Autism & Functional Capacity Assessment for NDIS Access in Melbourne

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides funding for supports and services for Australians with a permanent and significant disability. For individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), accessing the NDIS requires a comprehensive report with formal diagnosis and a **functional capacity assessment that clearly indicates functional impairments.**

The Behavioural Neurotherapy Clinic (BNC) can carry out comprehensive diagnostic assessments that also include a **functional capacity asssment** in a written report as required to support an NDIS access request.

Important: ADHD alone is not currently listed as an NDIS-eligible primary disability in most cases. However, autism (ASD) is a common NDIS-eligible condition, and many individuals have both ADHD and ASD. Contact BNC to discuss your specific situation. **For funding, NDIS focuses on functional capacity, not just diagnosis.**

What Is an NDIS Access Report?

To apply for NDIS funding, you need to demonstrate a permanent and significant disability. For autism, this requires a formal diagnostic report that must:

- Confirm a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by a clinical psychologist, paediatrician or psychiatrist
- Be based on a comprehensive, multi-source assessment using recognised diagnostic tools (e.g., ADOS-2, ADI-R, CARS-2)
- Document how the disability affects daily functional capacity across multiple areas of life
- Confirm that the disability is permanent and significant
- Meet the NDIS's evidence requirements for access

How the NDIS Access Process Works

1

Contact BNC for an ASD assessment

Phone BNC to discuss your situation; this is the first step. A GP or paediatrician referral is not necessary but highly recommended as you can get medicare rebates with a referral. For individuals younger than 25, Medicare provides rebates for autism evaluations through Complex Neurodevelopmental Disorder (CND) item numbers, even before a formal diagnosis is made. This support covers up to 8 appointments with psychologists and allied health practitioners. (Services Australia).

2

Comprehensive ASD diagnostic assessment

BNC conducts a thorough autism assessment using clinical interviews for developmental history, **standardised observations and validated diagnostic tools**. For children, parent and teacher input is usually required. For adults colateral information is required.

3

Diagnostic report preparation

If ASD is confirmed, a BNC psychologist prepares a comprehensive written diagnostic report suitable for NDIS access request submission, documenting diagnosis, assessment tools used, and results of functional capacity assessment. In addition Medicare requires that the psychologist provides a written report to the GP or referring practitioner which should include: (Services Australia).

- assessments carried out
- treatment provided
- recommendations on future management for the patient's disability
- advice given to third parties, for example, parents and schools.

4

NDIS access request

A psychologist will discuss the report with you and help you complete the NDIS access form. You can then submit the NDIS access request form (with the psychology and and any other relevant reports you may have) by email to the NDIS website, or in person at an NDIS office.

5

NDIS planning meeting

If your access request is approved, an NDIS planner contacts you to develop your first NDIS plan, outlining the supports and funding available to you.

ASD Assessment Tools Used at BNC

For ASD diagnosis

A clinical interview, the ADOS-2 and/or CARS-2, the ADI-R, adaptive behaviour screening, online screening questionnaires for other conditions such as ADHD, anxiety and depression, and cognitive assessment if indicated. The tools used vary for children and adults. See what each assessment tool involves.

For functional capacity assessment

- Parent, school and care-giver reports
- PEDI-CAT
- Vineland
- WHODAS

NDIS Functional Capacity Areas

The **NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme)** in Australia uses **Functional Capacity Areas** to assess how a person's disability impacts their daily life. These areas help determine what supports a participant might need. Here are the main NDIS functional capacity areas, with brief descriptions for each:

1. **Mobility**
    - This covers a person's ability to move around their home and community. It includes walking, using mobility aids (like wheelchairs or walkers), getting in and out of vehicles, and navigating different environments.
2. **Communication**
    - This area looks at how a person understands others and expresses themselves — whether through speech, sign language, writing, or communication devices. It also includes the ability to understand and use language.
3. **Social Interaction**
    - This focuses on a person's capacity to engage with others, form relationships, behave appropriately in social settings, and manage emotions during interactions.
4. **Learning**
    - This refers to how someone learns new information and skills, including understanding instructions, remembering things, problem-solving, and making decisions. It covers both formal education and day-to-day learning.
5. **Self-care**

- This assesses how independently a person can manage personal care tasks like bathing, dressing, eating, toileting, and taking medication.

6. **Self-management**
   - Sometimes called “self-management” or “self-management of tasks,” this area is about managing daily tasks, organizing routines, making decisions, handling money, and planning ahead.

These areas are used during NDIS assessments to get a complete picture of how a person’s disability affects their everyday life, and to help tailor the right supports and funding.

Note: The NDIS has specific requirements for the evidence it accepts. Not all documentation automatically meet NDIS standards. Contact a psychologist at BNC to discuss whether your existing documentation is likely to be sufficient.

Frequently asked Questions about NDIS, ADHD and ASD

Is ADHD eligible for NDIS funding? +

ADHD alone is not typically listed as a primary NDIS-eligible disability. However, ASD is an eligible condition, and many individuals have both ADHD and ASD. If you have ASD (with or without ADHD), you may be eligible. Contact BNC to discuss your individual situation. NDIS focuses on the impact of ADHD and ASD on day to day functioning.

Who can write an NDIS report for autism? +

An NDIS diagnostic report for autism must be written by a registered psychologist or psychiatrist with appropriate expertise in ASD assessment. BNC's psychologists are qualified to prepare these reports with a clinical

psychologist oversight.

How long does an ASD assessment for NDIS take at BNC? +

A comprehensive ASD assessment typically involves several sessions across 3–6 weeks, plus report preparation time. Contact BNC for current scheduling information. See our detailed page on timing and costs

Can adults get an NDIS autism assessment, or is it only for children? +

Adults are just as eligible as children to apply for NDIS funding with an autism diagnosis. There's no age limit. BNC assesses both children and adults for NDIS purposes, using different tools and information sources appropriate to each age group, and focusing on the functional impact.

Can I complete my NDIS autism assessment via telehealth? +

Yes. BNC offers NDIS-suitable autism assessments via telehealth for clients across Victoria and Australia-wide, using the same standardised diagnostic tools and evidence standards as an in-clinic assessment.

Is there a Medicare rebate for an NDIS autism assessment? +

Some appointments may be eligible for a Medicare rebate under a Mental Health Care Plan from your GP, though the NDIS-specific functional capacity components generally aren't separately rebated. Contact BNC to discuss what's likely to apply to your situation.

Can I use an autism diagnosis from another psychologist for my NDIS access application? +

It depends on whether that assessment, diagnosis and its supporting report meet the NDIS's evidence requirements. Contact a BNC psychologist with details of your existing documentation and we can advise whether it's likely to be sufficient, or whether additional assessment is needed.

Does having both autism and ADHD (AuDHD) affect my NDIS application? +

Having both conditions doesn't change eligibility on its own, since NDIS access is based on autism being a permanent, significant disability with functional impact. But assessing both together gives a fuller picture of how ADHD-related traits add to that functional impact, which can strengthen your evidence. BNC assesses both conditions under one roof.

What happens if my NDIS access request is declined? +

If your access request isn't approved, the NDIA will explain their reasons, and you can request an internal review or reapply with additional evidence. A BNC psychologist can discuss whether further assessment or documentation might help strengthen a future application.

Need an autism assessment for NDIS ?

Make an appointment with a psychologist at BNC to discuss your situation. We provide comprehensive ASD assessments and NDIS-suitable diagnostic reports with functional assessment for children and adults.

□□ (03) 9848 9100

Information is general and subject to change, always verify current requirements with the NDIS (1800 800 110 or ndis.gov.au).

Updated on: 21/08/2026 by Dr Jacques Duff PhD - BA Psych; Grad Dip Applied Psychology PhD, FANSA, Clinical Nutritionist

Reviewed on:21/08/2026 by: Bernard Ferriere- Clinical Psychologist; BA; Grad Dip Applied Psychology; Dip Clinical Hypnosis; MAPS