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Refer to the current Evidence Summary: Art and music therapy.

About the independent review

In late 2024, the NDIA commissioned an independent review of art and music therapy.

The review was led by experienced health economist Dr Stephen Duckett AM and shaped by input from more than 600 people in the disability community. This included people who access art and music therapy supports, as well as service providers.

The review looked into whether these therapies meet the standards required to fund a therapy support, and if so, what a reasonable price should be.

What the review found

The review confirmed that art and music therapy can be effective and beneficial for some people in some situations.

This means that the NDIS should fund art and music therapy supports when:

- There’s evidence it can help people with similar disability-related needs and goals.
- The therapy is provided by a qualified therapist who is registered with a recognised professional association.
    - To find a registered art or music therapist, or to confirm your current therapist is a professional member of the appropriate association you can search the associations’ websites:
        - Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapy website - ANZACATA
        - Australian Music Therapy Association website - Australian Music Therapy Association

Participants can pay for the support they need to participate in art or music activities, under a national price limit of $70.23 per hour.

In line with existing arrangements, core support funding can be used for support to enable participation in art or music activities but does not cover the cost of the activity itself.

Recommendations

The independent review made 19 recommendations to improve how art and music therapy is delivered.

Recommendations include:

- Providing better support for participants to make more informed choices about therapies
- Updating the price limit for art and music therapy from $193.99 per hour to match the price limit for counsellors, which is $156.16 per hour.

To learn more, download the full independent review of Art and Music Therapy:

- Independent review of Art and Music Therapy (PDF 682KB)
- Independent review of Art and Music Therapy (DOCX 429KB)
- Independent review of Art and Music Therapy - Easy read (PDF 3.2MB)
- Independent review of Art and Music Therapy - Easy read - Text only (PDF 2MB).

Find out more about the report in Auslan.

The NDIA's response to the review

The NDIA is committed to supporting a better life for Australians with a significant and permanent disability.

We want to make sure the therapies funded by the NDIS work, are backed by evidence, and help Australians with disability achieve their goals.

We support - or support in principle – all 15 recommendations made to the NDIA. This means we are committed to putting these recommendations into practice.

The recommendations provided in the independent review will help shape future operational guidance on how art and music therapy is delivered and funded.

To learn more, download the Agency's response to the Art and Music Therapy report in full:

- NDIA response to the Review of Art and Music Therapy (PDF 247KB)
- NDIA response to the Review of Art and Music Therapy (DOCX 184KB)
- NDIA response to the Review of Art and Music Therapy - Easy read (PDF 7.4MB)
- NDIA response to the Review of Art and Music Therapy - Easy read - Text only (PDF 51.5MB).

Submissions

If you made a submission to the Independent Review into Art and Music Therapies, you may receive an email from the NDIA.

We are asking for your consent to share your submission with the Australian Government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing . This is to support the NDIS Evidence Advisory Committee (EAC) in assessing the evidence base for art and music therapy interventions.

The EAC is an independent group that looks at evidence about disability supports. It gives advice to the government on which supports should be included or excluded from NDIS funding.

Providing consent is optional. Details on how you can give consent will be included in the email.

If you have any questions call 1800 800 110 or visit the Contact webpage.