

The National Alliance of Capacity Building Organisations (NACBO) welcomes the option for people with disability to self-manage their supports under the NDIS.

There are 4 reasons why we believe self-management is important for people with disability and their families to build full and meaningful lives.

1 Shared values and responsibility

When people self-manage, they can create supports that are unique to them and what they value. Support workers tend to stay in the job when their values align with the person with disability and their family. With shared values, a deepening personal relationship and trust can be built between the person and the support-worker. Everyone takes responsibility and everyone benefits.

*“Tell me, what is it
you plan to do
with your one wild
and precious life”
Mary Oliver, poet*

2 Value for money

People with disability, often with their family, know inherently how best to use their funds. With self-management, they can achieve greater value for money by avoiding unnecessary service co-ordination, operating costs, and irrelevant standardised training. They pay only for the support and training they need. With creative planning and thought, even the most limited funding package can go a long way.

Self-management is also value for money for the NDIS. People with disability and their families have proven that they are unlikely to squander funds or defraud the system. They understand what personally is at stake for them to lose funding, and they have everything to gain in being accountable and transparent in how money is spent.

3 Flexibility, choice and control

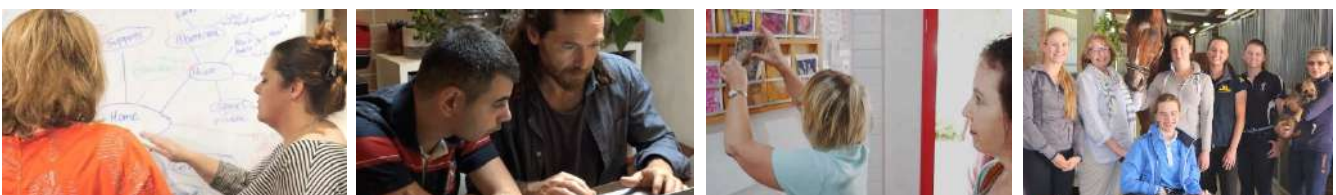
Despite the promise of individualised support, there are always compromises in group service arrangements. Self-management avoids these compromises and offers the greatest flexibility, choice and control. The person can choose the workers best suited to the role and guide them in how to provide support. They can arrange their support to suit any given situation.

Self-management allows the person’s vision and goals to drive all decisions around support. Workers avoid the conflicts of interest that are inherent in service organisations with layers of management and changeable priorities.

4 Opportunity for innovation

People who self-manage have greater opportunity to innovate, try various methods of reaching their goals and don’t have to fit into a prescribed program. They are more able to contribute to the community, find work, live in their own home, and create their own business. Innovative examples can be viewed at www.selfmanagementsupports.org.au

Self-management allows for workers to come from a wider range of backgrounds and bring a variety of talents and skills. The possibilities are endless when looking for the right match for the task. Self-management arrangements are attractive to workers who want good lives for people with disability, have good ideas, and are willing to learn as they go.



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There are 5 practices that we believe make self-management work well:

1 Get started

There are many ways to self-manage and as many sources of advice. The NDIS has excellent information online [about self-management](#) and the NDIS portal is straightforward to use.

Attending a workshop is often the first step in deciding to self-manage or in gaining the skills and confidence to 'have a go'. There are many people who have practiced self-management and who willingly share their experiences.

A good practice is to become informed, find experienced and supportive people, and 'have a go'.

2 Share the vision and build a team

People who self-manage well take the time to share their vision of a good life, goals and plans with others, including their workers, so that everyone understands their role and purpose. A shared vision is the foundation for mutual trust and understanding. Issues are identified early and resolved before they become problems.

A good practice is to have regular staff meetings, employee appraisals, team-planning and reviews. Good work conditions encourage workers to stay and build a strong, cohesive team.

3 Blend formal and informal support

For most people with disability, family and friends provide natural supports to be included in their community. Some people with disability may also rely on their families or others they trust to manage their funding because they have difficulty doing it themselves. The relationships between workers, families and friends can become complex. With thoughtful planning, clarity of roles and good communication, everyone can blend their support and work well together.

A good practice is to help everyone share the person's vision and plan, understand their roles, build trust, and solve problems together.

4 Think creatively

It takes time and practice to change old patterns of thinking. New ideas can seem risky. When innovation is supported, it often leads to good outcomes for the person with disability. Many people now have experience in self-management and successful innovation. They are not only inspiring but also offer practical advice on how to transform ideas into reality.

A good practice is to connect with mentors and capacity-building organisations such as [NACBO](#). They can build confidence and ability in people and families to make a good life for themselves. When the going gets tough, they can re-energise and keep the creative spirit alive.

5 Get organised

Self-management comes with responsibilities. The NDIS expects self-managers to be accountable, transparent and reliable in the management of their funds. This means maintaining good records, following a budget and making payments on time. In turn, self-managers need to be confident they have current and consistent information from the NDIS. [The Workforce Innovation: Self-Managed Supports](#) web site has lots of information and advice on tips and traps.

A good practice is to get organised. If this is difficult to do, there are now many businesses that can assist. That done, the focus can remain on building a unique support team and living the good life.



“Go for it. It was the best thing for us, gave us peace of mind. Be creative. Self-managing is not hard to do.” Rima