



Key steps in authorisation

March 2026

This information sheet has been developed to support people who are Quality Assurance (QA) Panel members. For full authorisation requirements please refer to the Procedure Guidelines for Authorisation of Restrictive Practices in NDIS Funded Disability Services (Procedure Guidelines) and the Authorisation of Restrictive Practice in Funded Disability Services Policy (Policy).

What is the purpose of a QA Panel?

Under the Policy, restrictive practices are required to be included in a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and authorisation must be obtained by an Implementing Provider for each regulated restrictive practice that is proposed.

The purpose of a QA Panel is to review all restrictive practice(s) outlined in a BSP against the principles for use (Section 4.1.2 of the Procedure Guidelines) and decide whether to approve or not approve each restrictive practice, in accordance with these principles.

The QA Panel ensure that people's human rights are central to the decision-making process and that restrictive practices are only used as a last resort, for the shortest period of time, to reduce the risk of harm to people with disability or others while other proactive person-centred supports are being explored. The QA Panel also ensures that restrictive practices are only used in response to a behaviour of concern, where that behaviour poses a risk of harm to the person with disability and/or others.

How to prepare for a QA Panel

To ensure a decision can be made for each restrictive practice considered at a QA Panel the following should be confirmed by the Implementing Provider prior to convening the panel:

- The BSP is current (i.e. not expired)
- There is evidence of engagement with the person who the plan is about, their key supporters as well as the Implementing Provider.
- All restrictive practices that are currently used or proposed are included and described in the BSP.



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- There must be a Reduction and Elimination Plan included as part of a BSP or as an attachment. If the BSP is an interim plan, there may not have been sufficient time to develop a full Reduction and Elimination Plan. In such circumstances, an action plan to develop a Reduction and Elimination Plan must be provided.
- There is sufficient information in the BSP to address each of the principles for the use of restrictive practice(s).
- The BSP and all supporting documents have been sent to the Independent External Behaviour Support Practitioner (Independent External Practitioner) with sufficient time to read and review before the QA Panel.

Requirements of a QA Panel

Implementing Providers are responsible for convening or accessing a QA Panel. There is no requirement for QA Panel meetings to be face-to-face (telephone, teleconference and online videoconferencing facilities may be used.)

Where there are multiple providers implementing the restrictive practice(s) captured in a BSP for the same person, the Implementing Providers should come together to contribute to the QA Panel process and its outcome.

A QA Panel must have at least two decision-making members:

1. A Senior Manager or delegate of the Implementing Provider(s) with operational knowledge and relevant experience in behaviour support and restrictive practice.
2. An Independent External Practitioner who is external to the Implementing Provider and who did not write the BSP.

The Implementing Provider may invite other people to join the QA Panel as non-decision-making members. They include the person who the plan is about, their families/carers, the Behaviour Support Practitioner who wrote the BSP and any other important people in the person's life.

The role of the Independent External Practitioner is to ensure that the authorisation application is evidence-based. They act in an impartial way and make decisions based on the objective evidence and information available to support the decision at the time.

The Department of Communities maintains a register of Independent External Practitioners for Implementing Providers to access for QA Panels at no cost to Implementing Providers.

Decision-making members of QA Panels must consider actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest ahead of panel and declare any conflict of interest (prior to the QA Panel meeting) and implement any mitigation strategies. Mitigation actions taken must be recorded and included in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report.



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QA Panel decision

All restrictive practices documented in the BSP are reviewed against each of the five principles of use for restrictive practices and considered as met or not met. All five principles must be met for a restrictive practice to be approved.

The QA Panel's decision to approve a restrictive practice must:

- be supported by all decision-making QA Panel members
- specify the length of time for which the authorisation applies.

The authorisation expiry must:

- not exceed 12 months. A shorter period may be deemed appropriate in many circumstances.
- be no later than the expiry date of the BSP.

Once the QA Panel has reached a decision it must be recorded in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report and signed by decision-making QA Panel members.

The reasons for the decisions made should be detailed in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report, including any recommendations for follow-up prior to future QA Panel meetings. The reasons and recommendations should be specific and clear. The completed signed QA Panel Outcome Summary Report should then be provided to the NDIS Commission as evidence of authorisation. It is the responsibility of the Implementing Provider to ensure NDIS reporting requirements are met.

What if a restrictive practice is not approved?

In some cases, a QA Panel may not feel satisfied that the principles of use of restrictive practices are met, and the restrictive practice may not be approved. In this situation, it will be important that further consultation with the person, their family and/or other stakeholders, takes place around the QA Panel recommendations. This will enable further consideration of the use of the restrictive practice(s) and/or to respond to actions or requests for additional information for consideration at a future QA Panel meeting.

Expiry of authorisation approval

Approval remains valid until such a time as one or more of the following occurs:

- The authorisation date expires.
- The BSP is reviewed or changed.

If the BSP requires a change at any point within the authorisation period, then all restrictive practices in the revised BSP need to be re-presented at a QA Panel for a new authorisation decision. This needs to occur regardless of whether any restrictive practices



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included in the revised BSP have been previously authorised and/or the authorisation period has not yet expired for those restrictive practices.

Key steps in authorisation checklist

Before a QA Panel

Is there evidence the person with disability, their key supporters and the Implementing Provider have been consulted in development of the BSP?

Is the BSP current (i.e. not expired)?

Are all restrictive practices that are currently used or proposed included and described in the BSP?

Are all restrictive practices included in the BSP in response to a behaviour of concern where that behaviour poses a risk of harm to the person with disability and/or others?

Is there sufficient information in the BSP to address all five principles for the use of restrictive practice?

Is a Reduction and Elimination Plan included (comprehensive BSP), or an action plan identified to develop a Reduction and Elimination Plan (interim BSP)?

Has the BSP been sent to the Independent External Practitioner with sufficient time to read and review before the QA Panel?

As a provider implementing the restrictive practices have you arranged a QA Panel? If not have you arranged to access a QA Panel convened by another Implementing Provider?

Are other providers implementing the restrictive practices in the BSP? Have they been invited to the QA Panel?

Have other attendees, non-decision-making members of the QA Panel, been invited to the QA Panel?

Does the QA Panel have at least two decision making members, including:

A Senior Manager or delegate of the Implementing Provider with operational knowledge and relevant experience in behaviour support and restrictive practice.

An Independent External Practitioner (who is external to the Implementing Provider and who did not write the BSP).

Has each QA Panel member considered and declared any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest ahead of panel and implemented any mitigation strategies?



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- Have you ensured a process to record mitigation actions in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report?
- Have you arranged for someone to take minutes/ notes and record decisions in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report during the meeting?
- Have you arranged for someone to advise the person who the plan is about and their key supporters, about the outcome of the QA Panel?

After a QA Panel

- Is there only one QA Panel Outcome Summary Report for a person with disability for each QA Panel process, including when multiple Implementing Providers use the same QA Panel for authorisation?
- Has the QA Panel decision been recorded in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report?
- Are the reasons for the decisions listed in the QA Panel Outcome Summary Report, including any recommendations?
- Has consensus been reached for each proposed restrictive practice and the reason behind whether it was approved or not approved?
- Has the signed and completed QA Panel Outcome Summary Report been provided to the NDIS as evidence of authorisation?
- Have the NDIS authorisation process reporting requirements been met?

A QA Panel must be arranged before the authorisation date or the BSP expires. If a BSP changes within the authorisation period, each restrictive practice must be re-presented at a QA Panel for a new authorisation decision.

Contact information

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