational Supports will be phased, commencing with supports for children aged 8 and under with developmental delay and/or autism with low to moderate support needs and their families, carers, and kin. The program for Foundational Supports provided to this cohort is termed 'Thriving Kids' in this Agreement.
7. Supports for other cohorts will be considered and negotiated in-line with this Agreement, outlined in bilateral agreements and will not require amendments to this Agreement.

## Reporting and Evaluation Arrangements

8. The Parties will report publicly on the delivery of Foundational Supports to enable the public and the Parties to understand and monitor how the reform, and associated funding, is delivering benefit to the community consistent with the principles and objectives specified in this National Agreement and its bilateral agreements.

## Financial Arrangements

9. The Parties co-fund Foundational Supports on an ongoing and equal basis. The maximum funding available for the first five years of this Agreement is capped at \$10 billion, with 50 per cent provided by the Commonwealth and 50 per cent provided collectively by the States on a per capita basis. The funding for the following five years will remain capped at a level consistent with the initial funding envelope.
10. The Parties will maintain a financial commitment to fund Foundational Supports, beyond this Agreement, subject to co-funding from the other parties.

## PRELIMINARIES

### Vision

11. Foundational Supports contribute towards a connected ecosystem of accessible, inclusive supports for all people with disability and, where appropriate their families and carers and kin, so they can access the right support, at the right time and place to achieve their potential. Foundational Supports include:
  - General supports: access to quality information, advice and services to build connection and capacity, and to support participation of all people with disability under the age of 65; children with additional developmental support needs; and their families', carers and kin.
  - Targeted supports: positioned between mainstream services and specialist supports accessed through the NDIS. While not binding for the purposes of this Agreement, the NDIS Review proposed targeted supports primarily for people under the age of 65 who are not eligible for an individualised budget through the NDIS and are in most need of additional support. Targeted supports may include home and community care-type supports, aids and equipment, early childhood supports, psychosocial supports and supports for adolescents and young adults<sup>1</sup>.

## PART 1 – FORMALITIES

### Parties to this Agreement

12. The Parties to this Agreement (the Parties) are the Commonwealth of Australia (the Commonwealth) and the States and Territories (the States).

### Term of this Agreement

13. This Agreement will commence when the Commonwealth and one other Party sign it and will expire on 30 June 2031.
14. This Agreement may be reviewed or varied as set out in Part 3 – Governance Arrangements.
15. The Commonwealth will write to the States at a minimum one-year before the expiration of the Agreement seeking to either extend the duration of the Agreement or renegotiate the terms.
16. The Parties' ongoing commitment to funding Foundational Supports is not limited by the terms of this Agreement.
17. Any bilateral agreements to this National Agreement will commence once the Commonwealth and the relevant Party sign them.

### Role of the Commonwealth

18. The Commonwealth will deliver information, services, and supports and meet the objectives, requirements and milestones set out in this Agreement and respective bilateral agreements.
19. The NDIS will continue to support people who meet the eligibility criteria for the NDIS.

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<sup>1</sup> Final Report of the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme

## Role of the States and Territories

20. The States will deliver information, services and supports and meet objectives, requirements and milestones set out in this Agreement and their respective bilateral agreements.

## Shared roles and responsibilities

21. To ensure an effective national offering, Parties share responsibility for designing, funding and delivering Foundational Supports within the agreed funding envelope, including consideration of nationally consistent system parameters as follows:
  - a. entry points into Foundational Supports are clear, accessible and transparent and allow for referral from multiple pathways/systems that people routinely interact with.
  - b. services are delivered using various modes (e.g. in-person, online, phone, outreach) that consider local needs and service landscapes.
  - c. where service users move across jurisdictions, arrangements are available to facilitate access to relevant supports, based on assessed need.
  - d. appropriate arrangements are in place for the regulation and/or monitoring of services and supports to ensure quality and safety.
  - e. Foundational Supports are informed by evidence and lived experience to respond to the intersectional and diverse needs of communities including First Nations peoples, CALD, and LGBTIQ+SB communities, and gender considerations.
  - f. Delivery approaches are bespoke, flexible and tailored to enable access for people living in remote and regional areas and in thin markets.
  - g. Parties collaborate on workforce, market and system stewardship to ensure Foundational Supports respond to thin markets and diverse client needs.
  - h. systems are in place to monitor and manage demand within the agreed funding envelope through proactive approaches that operate to ensure community expectations are being met.
  - i. support the interface between mainstream services, the NDIS and Foundational Supports, with Parties adopting the following:
    - i. smooth transitions and referral processes are facilitated for service users by working together on complementary approaches to understanding support needs and functional impacts, informed by agreed principles and, where appropriate, fit-for-purpose tools-
    - ii. appropriate sharing of information to support transition between systems and mutual recognition of supporting evidence to facilitate access and eligibility decisions
    - iii. Parties share information and data in relation to:
      1. people accessing the NDIS and Foundational Supports
      2. people deemed not eligible for the NDIS; and
      3. people deemed ineligible for Foundational Supports
22. To implement Foundational Supports more broadly, the Parties commit to:
  - a. jointly design, fund and agree cohorts to be serviced by General and Targeted Foundational Supports.

- b. continue to work together to implement Foundational Supports recognising their complementary roles in the connected ecosystem.
  - c. provide public leadership by promoting the availability, accessibility and importance of Foundational Supports as a key enduring part of the service ecosystem.
  - d. regular provision of up-to-date information on services and supports funded under this Agreement, where possible to assist other Parties with service integration and a suitable experience for service users.
  - e. share best practice and improvement strategies between governments including evaluations of programs, to support continuous improvement of Foundational Supports services.
  - f. deliver relevant information and data that supports monitoring of service delivery; aligned with the Objectives of this Agreement.
  - g. work collaboratively together to monitor, identify and mitigate interface issues between Foundational Supports, mainstream services and the NDIS
  - h. ensure the quality, cost effectiveness and safety of services, including:
    - i. equitable access for in-scope cohorts
    - ii. provision of high-quality information, services and supports
    - iii. ensuring safe environments where services are delivered, and protection from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
    - iv. ensuring effective compliance with relevant service, quality and safeguarding standards and applicable legislation for the conduct of activities covered under this Agreement
    - v. ensuring appropriate professional expertise and training in the delivery of relevant services under this Agreement
    - vi. monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement mechanisms to maintain high service standards for people accessing services.
    - vii. ensuring there are effective complaints management systems that are accessible, responsive and culturally safe.
    - viii. ensuring there are appropriate incident management and reporting systems that are accessible, responsive and culturally safe.
23. The Parties commit to monitoring and reporting of the deliverables they are responsible for as set out in the bilateral agreements.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

24. This Agreement acknowledges the shared national commitment to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, consistent with the objectives of the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and its four Priority Reforms:
- a. **Strengthening partnerships and shared decision-making** — continuing to build and/or strengthen partnerships and shared decision-making arrangements in policy and service design.
  - b. **Building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector** — supporting capability and capacity uplift during the design and implementation of Foundational Supports to ensure culturally safe and appropriate services are delivered. (for example, identifying alignment with the

Disability and/or Early Childhood Care and Development Sector Strengthening Plan).

- c. **Transforming government organisations** — progressing the transformation elements (clause 59) to improve the cultural safety, responsiveness and accountability of governments.
  - d. **Shared access to data and information** – enabling regional-level access to data and information, upholding principles of data sovereignty to inform service design, deliver and outcomes.
25. The Parties acknowledge that governments have already begun embedding these priority reforms and will have existing mechanisms and forums in place to engage and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the design and implementation of Foundational Supports.

## **PART 2 – PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS**

### **Principles**

26. The Parties agree to work collaboratively to:
- a. ensure all parts of the broader service ecosystem (including mainstream services, Foundational Supports and the NDIS) work together effectively to deliver the best outcomes.
  - b. place service users at the centre of Foundational Supports services, ensuring ongoing engagement and involvement of the disability community, families and carers, representatives of sub-population and intersectional groups, experts and providers in service design, implementation and system improvement.
  - c. ensure transparency and accountability to the community around the use of funds, efficacy of services and outcomes achieved under this Agreement.

### **Objectives**

27. The Parties agree this Agreement forms the basis for shared commitment to implementing Foundational Supports, supported by bilateral agreements.
28. Each state and territory is committed to signing their bilateral agreement on Thriving Kids by no later than 20 February 2026.

### **Outcomes**

29. The Parties agree that Foundational Supports delivered under this Agreement will be aligned with the following outcomes:
- a. Foundational Supports improve the outcomes for those eligible for supports, and where appropriate their families, carers and kin, enabling them to fulfil their potential as equal members of the community.
  - b. services are high quality, evidence-based, cost-effective and adopt a continuous improvement approach, informed by lived experience.
  - c. services are safe and appropriate for the intersectional needs and circumstances of eligible cohorts (including First Nations, CALD, and LGBTIQ+SB community, and gender).

- d. services are safe and appropriate for the needs and circumstances of eligible cohorts in regional, rural and remote communities.
- e. access pathways are clearly defined, and easy for service users to navigate.
- f. intergovernmental mechanisms operate effectively to resolve issues.

## **Outputs**

30. The Parties agree to:
- a. provide information, services and supports that align with the Roles and Responsibilities, Principles, Outcomes in this Agreement, and the national service model outlined in bilateral agreements, with appropriate local adaption.
  - b. work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to ensure services and supports for First Nations Australians are culturally safe and culturally appropriate.
  - c. publish information for service users, in line with standards practice within a jurisdiction which may extend to: access arrangements; quality and safeguarding arrangements; and complaints processes and other mechanisms for feedback and continuous improvement.
  - d. deliver to other Parties every six months for the first 12 months and annually thereafter an Implementation Report and relevant data as set out in bilateral agreements.
  - e. contribute to consolidated annual public reporting on the implementation of Foundational Supports.
  - f. participate in ongoing monitoring arrangements to inform continuous improvement, and evaluation, as specified in the bilateral agreements.

## **PART 3 – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Enforceability**

31. The Parties do not intend any of the provisions of this Agreement to be legally enforceable; however, this does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the Agreement.

### **Publication**

32. Parties agree this Agreement and its bilateral agreements will be made publicly available on the Federal Financial Relations website for the life of this Agreement. Any subsequent changes to this Agreement will also be published on the website.

### **Governance and Implementation**

33. The Parties agree governance mechanisms established for this Agreement will align with, and not duplicate, existing structures wherever possible and will clearly align with agreed priorities identified by Ministers of the Commonwealth, States and Territories.
34. This Agreement will be overseen by First Ministers with delegation of Bilateral Agreements and implementation to be determined by First Ministers.
35. Chief Executives of Commonwealth, and State and Territory First Ministers Departments will be responsible and accountable for the implementation of this

Agreement at an officials level, unless delegated to an alternative Department and advised to all Parties. Chief Executives, in collaboration with officials in other departments as appropriate, will be responsible for implementation, including regular reporting on implementation, key risks and issues.

36. Chief Executives can delegate agreed implementation functions to Senior Officials as required.

## **Review of Implementation Progress**

37. A rapid independent Review to assess implementation progress, commissioned by First Ministers, will commence three years after signing of the Bilateral Agreements for Thriving Kids.
38. The terms of reference of this review will be jointly developed between the Commonwealth and the States and agreed by First Ministers.
39. The Review will assess if Foundational Supports delivered to date are meeting stated objectives, outcomes and outputs, and report on the sustainability, capacity, efficiency and effectiveness of reforms delivered through this Agreement and Bilateral Agreements in effect at that time.
40. The Review may consider other matters agreed by First Ministers, or other Ministers where delegated by First Ministers, and include but not be limited to, assessing:
  - a. whether reforms delivered through this Agreement and Bilateral Agreements, including governance arrangements and funding arrangements, are delivering on the objectives.
  - b. the sustainability, capacity and efficiency of Foundational Supports (including General and Targeted) for priority cohorts, as well as the service demand experienced and the ability of efficacy of demand management mechanisms.
  - c. any unintended consequences, such as gaps or emerging gaps between systems, cost-shifting, perverse incentives or other inefficiencies that impact on outcomes for service users, and the capacities of the Parties to deliver supports.
  - d. the impacts of reforms on First Nations, CALD, and LGBTIQ+SB communities, and gender considerations with this component involving people with lived experience.
  - e. the effectiveness of service delivery within regional, rural and remote areas across Australia including the impacts of thin markets.
  - f. assessment alongside other relevant information and reforms such as population changes, NDIS trends and demographic trends relevant to key cohort groups.
41. The findings of this Review will be published within 12 months of the finalisation of the Review.

## **Variation of this Agreement**

42. This Agreement may be varied or extended at any time with the agreement in writing of all Parties, with any extensions or variations flowing through to relevant Bilateral Agreements.
43. Bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and a State, that have no impact on other jurisdictions, may be varied or revoked, and new schedules may be added, at any time with the agreement of First Ministers or the Ministers responsible for bilateral agreement/s where this has been delegated. Any new or varied bilateral

agreements expiring beyond the term of this Agreement are taken to extend the expiry of this Agreement.

## **Dispute resolution**

44. Any Party may give notice to the other Parties of a dispute under this Agreement or any Schedule to this Agreement.
45. Officials of relevant Parties will attempt to resolve any dispute under this Agreement in the first instance.
46. If a dispute cannot be resolved by officials, it may be referred to the relevant First Minister (or in the first instance delegated Minister, where First Ministers have delegated). If a dispute cannot be resolved by First Ministers, it will be referred to National Cabinet for consideration.
47. A dispute does not, of itself, constitute failure to implement this Agreement.

## **Alignment with other Agreements**

48. The parties recognise this Agreement operates alongside a broader set of national and Bilateral Agreements. The parties agree to ensure new and existing agreements have objectives and actions that are mutually reinforcing across agreements.

## **PART 4 – NATIONAL PRIORITY COHORTS**

49. By signing this Agreement, the Parties commit to:
  - a. Deliver General and Targeted Foundational Supports for children aged 8 and under with autism and/or developmental delay with low to moderate support needs, and their families, carers and kin, with:
    - i. the National Model for Thriving Kids and Responsibilities of the Parties in Schedule B and C, and
    - ii. details to be specified in bilateral agreements.
  - b. Negotiation on future cohorts will be undertaken by First Ministers, unless it is agreed to be delegated to other Ministers.
  - c. Arrangements for future cohorts will be agreed in writing through bilateral agreements signed and agreed by relevant Parties.
  - d. The Commonwealth will provide to States and Territories at the earliest opportunity the:
    - i. definition of proposed future cohorts
    - ii. the estimated size of the cohort
    - iii. the estimated quantum of funding, from the capped, jointly funded, \$10 billion Foundational Supports funding envelope; and
    - iv. Commonwealth-preferred timing to commence supports.
50. Details specific to the implementation of each Foundational Supports cohort, will be contained in separate bilateral agreements.
51. Details of the roles and responsibilities of the Parties in delivering supports for the future cohort/s will be specified in bilateral agreements.

## **PART 5 – MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

52. The Parties agree to be jointly accountable for reporting on the implementation of Foundational Supports, and to coordinate and align reporting to the extent practical to minimise additional reporting burden while also ensuring appropriate transparency and accountability.
53. Parties will work together in good faith to monitor the delivery of Foundational Supports appropriate for each cohort. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements will be included in individual bilateral agreements to this Agreement.

## **PART 6 – FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

### Quantum of funds and co-funding

54. The Parties will co-fund at a cost of up to \$10 billion new investment over 5 years (capped for all parties, split 50:50 on a per capita basis), with effective servicing costs, and demand management strategies required to sustain services within the \$10 billion cap.
55. Commonwealth payments to States and Territories under this Agreement are contingent on the agreed matched contributions and commitments outlined in the relevant bilateral agreements. Where a State is unable to demonstrate expenditure or matched investment in line with this Agreement and the bilateral agreement, the Commonwealth will work collaboratively with the State to identify contributing factors and agree on appropriate remedial actions. As a last resort, the Commonwealth retains the option to withhold payment of its financial contribution to relevant State.
56. Each Party will maintain its contributions to Foundational Supports at agreed levels on an ongoing basis.
57. The States agree:
  - a. to matching the Commonwealth contribution for Foundational Supports (up to \$5 billion over 5 years, capped) on a per capita basis.
  - b. payments will be set out in the bilateral agreements.

### Commonwealth contribution

58. The Commonwealth will co-fund its share of Foundational Supports (up to \$5 billion over 5 years, capped) on an ongoing basis pending States matching this investment.
59. In relation to Thriving Kids, the Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to the States of at least \$1.4 billion of the Commonwealth's \$2 billion contribution. It will be provided on a per capita basis (0-64 years), with no loadings, as direct funding to states for Thriving Kids services. All payments are exclusive of GST.

### Additionality

60. Funding for programs, services and activities within the scope of this Agreement and bilateral agreements (i.e. services that support the in-scope cohorts) must be additional to any funding by the Parties of the same or similar/substitutable programs, services and activities in place in 2022-23.
61. The requirements set out under Part 6 of this Agreement do not prevent Parties making changes to existing programs, services or activities in the future. Any investment in revised programs, services or activities will count towards Parties

contributions under this Agreement, if they are additional and specifically relevant to the Foundational Support National Model and cohort.

# PART 7 – SIGNATURES

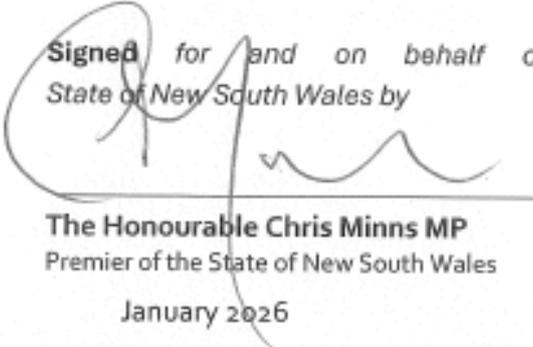
The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this Agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



**The Honourable Anthony Albanese MP**  
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia  
27 February 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by



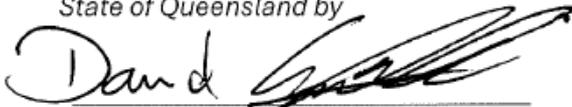
**The Honourable Chris Minns MP**  
Premier of the State of New South Wales  
January 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by



**The Honourable Jacinta Allan MP**  
Premier of the State of Victoria  
January 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by



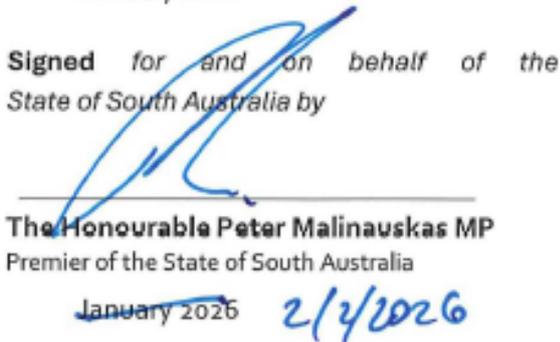
**The Honourable David Crisafulli MP**  
Premier of the State of Queensland  
January 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by



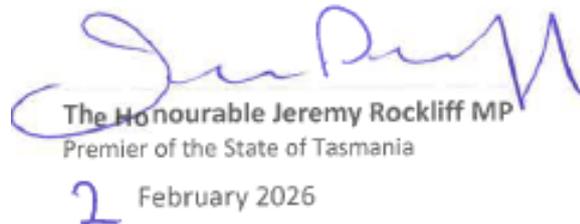
**The Honourable Roger Cook MLA**  
Premier of the State of Western Australia  
2 January 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by



**The Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP**  
Premier of the State of South Australia  
January 2026 2/4/2026

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by



**The Honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP**  
Premier of the State of Tasmania  
2 February 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by



**Andrew Barr MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory  
2 February 2026

Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by



**The Honourable Lia Finocchiaro MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory of Australia  
2 Feb  
January 2026

# **SCHEDULES**

Schedule A – Definitions

Schedule B – Thriving Kids National Model

Schedule C – Commonwealth and State Delivery Responsibilities for Thriving Kids

Schedule D – Bilateral Agreements

## Schedule A Definitions

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO)	An incorporated Aboriginal organisation initiated and governed by a local Aboriginal community. ACCOs deliver holistic, culturally appropriate services and operates under principles of self-determination, allowing communities to manage their own affairs.
Additional developmental support needs	Where a child requires extra or specialised support for their physical, cognitive, social, emotional, or communication development, beyond what is typically provided in mainstream services.
Accessible	Ensuring all people can confidently locate, use, and participate in services, spaces, and resources - physically, socially, and digitally. This includes considering cultural relevance, affordability, geographic location, and socioeconomic factors to make environments welcoming and usable for all.
Best practice	Evidence-informed practices that promote and achieve high-quality outcomes in service delivery.
Bilateral agreement	An agreement between two parties that outlines shared roles, responsibilities, funding, governance (etc.) to achieve a particular outcome. In the context of Foundational Supports, bilateral agreements will be between the Australian Government and one state or territory.
Capacity building	Increasing people's knowledge, skills and abilities.
Carers	A person who provides unpaid ongoing care and support to a family member, friend, or other individual unable to fully care for themselves.
Council on Federal Financial Relations (CFFR)	CFFR comprises the Australian Government Treasurer and all state and territory treasurers and is responsible for overseeing and managing the financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the states and territories. Its functions include providing central oversight of intergovernmental financial matters and administering the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR)."
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)	There are a number of ways to define culturally and linguistically diverse people. Cultural and linguistic diversity can encompass a range of aspects including a person's country of birth, their ancestry, where their parents were born, what language/s they speak, and their religious affiliation. Generally, people who were born overseas, have a parent born overseas and/or who speak a variety of languages are considered to be in the CALD population
Developmental delay	A term used to describe differences in the pace of developing physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and/or communication skills in comparison with their peers.

Disability	Disability is defined in line with the social model of disability which recognises attitudes, practices and structures can be disabling and act as barriers preventing people from fulfilling their potential and exercising their rights as equal members of the community. It describes disability as a social construct where intersecting societal barriers are the obstacles to equal participation, not people's impairment.
Disability Reform Ministerial Council (DRMC)	A Ministerial Council comprising Commonwealth, state and territory ministers with responsibility for disability policy, with reporting lines to National Cabinet. For the purpose of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013, DRMC is the Ministerial Council with functions outlined in Part 5, s12.
Equitable	Providing fair and transparent access to Foundational Supports for all intersectional cohorts across Australia, recognising that access criteria and triage arrangements may vary between jurisdictions to reflect local needs, service contexts and delivery approaches.
Ecosystem	An interconnected network of systems that work together to deliver services.
Family	A social unit with varying forms and structures. 'Family' is usually self-defined, including those who are parenting, child/children, siblings and others. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, family is the cornerstone of culture, spirituality and identity. Kinship systems define where a person fits into community, binding people together in relationships of sharing and obligation. Child rearing is a family and community concern and is not confined solely to the parents of the child.
Federation	The federal system under which powers and responsibilities are shared between the Commonwealth government and the state and territory governments, as outlined in the Australian Constitution.
First Minister	The Prime Minister, the Premiers of each Australian state, and the Chief Ministers of the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.
Foundational Supports	<p>Foundational Supports contribute towards a connected, accessible and inclusive support ecosystem , so that people in scope for services can access the right support, at the right time and place. These include General and Targeted Foundational Supports and are in addition to what is offered through mainstream services and the NDIS.</p> <p>General supports: access to quality information, advice and services to build connection and capacity, and to support participation of all people with disability under the age of 65; children with additional developmental support needs; and their families', carers and kin.</p> <p>Targeted supports: positioned between mainstream services and specialist supports accessed through the NDIS. While not binding for the purposes of this agreement, the NDIS</p>

	Review proposed targeted supports are primarily for people under the age of 65 who are not eligible for an individualised budget through the NDIS and are in most need of additional support. Targeted supports may include home and community care-type supports, aids and equipment, early childhood supports, psychosocial supports and supports for adolescents and young adults <sup>2</sup> .
Gender Considerations	Recognising how gender roles and expectations can create unequal experiences and access to services for women, trans and gender diverse people, including women, trans and gender diverse people with disability.
Inclusion	Inclusion is where everyone is treated equally and has an active role in society. Inclusive and accessible services and communities ensure all people can access appropriate support and participate as equal members of society.
Independent review into the NDIS	An independent review to put people with disability back at the centre of the NDIS. The purpose was to restore trust, confidence and pride in the Scheme. The Review looked at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Scheme’s design, operations and sustainability</li> <li>• how to build a more responsive, supportive and sustainable market and workforce.</li> </ul> See: <a href="http://www.ndisreview.gov.au">www.ndisreview.gov.au</a>
Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR)	An agreement between the Australian Government and all states and territories that sets out how federal funding is provided to the states for key services including health, education, and disability. It aims to make funding arrangements clearer, more flexible, and accountable, while supporting cooperation between governments.
Intersectional Considerations	Considerations made when developing and implementing policies, services and practices to ensure they appropriately take account of the impact of experiences of overlapping/intersecting aspects of a person’s identity. Examples of these aspects of identity include gender, race, disability, sexuality, and socio-economic status.
Kin	A person recognised as family. This includes immediate family members (parents, children, siblings), relatives, and may also extend to others who are regarded as family through cultural ties and kinship rules.
LGBTIQA+SB	Refers to people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer/Questioning Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboy. Sistergirl and Brotherboy are culturally distinct queer identities in First Nations communities.
Mainstream Services	Government funded services that all Australians can access and benefit from. They include essential services like health care, education, transport, employment services, community housing, family and domestic violence services and may be universal, targeted or specialist in nature. Differentiated

<sup>2</sup> Final Report of the Independent Review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme

	responsibilities between the NDIS and mainstream services is described in the Applied Principles and Tables of Support (APTOS) document negotiated through Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and published in November 2015.
National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap Agreement)	The formal agreement between the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations, and all Australian Governments. Its objective is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.
National Cabinet	A forum for the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers to meet and work collaboratively. National Cabinet was established on 13 March 2020 and is chaired by the Prime Minister. The Commonwealth and state and territory governments individually have flexibility to determine the best way to achieve any agreed outcomes made by National Cabinet in their jurisdiction. A representative of Local Government is invited to meet with National Cabinet once each year.
National Consistency	A shared approach of principles applied across jurisdictions to ensure comparable outcomes and expectations, while allowing sufficient flexibility for local adaptation in implementation and delivery that reflects differing community needs and service context.
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	A national scheme for people with disability, administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and regulated by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The NDIS provides funding to eligible Australians with disability to gain more time with family and friends, greater independence, access to new skills, jobs, or volunteering in their community, and an improved quality of life.
Per capita basis	A measure or allocation calculated on a per-person basis.
Rural and Remote	Areas located outside major cities and metropolitan regions.
Significant and Permanent Disability	To be interpreted in accordance with the meaning used under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act).

## Schedule B: National Model: Thriving Kids

The National Model describes the domains of support for Thriving Kids and the principles expected to underpin implementation. This National Model is to be read in conjunction with the Heads of Agreement on the National Health Reform Agreement, National Disability Insurance Scheme reforms and Foundational Supports, the National Agreement on Foundational Supports 2026-31 and the bilateral agreements for Thriving Kids.

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### Domains of support:

- **Improved awareness of developmental delay and neurodevelopmental difference**
  - Activities that support greater parent/family/kin awareness of childhood development and neurodevelopmental difference (including Autism) to support early identification where a child may be developing differently to their peers.
- **Early identification of children with developmental delay/neurodevelopmental difference**
  - Routine child development and health assessments or checks.
- **Information and advice and navigation**
  - National and local digital/phone-based information and advice on childhood development and Autism; and navigation support on where and how to access relevant supports.
  - Information on available Thriving Kids supports that is maintained by all jurisdictions on an ongoing basis, and is readily accessible to the community and key workforces who interact with or may refer children for supports.
- **Best practice parenting supports and programs**
  - Programs and/or supports to empower families, carers and kin with resources and skills required to assist and improve their child's learning and development through everyday activities. There is a soft entry to these supports/programs for the eligible cohort.
- **Targeted supports for children**
  - Targeted supports including group and 1:1 allied health, low-cost assistive technology related to development; and more intensive capacity building to support families with complex needs/circumstances. Access to targeted supports is based on nationally consistent functional needs identification and triage arrangements.

Services within these domains should be designed to consider the unique needs of cohorts such as First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, children in out-of-home care, intersectional needs and families experiencing crisis or family and domestic violence, and those who may not regularly interact with the broader service ecosystem as well as geographical considerations including rural and remote and thin markets.

### **Enablers**

- **Reporting and evaluation of Thriving Kids**
  - Effective reporting and evaluation arrangements are recognised as essential to the operation of the National Model.

## Thriving Kids Service Principles

Supports are:

- Focused on outcomes
- Cost effective
- Child-centred, family-centred and strengths-based
- Flexible and accessible, including for those with different intersectional needs
- Evidence-informed, based on contemporary evidence/research, and lived experience of children, families and carers
- Delivered predominantly in everyday settings that families and children already interact with (where children live, learn and play)
- Culturally safe, with ACCO, AMS and ACCHOs, where appropriate and available, prioritised as providers for programs/services for First Nations children and families, carers and kin
- Delivered through flexible and effective service approaches in regional, rural and remote areas and thin markets.
- Effectively connected and integrated with related services and supports across the service ecosystem
- Delivered by appropriately skilled workforces

## Schedule C: Commonwealth and State Delivery Responsibilities for Thriving Kids

1. Consistent with the National Model of Support domains and service principles, States will deliver the following within their jurisdiction:
  - a. Routine child development and health assessments checks.
  - b. Navigation to support access to Thriving Kids supports.
  - c. Programs and/or supports that assist families, carers and kin to support their child's development .
  - d. Targeted supports including group and 1:1 allied health, low-cost assistive technology related to development; and more intensive capacity building to support families with complex needs/circumstances; with States to determine access to targeted supports and what supports are provided based on nationally consistent functional needs identification and triage arrangements. These supports should be provided in all settings where children live, learn and play.
  - e. Information on Thriving Kids supports in their jurisdiction that is maintained on an ongoing basis and promulgated to the community and key workforces who interact with or may refer children for supports.
  - f. State measures to assist workforce capability readiness in key sectors, including primary care and early childhood education and care and schools.
  - g. Reporting required to support monitoring of reform and evaluation activities.
  - h. Respond to the intersectional and diverse needs of communities including, CALD, with a strong focus on First Nations peoples.
2. Consistent with the National Model of Support domains and service principles, the Commonwealth will deliver at a minimum:
  - a. National awareness raising around the signs of developmental delay/neurodevelopmental difference and the availability of services delivered through this reform. This will complement any state awareness raising activities.
  - b. National online/digital/phone information and advice about early childhood development, Autism and available Thriving Kids supports. These will be designed to complement and connect with state localised information, advice and navigation offerings.
  - c. Continue to investigate the extent to which National 3 year old GP health and developmental checks would align with state child development assessments and checks.
  - d. National measures to assist workforce and build capability readiness in key sectors, including primary care and early childhood education and care and schools. This will be designed to complement state workforce capability readiness activities.
  - e. Respond to the intersectional and diverse needs of communities including, CALD, with a strong focus on First Nations peoples.
  - f. National enabling elements.
  - g. Reporting required to support monitoring of reform and evaluation activities
  - h. National evaluation of Thriving Kids (funding of the evaluation)