What People Can Buy with Disability Funding: Ministry of Health Purchasing Guidelines

This document describes what government disability support funding (funding) can be used to buy. It is for people using:

- Enhanced Individualised Funding (EIF)
- Choice in Community Living (CiCL)
- Enabling Good Lives (EGL) hosted personal budgets
- Flexible Respite Budgets (Carer Support)
- Flexible Disability Supports (FDS).

Disabled people who can make choices about how they use their funding are more likely to buy goods and services that make their lives easier and/or better. This purchasing policy aims to give disabled people as much flexibility as possible over what they can buy with government funding.

A disability support (support) is a good or service that helps a person overcome barriers that come with having an impairment within a disabling society.

Criteria

There are four criteria that must be met to be able to use funding to help buy a disability support.

One: It helps people live their life or makes their life better

The support should help people live a good life.

Each person has a different idea about what a good life is. The person's goals and aspirations for a good life should be written out in a personal plan. This can be done with help from their Needs Assessment and Service Coordination (NASC) organisation or Independent Facilitator. Personal plans should include goals such as:

- having good relationships
- maintaining or improving skills
- being able to do everyday activities at home or in the community
- the person's family/whanau being supported to continue their caring roles
- being able to live in a home of the person's own choice

Two: It is a disability support

The support:

- is only needed because the person is disabled and/or
- costs more than would be the case if the person weren't disabled and/or
- is in addition to, or complements, the goods and/or services the person would need if they didn't experience disability.

Three: It is reasonable and cost-effective

Generally, the support should be 'reasonable'. Here it means that the support should cost about the same as (or less than) the market price for comparable things.

'Cost-effective' here means the best available outcome for the money spent.

It might cost more than another type of support but will help the person more, it will last longer or mean that less is spent on some other support now or in the future.

Four: It is not subject to a limit or exclusion

A person should explore other funding options to help get a support. Examples of other options include:

- the Disability Allowance (from Work and Income)
- grants, charitable donations
- equipment funding (either by the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Health)
- specialist services (e.g. the Ministry of Health's Behaviour Support Services and Child Development Services)
- district health board funded therapies
- transport allowances (e.g. the Total Mobility transport scheme).

In some cases, people can buy a support when funding for that support has been turned down by (or on behalf of) the responsible government agency or if waiting times are too long and the proposed support is expected to:

- achieve a person's life goal that would not otherwise be achievable and/or
- reduce disability support costs over time and/or
- reduce the risk that disability support costs will increase in the future.

The funding cannot be used for:

- paying family carers who are either a family member living with the disabled person or a parent or a spouse unless they are delivering Home and Community Support services and the disabled person has been assessed by a NASC as having high or very high needs
- illegal activities, gambling or alcohol
- things that are not disability supports, such as health services provided by a hospital or income support.

Further help

For more help in understanding this policy, people can talk to their NASC organisation or their provider to work out if a support they want to buy meets the criteria.

Also read the *Notes to the Ministry of Health Purchasing Guidelines* and *The Purchasing Approval Process* documents for more information.