



Local Coordination Operational Policy – Prioritisation of Funding

Purpose

This Policy outlines the principles and approach to prioritisation of funding in Local Coordination.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Local Coordination areas and is applicable to people with disability accessing Local Coordination support.

Policy statements

During the transition to the Australia-wide National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), a difference will remain between demand for reasonable and necessary supports and available funding to meet the costs of those supports. Prioritisation of funding will be required to ensure those individuals with the greatest need are adequately supported. Until the NDIS is fully implemented, this prioritisation will occur through local decision-making which reflects the principle that decisions are best made close to the individual they affect.

Funding allocation will balance the needs of the individual and their family/carer in relation to the needs of others seeking support.

Funded strategies must meet the principle of reasonable and necessary supports, and reflect the individual's support needs assessment.

Where there is greater demand than can be met with available funding, prioritisation indicators will guide decision making about the circumstances that will be prioritised for support, and subsequently which plan goals and strategies will be funded to meet those priority needs. It is acknowledged that possibly not all plan goals and strategies will be funded.

Principles

Decision-making principles are transparent, easily understood and publicly available.

Funding decisions will be open and transparent, and determined in a fair manner.

The decision-making process for prioritising funding is consistently applied across Local Coordination areas.

The individual's needs and availability of funds will determine the supports which receive funding. This may mean that not all plan goals and strategies proposed by the individual (or their representative) are funded.

Introduction

This policy will be implemented when an individual develops a plan for the first time, and when an individual with an existing plan has changed needs requiring additional funding.

The prioritisation of need for support will be considered by Local Coordinators in collaboration with the Area Manager and Regional Manager.

The prioritisation of funding of reasonable and necessary supports within a plan will be considered by Local Coordinators, in consultation with the individual (or their representative), as part of the planning process.

Supports may not be of the same nature, quantity or funding amount as was the case in the individual's previous plan.

The Local Coordinator will document the rationale for prioritisation of funding based on the priority indicators and using the Planning and Assessment Tool to provide evidence of support required.

Funding decisions will be endorsed in accordance with the approved delegated authority.

The process of prioritisation of funding is ongoing and will be considered as part of each scheduled or early plan review.

Funding decisions that do not meet the prioritisation of funding criteria are to be discussed with the Area and Regional Managers.

A Department of Communities (Communities) response, regardless of priority, does not replace the responsibility for mainstream agencies to provide services that meet the immediate needs that are not specifically related to the individual's disability. Relevant agencies should be contacted to ensure appropriate responses are provided to ensure the individual's support and safety.

Funding for strategies of less than three months to ensure the individual's safety can be enabled through the Temporary Funding process (see Local Coordination Operational Procedure – Temporary Funding Request). Where there is a permanent change in circumstances as a result of this situation, planning activities leading to the development of a new plan should commence as soon as is reasonably practicable after the immediate situation has been addressed.

Priority Areas

1. When considering an individual's need for support, the following circumstances will be prioritised:
 - a) The need for the support is urgent and requires an immediate response, e.g:
 - an insufficient level of care to meet the individual's disability-related support needs due to the usual support system becoming unavailable
 - the person is experiencing abuse or neglect (physical, psychological, sexual

- and/or emotional), or is imminently likely to if the support is not made available.
- b) The need for support arises from a situational change, such as returning to the community after hospitalisation, incarceration, a child turning 18 leaving care arrangements, or change in workplace or schooling, and as a result the person:
 - will have no, or negligible, disability-related supports in place and the delay is likely to result in a further reduction in functioning or wellbeing
 - will require appropriate support arrangements in place in order to move safely to the community.
 - c) The need for early intervention supports for children aged under 6 years with developmental delay, and for individuals soon after the disability is acquired or diagnosed, which are likely to benefit the individual by reducing their future need for disability-related supports by:
 - improving the effectiveness of those supports
 - improving functioning or slowing/halting further functional deterioration
 - enhancing the likelihood of achieving an approaching key milestone
 - strengthening the sustainability of informal supports available to the individual.
 - d) The need can be met in the short term and may prevent additional resources being required if the needs are unmet for a longer period.
 - e) Multiple and complex needs, or disadvantage exists within the personal, social and/or community context of the individual, and impacts or is likely to impact on their wellbeing.
2. Once the individual's need for support has been prioritised, the priority for funding goals and strategies identified in the individual's plan to meet that need will be based on:
- a) the strategies that the individual (or their representative) identifies as best able to meet the priority need
 - b) the strategies that the individual (or their representative) identifies as most important in addressing the priority need and is most urgent
 - c) the readiness of the requested strategies to be implemented
 - d) whether the supports, if used in the past, have been effective in achieving plan goals, or have a high likelihood of achieving a positive impact for the individual in the immediate future.

Comparability of decisions

The Planning and Assessment Tool will assist with determining and assessing an individual's support context for comparison purposes.

To enhance consistency of decision-making, the Area Manager may discuss approved plans with the Regional Manager and analyse the individual's circumstances, strategies that have been funded and the funding levels.

Complaints

An individual (or their representative) may raise concerns and complaints through Communities' complaint resolution process about how the prioritisation of funding decision was made, however this does not extend to the decisions themselves.

Responsibilities

Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

Other related documents

- Local Coordination Operational Policy: Safeguarding
- Local Coordination Operational Policy - Funded Supports in the Plan – Reasonable and Necessary
- Local Coordination Operational Policy – Plan Development and Plan Changes
- Local Coordination Operational Policy - Support Needs Assessment
- Local Coordination Operational Policy - Review of Plans
- Local Coordination Operational Procedure – Temporary Funding Request

Document control

Publication date	16 October 2020
Review date	16 October 2022
Owner	Executive Director – State-wide Services, Community Services Division
Custodian	Program Support and Development Manager - State-wide Services, Community Services Division
Contact	Program Support: programsupport@communities.wa.gov.au , State-wide Services, Community Services Division

Feedback and enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to programsupport@communities.wa.gov.au .

This document can be available in alternative formats on request.

Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Description
1.0	9 December 2016		
1.1	17 December 2019	Program Support	Review by 17/12/2020

Version	Date	Author	Description
1.2	16 October 2020	Program Support, State-wide Services, Community Services Division	Review by 16/10/2022