

CORE – Consumables and Low Assistive Technology

Consumables is a support category under CORE and is available to assist participants with purchasing **everyday use items** or Low Assistive Technology products. Supports such as Continence and Home Enteral Nutrition (HEN) products are included in this category.

There is considerable confusion what is funded and what isn't and what is considered reasonable and necessary for an individual participant. All decisions should be guided by the **National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013** (NDIS Act), and the associated NDIS rules, which states that a funded support must represent “**value for money**” in that the costs of the support are reasonable, relative to both the benefits achieved and the cost of alternative support. These can be found on the [NDIA website](#).

Low-Cost Assistive Technology are mostly items <\$1500

Participants who have AT needs may have funding included in their *Consumables* budget to enable them to purchase low risk, low-cost AT. These items are general level 1 and 2 Assistive Technology products.

Plan-managed or self-managed participants can purchase these items from any provider.

We know not all participants have funding allocated in their Core budget for consumables. **Following a change made in 2020, participants can use their Core budget more flexibly, including to purchase low-cost AT under the consumable's category.**

Some participants only have funding in their Capacity Building budget, for example those who are part of the Early Childhood Early Intervention program. Participants can use the Low-Cost AT – to support Capacity Building support delivery line item to purchase this low-cost AT.

Participants should use their plan wisely for all of their support needs. The NDIA will not increase plan values to accommodate the purchase of a device under this policy.

What is Low-Cost AT?

Low-Cost AT is claimed using one of the below 6 classifications:

- Low Cost AT - Communication Or Cognitive Support
- Low Cost AT - Hearing Related AT
- Low Cost AT - Personal Care And Safety
- Low Cost AT - Personal Mobility
- Low Cost AT - Prosthetics And Orthotics
- Low Cost AT - Vision Related AT
- Low Cost AT - Support Capacity Building delivery

Participants can use their existing NDIS funding to purchase an item from one of the above classifications if all of the following conditions are met:

- it will maintain or improve delivery of funded NDIS supports like a program, therapy or requirement (for example physiotherapy or Auslan interpreting provided via video conferencing)
- the provider of supports has confirmed in writing the device is necessary to continue supports and services while maintaining physical distancing and other health requirements as advised by government
- it is the lowest specification that will maintain funded supports
- they do not already have the item, another suitable item or access to the item
- the item has not been funded by another organisation
- the item or circumstances are not specifically excluded.

What is excluded from this policy?

The following items and circumstances are excluded from the flexible low-cost AT policy:

- items that do not relate to the participant's disability
- items with extra specifications above the basic model
- smart phones, tablets or iPads with mobile-only 3G, 4G or 5G connections (though you can upgrade from a wifi only device to one of these devices using your own money)
- the purchase of multiple devices for the same participant
- internet connection and data, these are considered ordinary living costs (utilities)
- applications (apps) or software. Apps which have been specified and approved in a plan can be paid for with NDIS funding
- additional hardware or accessories, other than standard protective cases
- additional hardware and accessories may be purchased if they relate to using the device because of the participant's disability, such as wheelchair mounting for a person with limited grip.

Replacements for loss or damage will generally follow the existing [AT replacement policy](#)

Replacement of items would generally only apply where the existing device is no longer suitable to meet the participant's needs at that time. It does not include upgrade because a new model or version is released.

COVID allowance: Participants should not spend more than \$750 on electronic devices needed to maintain existing services and are advised that if a standard tablet computer or iPad is required to participate in online video classes, these should generally cost no more than \$600.