

Information for Medical, Allied Health & other Professionals on the Inclusion Support Program and Documentary Evidence



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The Inclusion Support Program (ISP)

The Inclusion Support Program (ISP) is funded by the Australian Government to build the capacity and capability of eligible mainstream Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to include children with additional needs, alongside their typically developing peers. The ISP includes Inclusion Agencies who provide tailored inclusion advice and support and access specialist equipment where required. The ISP also provides funded support through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) with applications assessed for the four streams of IDF by the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM).

What is the purpose of support through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF)?

IDF support is available to ECEC services to address the barriers to inclusion for children with additional needs, which cannot be addressed by support from the Inclusion Agency, to enable their inclusion alongside their typically developing peers. Eligibility requirements and subsidy limits apply.

How can IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator be used?

ECEC services, who provide centre based day care or outside school hours care, can apply for funding to contribute to the cost of employing an Additional Educator to increase the educator to child ratio in the care environment, above licensing requirements. The aim is for all educators to implement the strategies they have developed to address any barriers to children's participation and interaction with peers and to embed inclusive practices to benefit all children.

The Additional Educator works as a member of the team, sharing the daily work and responsibilities to support the participation of all children in the care environment. The Additional Educator is not solely responsible for the child/ren with ongoing high support needs and does not provide ongoing one to one support for any child.

Who are children with additional and ongoing high support needs?

Children with additional and ongoing high support needs may include:

- children who have a disability or developmental delay or are currently undergoing assessment for disability.
- children who have a serious medical or health condition, including mental health.
- children who are presenting with challenging behaviours or trauma related behaviours.

A child with ongoing high support needs requires *significant additional support* from educators, which is over and above what would be expected for a child of similar age.

Please note, not all children with additional needs will also have ongoing high support needs. Other support is available through the Inclusion Support Program to support children's inclusion through the Inclusion Agency and other IDF Support streams.

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What documentary evidence is required?

The ECEC service must demonstrate they are including a child with **additional and ongoing high support needs** to be eligible to access the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator or FDC Top Up. To assist with this requirement, documentary evidence must be provided by the family to the service. Documentary evidence should be dated within the last 12 months (if not a permanent disability as per the [Social Security Guide](#)) and can include evidence that demonstrates the child has been assessed within the Australian Government system:

- the child's current Health Care Card with the code 'CD', or
- documentation to show the child is a current National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant, for example, a copy of the child's current complete NDIS plan or approval letter.

Other suitable documentary evidence can include:

- a report or supporting documentation signed by a relevant qualified, registered medical or allied health professional or qualified welfare professional, such as social worker, or registered psychologist.

This evidence will provide **details of the child's additional needs, including information about the current level or impact of the disability or additional needs, showing ongoing high support needs**. To demonstrate ongoing high support needs, the documentary evidence should outline the **specific concerns about the child's development and/or behaviour** as identified by the author, including the level or impact of the child's additional needs and if known, the supports required in their daily life.

What are the requirements for Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services and programs?

To be eligible for IDF Subsidy, an **OSHC service or program** must provide current documentary evidence by relevant professionals that confirms the child has *a diagnosis of disability, or is currently undergoing assessment for disability, and has ongoing high support needs*.

Is documentary evidence the only eligibility requirement?

Documentary evidence is not the only criteria for IDF Subsidy eligibility. Eligibility is determined based on the information provided about the child and the care environment. The Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) will identify the barriers to inclusion in the care environment for which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate solution, and how the educator team will work together to implement the strategies to address these barriers to meet the needs of all children.

Is there further information available? Further detail about documentary evidence is available in the [Documentary Evidence Information Sheet](#)

<https://www.dese.gov.au/uncategorised/resources/documentary-evidence-information-sheet>