

Frequently asked questions

NDIS Price Guide changes

update advice: March 2023

Araluen's pricing for the supports and services we provide match those in the NDIS Price Guide. The NDIA adjusts pricing on an annual basis and at other times too. When this happens, Araluen will adopt the new prices, notify you and explain why.

About the upcoming changes

As of 17th April 2023, Araluen will implement some Price Guide changes to billing that will apply to people who access Araluen's day services and SIL support.

- ratio-based pricing will no longer be used for billing Programs of Support; and
- instead of having one hourly unit price, the cost will be broken down into a range of smaller, more transparent charges:
 - **Apportioned pricing** page 2
 - **Centre Capital Costs** page 3
 - **Non-Face-to-Face Time** page 4

General information about your plan, quote and bill can be found on pages 5 and 6.



If this document doesn't answer all your questions, please get in touch with your manager.

What's different about my group support pricing?

This information applies to people who use Araluen's day services

Transitional vs apportioned pricing

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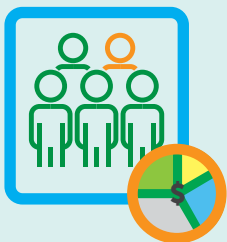


How am I currently charged for Programs of Support?

The current way of pricing on ratios under Programs of Support (POS) is referred to as "**transitional pricing**" because the NDIA only intended it to be a limited-term approach to how some group support charges are calculated. Araluen is currently charging the NDIS transitional price for POS.

Transitional pricing for group support bundles multiple support costs into the one unit price. So several costs like staffing, non face-to-face time and centre capital costs are already considered and included in your transitional pricing hourly rate. Currently, your unit price for POS is based on the staff to participant ratio of the group receiving support. So the smaller the group, the higher the unit price. Each person in the group pays a unit price.

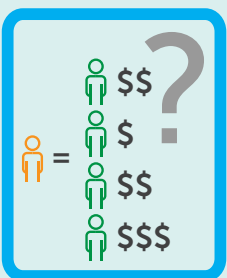
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What is apportioned pricing?

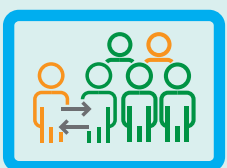
Ratio-based pricing is being replaced with apportioned pricing. This means that the total cost of the staff member/s supporting the whole group will be divided between each participant in the group, equally or in proportion to need.

Apportioned pricing only includes staff time so you will likely notice that your hourly support rate will be less, because other cost factors will now be billed separately. If a participant exits a group, the cost will be apportioned between remaining participants.



How is the cost divided between participants in a group?

The NDIA has not set rules about how providers must divide this cost amongst participants. Initially, Araluen will apportion costs equally between however many people are in the group (so each person will pay the same amount). However, in the future we may allocate costs on the basis of actual support received during a session (so each person will pay a different amount), or a mix of both. This is so that people pay a fair amount that reflects the amount of support/time they received from the group's staff.



What if I need additional support to participate in a group activity?

You can still receive support from an extra staff member who is not supporting the group if you need it, for some or all of the session. This will be charged as a separate item, in addition to your charge for group support. Generally this additional support will be charged to participants who are currently billed under "Assistance with Daily Life".

Will group sizes or the way my supports are delivered change?

No. The changes only impact how we calculate your bill and may affect the amount you pay. Everything else about your POS will remain as is.

Centre Capital Costs

This information applies to people who use Araluen's day services



What are Centre Capital Costs?

Centre Capital Costs (CCC) are a separate billable item that cover the costs of running a centre. The NDIA defines a centre as "a workplace" that the provider incurs costs to use.

Centre Capital Costs were previously factored into the overall unit price for 'Group Activities in a Centre' but will now be billed as a separate item.

When will I be billed for CCC?

Araluen will apply CCC to all billing for our Programs of Support in our day services. CCC's are billable whenever a centre is operating, regardless of whether the billed support is delivered at a centre or not, because providers still incur costs to make the centre available.

CCCs will be billed when your POS:

- occurs at an Araluen site/centre (not a group residence)
- occurs in the community but our centre is available at the same time
- occurs at another building/location we hire for the purpose of providing group support

Because our POS are only available while our centres are operating, this means all POS will incur a CCC fee.

How much will I pay?



The cost for CCC is a **flat rate of \$2.28 per person, per hour**. This is on top of your group support charge (and individualised support charges if applicable) and it is not apportioned.

Non face-to-face time

This information applies to people who use Araluen's day services or SIL

What is Non face-to-face time?

Non face-to-face time (NF2FT) is a charge that covers staff time to perform administration, planning, reporting and training tasks that relate directly to you. It can not include general or everyday administration or business tasks or general training.

These costs were factored into the transitional hourly rate, however, they will now appear on your bill as a separate charge.

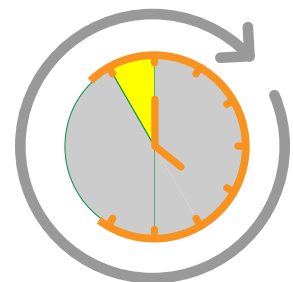
Important to note:

- Your NF2FT must be agreed or preauthorised through an updated service agreement with any provider before it's delivered or billed. When you are due for a new quote this will be sent as normal. You can also request a new quote to assist you with planning
- Providers must not charge Nf2FT at the same time as face-to-face support



How much will I pay?

- Your quote will include **5 minutes of NF2FT per 60 minutes of POS or SIL support** you receive (so approximately 30 minutes per 6 hour day).
- NF2FT is charged at the **same rate as direct support (currently \$64.04 per hour)**
- Managers may also charge an additional 30 minutes of NF2FT if their time is used to support participants in a direct manner that is considered billable under the NDIA's NF2FT rules
- Your NF2FT quote may be higher if your manager determines that more time is needed to adequately meet your needs (e.g. if we need to engage with an allied health professional or need to address a specific incident).



**5 minutes
per 60 minutes**

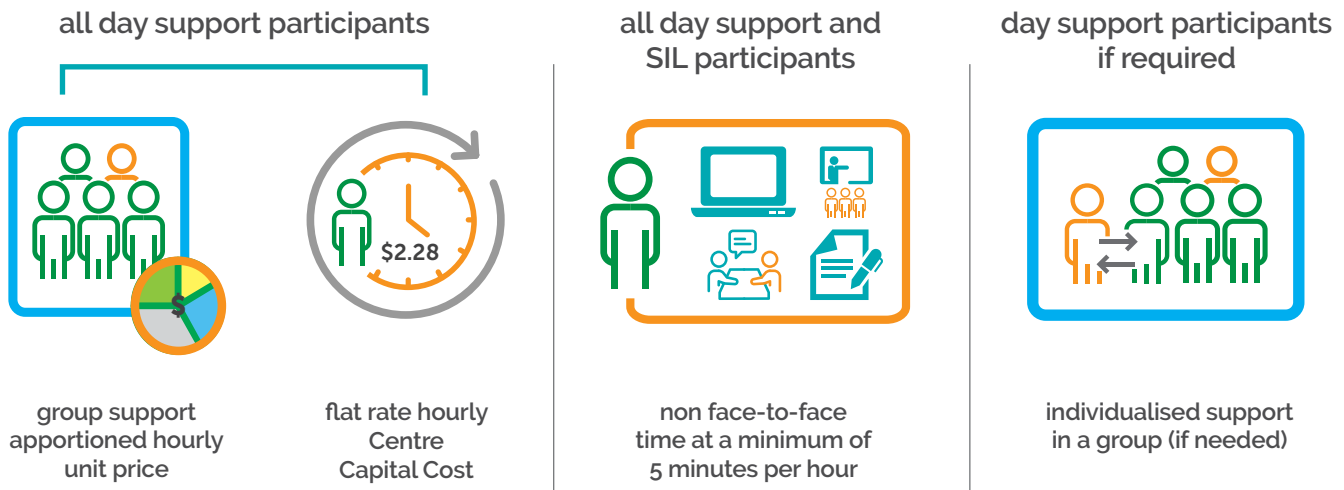
What are some examples of NF2FT that Araluen will charge for?

NF2FT can only be charged for time that is directly related to you (though Araluen may apportion staff time between multiple participants if a singular task supported multiple people at once).

- writing diary entries, incident reports or progress notes about you or relating to your NDIS goals
- creating or updating relevant, compulsory or complex documents about you, such as "My Support Plan", medical information, mealtime assistance plans, individualised timetables, NDIA progress reviews etc
- attending an internal or external meeting where your needs are discussed
- plan and deliver your new or existing activities, e.g. setting up the room, equipment or personal items you need to participate in your activity or support
- research activities linked to your needs and the achievement of your NDIS goals
- training around a participants individualised support needs

So what will I see on my bill after the price changes take effect?

Depending on the supports you receive from us, you will see the following items on your bill (alongside your other usual support charges).



Will I pay more for the same supports now?

Araluen's modeling using the new pricing shows that the impact will vary between individuals. Most people will experience only a small difference in price, unless you require a high amount of individualised support NF2FT, in which case the additional charges will likely increase.

Keep in mind that if you are a day service participant, you are already being charged for CCC and NF2FT - just not in a transparent way - and that the unit price has been reduced now that the overall costs of group supports are being charged separately.

What does this mean for my next plan?

It is always important that you work with us, your planner and/or support coordinator to ensure you have enough funding in your plan to cover everything you need. Make sure you tell your planner that Araluen has switched to apportioned pricing. We will quote you based on current knowledge of how your supports operate and we will quote and bill in a standardised manner initially. However, we expect that we will adapt a more individualised approach once we become accustomed to how the new pricing works in practice.

If you already have an active plan and would like to know if it will be enough to cover supports under the new pricing, please also get in touch with your manager so we can help you understand how the plan might be impacted.

What if I've rolled over my plan for 3 years? Will I run out of money?

The answer to that question depends on your plan and what's included in it. If you have concerns about running out of funding early, talk to us as soon as possible, especially if you may require a significant amount of individualised funding or NF2FT. We can provide a quote for the remainder of your current plan using apportioned pricing so you can see how this matches up against your current or remaining funding.

We will always work with you to find a solution and will let you know if we identify a potential funding shortfall. Options depend on your circumstances and may include using available Core support money, going for a plan review or changing your support hours.

What next? Do I get a new Service Agreement or quote?

You should have already received an updated service agreement from us outlining the new pricing arrangements. We will automatically send out a new quote as part of our processes nearing the end of your current plan, to assist you with any plan review. This quote will be prepared using apportioned pricing. Or we can work with you to review your funding.

Who should I talk to for more information?

Your manager will be happy to discuss how the upcoming changes will or may affect you. If you need further assistance or your situation is complex, please contact Joshua Brouwer, our General Manager for Quality, Safety & Practice, on (03) 8457 3040 or JoshuaB@araluen.org.



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