



Completing a Change of Needs Application

This fact sheet provides guidance to Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA) Service Coordinators on completing and submitting a Change of Needs (CoN) application for their client.

Eligibility and mandatory submission requirements

- If the client has had an aged care assessment, please review the [DSOA Program Manual](#) to determine whether they are eligible for additional funding through the DSOA Program.
- The DSOA Service Coordinator must complete the [Change of Needs application form](#) available on the [DSOA website](#). Incomplete applications will not progress further and will be returned to the DSOA service coordinator for resubmission, which will delay assessment, including the date from which funding will be considered.
- Evidence dated within the last 12 months must be provided, demonstrating how the client's disability related needs and/or circumstances have changed and why they require additional support through the DSOA Program.
- You must submit your client's up to date Individual Support Package (ISP) and Annual Review.
- If the client lives in Supported Independent Living (SIL) accommodation and you are applying for additional Assistance in Supported Independent Living, you must submit 2 separate NDIS SIL Rosters of Care (ROC). The first must reflect the client's current care arrangements, with the second outlining the proposed care arrangements if additional funding is approved. Both ROCs must be submitted in Microsoft Excel format and include all residents in the accommodation setting, including any vacancies, with all non DSOA residents information de-identified.
- If the client lives in their own home and you are applying for additional Assistance with Self-Care Activities, you **must** submit 2 weekly care rosters. The first must reflect the client's current in-home care arrangements, with the second outlining the proposed care arrangements if additional funding is approved. The rosters can be submitted in any format, provided they clearly list all seven days of the week and specify the times of the day a support worker is with the client.

Application Form

To avoid common errors with the application, please consider the following information:

- **Part A – DSOA Service Coordinator Information**
 - List your organisation’s full legal entity name in this section, not business trading name.
 - Refer to your DSOA Grant Agreement to obtain your Organisation ID and Schedule ID.
- **Part B – Client Information**
 - List the client’s *DSOA National ID*. This is in the format of *DSOA0000* – ‘DSOA’, followed by numeric values.
 - Identify whether your client is residing in their own home or in Supported Independent Living (SIL) accommodation.
 - List your client’s primary disability and any secondary disabilities where applicable. This should match information in their ISP and Annual Review.
 - Has the client previously been assessed or approved for services under the *Aged Care Act 2024*? If so, include the date of assessment, what services they were found eligible for, and if any services have commenced. For example:

The client had an aged care assessment on 3 March 2022 and was found eligible for Permanent Residential. This service has not commenced.

- **Part C – Requested Supports**
 - Please refer to [Appendix A – DSOA Service and Pricing Schedule](#) when completing the table.
 - The table must only include **additional** annual outputs requested, not funding the client currently receives. Annual outputs must be rounded up to the closest hour. For example, 15.7 hours and 15.1 hours are rounded up to 16 hours.
 - For each DSOA support type requested, you must list the *DSOA Support Level*, *Time of day/week*, if the funding is *Recurrent* or *One-off*, and the *Unit Price*.
 - Retrospective funding is **out of scope** for the DSOA Program. The funding commencement date for successful applications is the date a complete application was accepted by the department.
 - If you are requesting *DSOA Conditional In-Scope Services*, the one-off amount should be clearly listed in the table.
- **Part D – Assessment Criteria**
 - Identify the option that best describes the client’s change in need and/or circumstance. Your client may be awaiting discharge from hospital or have recently transitioned to a new Supported Independent Living (SIL) home.
 - Describe how the client’s disability support needs have changed in the last 12 months. Your response must include sufficient detail to inform the assessment process and may reference supporting clinical evidence.
 - Explain how the DSOA support types requested in Part C – Requested Supports will specifically address the client’s change in need. For example:

Additional occupational therapy support will facilitate annual Functional Capacity Assessments and reviews of the client’s manual wheelchair. The physiotherapist letter provided confirms that 30

additional annual outputs of Assessment Recommendation Therapy And/or Training (Incl. AT) - Other Therapy are now required.

- List other steps taken to support the client's change in need. Examples may include submitting Funding Amendment Requests, organising allied health assessments, engaging with the client's General Practitioner or reallocating them to more suitable accommodation arrangements.

Submission

- CoN applications **must** be submitted by the client's DSOA Service Coordinator.
- Email the completed CoN application form, with all supporting documentation attached to DSOACHangeofneed@health.gov.au.
- Only one application may be submitted per email for each client.

Frequently Asked Questions

• Can I request Conditional In-Scope funding?

As outlined in Section 2.2 of the [DSOA Program Manual](#), the DSOA Program is not intended to fund supports that are already available through other government funded subsidised programs. The department will only consider one-off funding requests for Conditional In-Scope Services through the CoN process. Clients must first explore and exhaust all other available funding options, including existing state or territory and/or Commonwealth subsidies before requesting support through the DSOA Program.

For example, if a client residing in New South Wales requires aids and equipment to address their disability decline, we require evidence that funding through the [Commonwealth Home Support Program's \(CHSP\)](#) and EnableNSW have been exhausted before the department will consider the request.

Ensure that the amount required is clearly listed in the table in Part C – Requested Services. Supporting evidence is required to justify the amount requested and how it will address the client's disability-related needs. For example, where funding is requested to cover the cost of dietary thickeners, confirmation of a daily clinical need from a speech pathologist is required, along with a supplier quote outlining the annual cost.

• Can I request an Independent Assessment for my client?

If a client's support needs have changed and they require additional support, their DSOA Service Coordinator can submit a CoN application to the department for consideration.

The department will refer the client for an independent assessment where a Change of Needs application exceeds \$20,000 annually, or as a result of compliance actions. The department may also use its discretion to refer a client for an independent assessment, including where a Change of Needs application is less than \$20,000

• What evidence is required to support a Change of Needs Application?

The evidence required to support a CoN application is to be determined by the DSOA Service Coordinator. However, it must clearly demonstrate changes in the client's needs and/or circumstances and substantiate the requirement for the additional supports requested.

• How long does it take for a Change of Needs application to be finalised?

The timeframe for the department to finalise their review of a CoN application will vary depending on a range of factors, including the complexity of the application, whether an independent assessment is required, and the priority of other applications awaiting assessment. Applications assessed as urgent will be prioritised accordingly.