

# Department of Families, Fairness and Housing - Intensive Support Team

Factsheet outlining program offerings

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## Purpose of this factsheet

This information is for service providers, including mainstream services and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers, government agencies and advocacy organisations about targeted support provided by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department) Intensive Support Team (IST) for Victorians living with disability who have complex needs.

## Purpose of the Intensive Support Team

The IST is a state-wide service established in April 2017 by the Victorian Government to provide a targeted intervention to Victorian's with disability experiencing significant and critical issues with the disability service system. The IST was set up in response to the systemic issues experienced by people with complex support needs transitioning to the NDIS.

The NDIS came into full effect in Victoria in June 2020. Some individuals, particularly those with complex support needs, continue to experience issues with the Scheme and/or disability service system processes and supports. Barriers to individuals accessing supports include navigating access processes, gathering evidence to support access or planning, plan implementation, or limited supply of appropriate supports. Such individuals may require IST support to resolve these issues and ensure a comprehensive, holistic support structure is put in place.

In 2021, the Continuity of Support (CoS) program was absorbed by the IST. This program has been expanded to also support Victorian's Ineligible for NDIS (VIN). The VIN/CoS Program offers an avenue of support for Victorian's who are ineligible for the Scheme due to residency or were unable to secure disability specific supports following their NDIS transition.

## Intensive Support Team mission statement

*We give Victorian's living with disability a voice, equip and empower them to navigate support systems through the provision of specialist, outcome-focused interventions.*

*We are continually increasing our knowledge and understanding of the disability sector and listening to the experiences of Victorian's living with disability.*

*Through a collaborative and inclusive approach, we will share our experience, knowledge and skills with all government and non-government service systems, with the aim that all support systems will be consistently responsive and equitable for Victorian's living with disability.*

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# Types of support provided by IST

There are two program offerings under the IST outlined below, being for:

- [NDIS Eligible Victorians](#), and
- [Victorians Ineligible for the NDIS or receiving Continuity of Support funding](#)

## Intensive Support Team - NDIS Eligible Victorians (NEV) Program

### Overview of NEV supports

The types of support provided by the Intensive Support Team (IST) includes:

Supporting people living with disability and their care team in resolving individual issues.

Participating in Multi Agency Panel (MAP) and Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative (MACNI) panels, where coordination is required across multiple service systems including disability.

Providing support and escalation for specific cohorts experiencing common issues (i.e., Specialist Forensic Disability Accommodation (SFDA) clients).

Supporting National and State emergency response work e.g., coronavirus (COVID-19) response in disability settings.

Escalating systemic issues observed in practice and providing recommendations – this may involve compiling case-studies and data in collaboration with mainstream areas or independently to inform the work of the department and National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

Providing advice and secondary consultation to mainstream services, including: Child Protection, Disability Justice, Health, Office of the Chief Psychiatrist, Office of Professional Practice and non-government service providers.

### IST NEV target group

The target group of the IST is Victorian's living with disability who have complex needs or circumstances who are experiencing significant issues in their NDIS journey, including access to the Scheme, where the risk of an adverse outcome for the person is high, and the need for intervention is time critical due to the impact of the issue.

Examples include:

- People who have been unsuccessful in resolving their concerns directly with the NDIA in a (potential) gap/loss of critical services and significant risk to the person (this includes situations where a support coordinator has been unable to resolve the issues).
- People who were in receipt of state funded supports that do not align with NDIA support types, requiring negotiation about how their reasonable and necessary disability needs can otherwise be met.
- People using a combination of disability related and mainstream supports that require coordinated planning across mainstream service systems such as health or justice.
- Cases that may present a real, perceived or unexpected risk to the department, including reputational, political or financial.

### Supports delivered by the IST NEV when working with an individual client

The types and level of support provided by the IST to an individual will vary depending on the needs of the individual and the capacity of the provider. This includes:

- Supporting individuals experiencing complex issues to access the right disability and mainstream supports. The IST will build the capacity of people with disability and their key supports to navigate service system pathways and processes.
- Helping individuals to navigate the NDIS system and pathways to meet their planning needs. IST can escalate cases as required particularly when clients have experienced delays in plan approval or implementation of support or need to seek an unscheduled plan review.
- Working with an NDIS allocated support coordinator or provide capacity building to a service provider where there is no support coordinator involved to improve client outcomes.
- Providing information and advice to:
  - assist individuals or mainstream service professionals to identify options for continued support within their current plan or need for a fast-track review
  - NDIA staff, support coordinators and/or funded services about mainstream service responsibilities and delivery modes in Victoria.
  - Providing specialist advice for clients who require disability and mainstream supports. This includes; hospital discharge planning, forensic disability client transitions, children and families interface support.
  - Ensuring sustainable service options have been established, roles and responsibilities are clear and confirmed prior to closure of intervention. This may include linking a client with a support coordinator if not already in place and required.
  - Collaborating with NDIA and its partners regarding issue resolution and capacity building for support coordinators and mainstream services.

## Referrals for the IST NEV

### What is an appropriate referral?

In determining whether the IST will accept the referral, consideration will be given to the complexity and urgency of the issue.

An attempt must have been made by the referrer to resolve the person's transition issues with the NDIA and/or client Support Coordinator (if applicable) before lodging a referral to the IST.

- Common referral sources include:
  - mainstream services and departmental programs (i.e., health policy and settings)
  - advocacy services (including legal)
  - ministerial offices
  - the NDIA and NDIS providers

The IST also accept enquiries regarding data or policy input – such requests may also be sent through the email address provided below.

### What information is required to make a referral?

IST referrals should include the following information:

- consent either verbally or in writing from the client or their significant decision maker
- the issue/s requiring intervention
- the risks and concerns identified
- current services provided to the person
- recent involvement and outcomes (including mainstream interface, i.e., unmet need)
- summary of the outcome of discussions and/or attempts to contact the NDIA regional office.

# The Intensive Support Team – Victorian’s Ineligible for NDIS and Continuity of Support program (VIN/CoS) Program

## Overview of VIN/CoS supports

As the NDIS came into full effect in Victoria from June 2020. Some individuals, particularly those with complex support needs experience issues with the Scheme. Barriers to these individuals accessing supports included, not meeting the residency requirements for those who are temporary residents in Australia and deemed ineligible to access the NDIS.

There were also those who as a result of the introduction of the Scheme, were not able to achieve similar outcomes related to their disability specific needs to what they were aiming to achieve, prior to the introduction of the NDIS were continued to be supported under the Continuity of Support (CoS) program. Entry to this program is now closed.

The Victorians Ineligible for NDIS (VIN) Program provides individualised disability support funding to support people with a disability and their families and carers on a short or long-term basis, who are temporary residents in Australia and are ineligible to access the NDIS. This Individualised disability support is focussed to support a range of disability-specific needs that is unable to be funded anywhere else.

## IST VIN Target Group

The VIN target group only relates to those found to be not eligible for the NDIS. The program has access and eligibility criteria that is required to be met. This includes being denied by the NDIS due to residency and meet the disability requirements as per the *Disability Act 2006*.

The program is required to undertake an assessment of eligibility to be deemed eligible for services and priority factors apply before any funding and services may be requested.

People from overseas on short-term visas - such as a tourist/holiday/student visa are not eligible for the program.

## Supports delivered by IST VIN/CoS when working with an individual client

The types and level of support provided by the IST to an individual will vary depending on the needs of the individual. This includes:

- Tailored, individualised disability-specific support funding, i.e., an accommodation support model, support workers, or therapeutic interventions.
- Planning, implementation, and reviews of the funded service provision/s; including changes of circumstances.
- Monitor and oversee each service delivery and their providers, which may also require the need to response to incidents, complaints, and safeguarding.

## Referrals for the IST VIN/CoS

### What is an appropriate referral?

The VIN program considers referrals for support requested from people who are ineligible for NDIS, are aged between 5 – 65 years, have a disability diagnosis as per the *Disability Act 2006* and have unmet disability specific support needs. A referral form can be requested from the [VIN/CoS Inbox](#).

All alternative avenues of funded support and mainstream services need to be explored and exhausted prior to lodging a referral with the VIN/CoS program.

## What information is required to make a referral?

VIN referrals should include the following information:

- Consent
- NDIS not met letter or equivalent
- current services provided to the person and any barriers experienced
- issues with service delivery and mainstream interface i.e., unmet disability support needs
- exploration of all options considered and exhausted
- details of the disability specific needs, and support request

## Contact Information

To contact the Intensive Support Team, please refer to the table below.

Name	Monitoring and response	Email
IST NEV program inbox	General inbox – 9am-5pm weekdays	<a href="mailto:intensivesupportteam@dffh.vic.gov.au">intensivesupportteam@dffh.vic.gov.au</a>
IST VIN/CoS program inbox	General inbox – 9am-5pm weekdays	<a href="mailto:VINCOS.enquiries@dffh.vic.gov.au">VINCOS.enquiries@dffh.vic.gov.au</a>

The following contacts may be useful for persons requiring disability support that are not within the scope of IST:

Name	Position	Phone	Email
The National Disability Insurance Agency	General contact	1800 800 110	<a href="mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au">enquiries@ndis.gov.au</a>
The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	General contact	1800 035 544	<a href="mailto:contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au">contactcentre@ndiscommission.gov.au</a>
The Victorian Disability Services Commissioner	General contact	1800 677 342	<a href="mailto:complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au">complaints@odsc.vic.gov.au</a>

To receive this document in another format email [intensivesupportteam@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:intensivesupportteam@dffh.vic.gov.au)

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