

Your Life Your Choice - host provider model

Handbook for people with a
disability, their families and
support networks

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Introduction

In September 2012, the *Your Life Your Choice — self-directed support framework* was launched by the Premier, Campbell Newman MP, and the Minister for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Ms Tracy Davis MP.

Self-directed support enables you, your family and carers to have choice and control over the disability supports and services you purchase to achieve positive outcomes in your life. By using a combination of disability funding and other resources to plan and purchase supports and services, you become an active participant in the design and delivery of how you will meet your disability support needs.

The following elements underpin the framework for self-directed support in Queensland:

1. Good Planning
2. Working together in co-creation and collaboration
3. Promoting personal choice and control
4. Supporting changes in capacity
5. Having flexibility
6. Being accountable
7. Encouraging peer support
8. Purchasing reasonable and necessary support
9. Supporting community connections
10. Ensuring safeguards

You can choose to self-direct your individual funding through either a:

1. host provider model – where you make decisions with a host provider about whether you want to take some or all of the responsibility for buying and managing your disability supports and services, or
2. direct payment model - where you take all the responsibility for buying and managing your disability supports and services and you receive funding directly from Disability Services to pay for these.

This handbook is for people with a disability, their families and support networks. It will help you decide if self-directed support is for you. It explains how you can self-direct your support using a **host provider**.

The principles of choice and control

The Your Life Your Choice framework adopts human rights principles and requires that all people with disability:

- have the same human rights to be respected and treated with dignity as any other member of society
- have the right to individual autonomy, independence and the freedom to make their own choices about their lives
- cannot be discriminated against due to their ability, culture, age, gender or geography
- have the right to have valued roles in the community and be full, effective and active participants within their communities
- are accepted as part of human diversity and humanity
- have access to the same opportunities as other members of society

- have access to information in easily accessible and understood formats
- have the right to realise their individual, skills, capabilities and development within their lives.

Who can self-direct their support?

You can self-direct your support if you have:

- ongoing individualised funding from Disability Services, and
- support needs that are considered stable (see glossary).

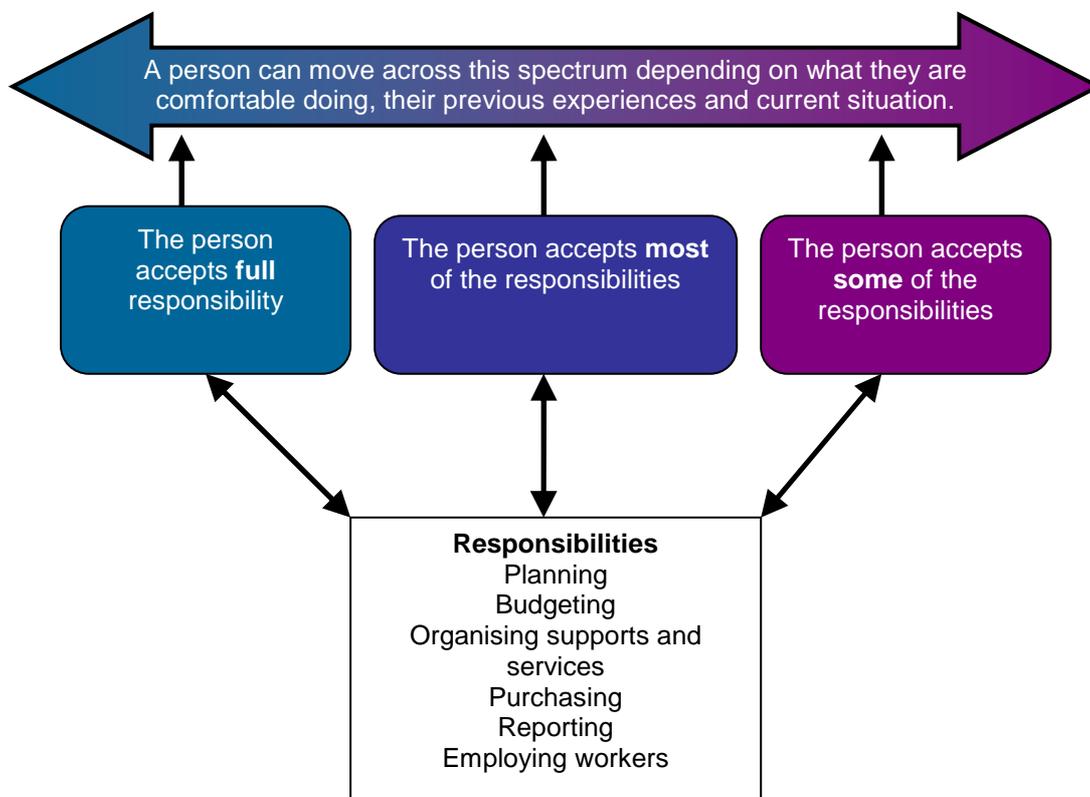
How does it work?

A host provider is the provider who will receive your individualised funding from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and assist you to plan, choose your disability supports and manage the funding.

Self-directed support – host provider model lets you make decisions about whether you want to take some, or all, of the responsibility for purchasing and managing your disability supports and services. It also lets you make the decisions about how you will receive your disability supports and services and where from.

This means the choice is yours - you may want your host provider to give you a little bit of help, or a lot of help, to self-direct your support. The different levels of responsibility are shown in the spectrum of self-direct support diagram below.

Diagram 1



Each host provider offers different types of help. Some will assist you with all the things you need to do to self-direct your support, others will assist you but you will take most of the responsibilities.

Where a host provider has a model that supports you to take full responsibility for your support and services, you will have the responsibility to:

- develop and manage your plan for support and funding
- identify, choose and pay the suppliers of your supports and services
- provide financial reports on how you have spent your government funding to the host provider.

Where a host provider has a model that supports you to take on some or most of the responsibility for your supports and services, you will have the responsibility to develop your plan for support and funding but may receive support from a host provider to manage the purchase of your supports and services.

Knowing how much responsibility you want to take on will help you to choose your host provider. You may want to talk to your family, friends or support network about self-directing your support. This may help you make a decision about whether it is right for you.

Planning supports and services

If you choose to self-direct your support, you will need a plan about how you will use your funding, what you will buy and where you will buy it from. This will be your plan for supports and funding.

There is not a standard format for the plan for support and funding. You may want to use words, drawings or pictures to tell your story. What the plan will look like will be discussed between you and your host provider and should be flexible enough to respond to your needs.

When you are developing your plan for support and funding you will need to show what supports and services you are going to buy with your disability funding to meet your disability support needs that are outlined in your assessment.

The plan will have a focus on linking your assessed need to your goals and priorities and to the specific supports and services you think will meet your need. The planning process should also give you opportunity to have choice and control over the disability supports you buy.

At a minimum, your plan for support and funding will need to include:

- what services categories you are assessed to receive
- the amount of funding you have
- your priorities or goals
- what supports and services you will buy to meet your assessed need
- where the supports and services will be bought from

You can develop your plan for support and funding before you approach a host provider or you can ask a host provider to help you develop one. Regardless of how your plan for support and funding is developed it belongs to you.

Your plan for support and funding can change if your situation or support needs change.

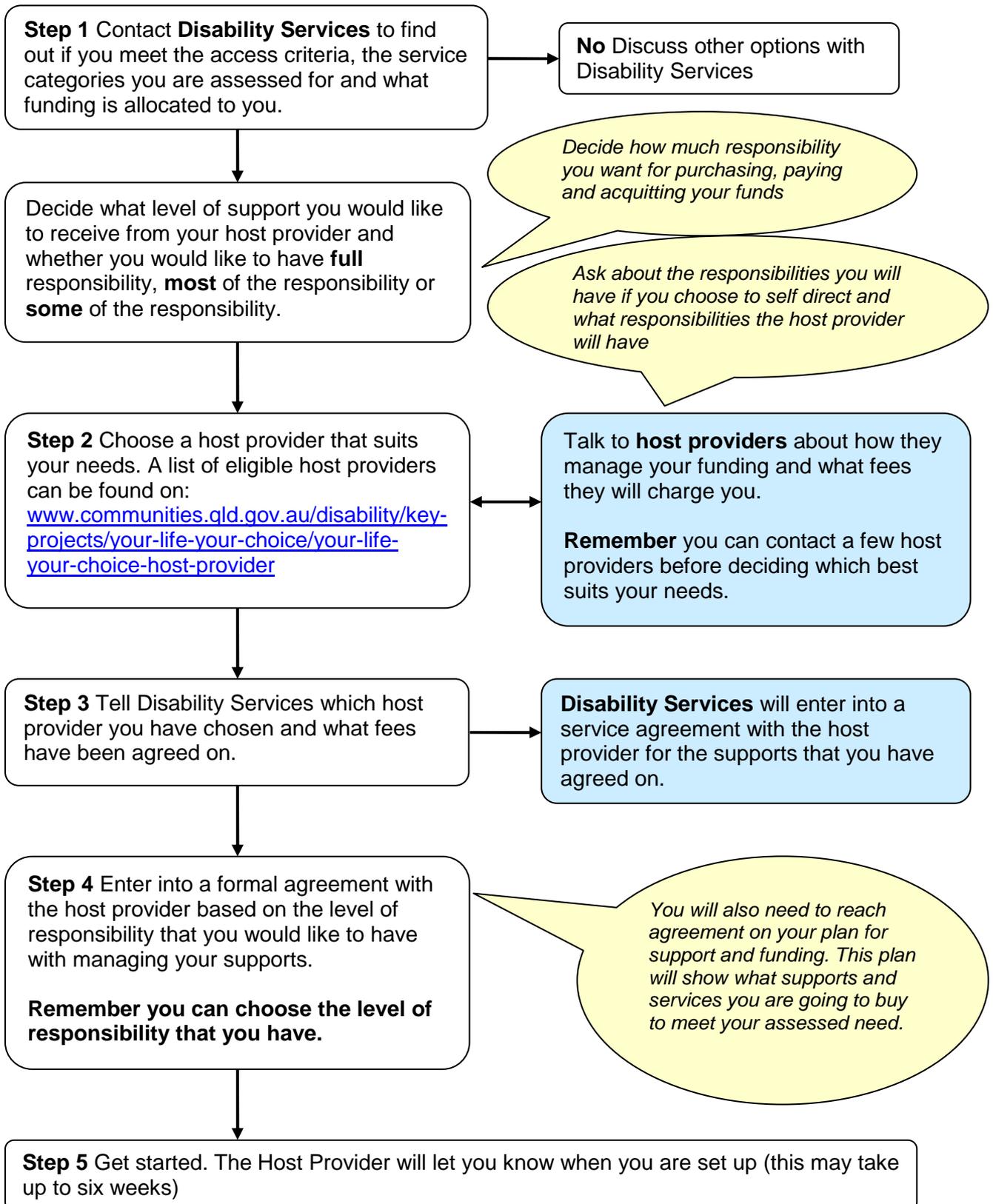
A host provider may assist you to make the changes, reprioritise what you are going to buy and re-budget for these changes within your funding allocation or you may be able to make your own changes to your plan for support and funding.

However this happens all changes to your plan will need to be endorsed by your host provider to make sure the changes still link to your assessed service categories and goals.

Links to resources to assist with planning are provided under further information and useful links.

Making it happen

Interested in self-directing your support? Your plan will include how you are going to use your individualised funding to meet your disability support needs.



Step one — can I self-direct my supports?

If you are interested in self-directing your support through a host provider you need to contact your local Disability Services regional office to find out if this is possible for you to do, this will depend on the type of funding you have.

If you meet the access criteria, Disability Services will tell you how much funding you have and what service categories you have been assessed to receive. For example, you may be assessed for accommodation support, community support, community access or respite.

You should take this information to host providers. This will help you and the host provider talk about what supports and services you will be able to buy.

To get the contact details of your local Disability Services regional office go to: www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/contact-us/disability-services-regional-offices

Step two — choosing a host provider

You are strongly encouraged to contact a few host providers before deciding which one best suits your needs.

Information on host providers that have been endorsed by Disability Services, the supports they offer, where they are available in Queensland, and their fees, is available at: www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects/your-life-your-choice/your-life-your-choice-host-provider

The host provider you choose does not have to be located close to where you live. If you choose a host provider that is not close to where you live, you need to ask them how they will support you from a distance.

When contacting a host provider you may want to ask them about:

- their fees
- how they will manage your funding
- who you can contact if a problem arises.

You should tell the host providers you contact how much funding you have and the service categories that you have been assessed for.

The host provider will tell you what services they provide as a host and give you an estimate of how much this will cost. You can then decide which host provider suits you.

You may want to prepare answers to the below questions to help you to decide if a host provider is right for you:

- Do I need help with planning?
- Do I need help to find the supports and service I want to buy?
- Do I want help to find my support workers?
- Do I want to employ my own workers?
- Do I want to pay the wages of people I employ?
- Do I want to buy my supports and services from non government service providers?
- Do I want the host provider to transfer my funding into a bank account for me to manage?

Step three — tell Disability Services about my host provider

To decide on a host provider you need to agree with them on the support they will provide you and what they will charge you. This is important as your funding needs to pay for the supports and services in your plan and the fees of the host provider.

Once you and the host provider have agreed, you need to let your Disability Services regional office know who the host provider is and what the fees are that they will charge you. You can do this by email, letter or by phoning them.

The Disability Services regional office will talk to your host provider to make sure they have all the information that is needed. Disability Services will need to develop a funding agreement with the host provider to be able to pay your funding to them.

Step four — agreement with the host provider

With self-directed support, you have an active role in the development of your plan for support and funding (see glossary), including the choice of the supports and services you buy. However, a host provider will have the responsibility to administer the funding and report all purchases made with the funding to Disability Services on your behalf. All of these responsibilities will be captured within your agreement with the host provider.

The host provider has some standard responsibilities that need to be outlined in the agreement that you sign with them. These include clearly identifying:

- the agreed roles and responsibilities of you and the host provider
- the supports the host provider will provide and associated fees
- the service categories (see attachment 1) you are able to purchase with your individual funding (based on your assessed need)
- how the funding will be paid
- how to change the level of responsibility you have in self-directing your supports
- what information you need to provide to the host provider for them to report to Disability Services how much funding you have spent
- what to do if you want to change your plan for support and funding
- how to change or stop the agreement or change host provider

Before signing the agreement you should also discuss the host provider's responsibilities for:

- assisting you to develop a plan for support and funding that meets your assessed needs
- endorsing your plan for support and funding
- ensuring purchases made with Disability Services funding are consistent with the approved items on your plan for support and funding
- managing the taxation impact of making payments directly to a you
- managing records in accordance with relevant legislation.

Where relevant you may also need to discuss:

- managing the employment of support staff
- assisting with the completion of pre-employment screening
- managing the payment of wages and insurances
- implementing occupational health and safety requirements
- managing financial expenditure (including NMDS reporting and financial accountability).

You may want to ask your family, friends, advocate, lawyer or someone else in your network to check the agreement before you sign it to make sure you are getting what you want and need.

Step five — when can I start with the host provider?

Once you have let the Disability Services regional office know who your host provider will be, Disability Services and the host provider will work as quickly as possible to get you started. This may take up to six weeks.

The host provider will keep you up to date with the progress of this change and will tell you when this has happened.

What can I buy with my funding?

All Disability Services funding must be used to purchase reasonable and necessary supports and services that are directly related to your assessed disability support needs, and your goals and priorities.

Your Life Your Choice lets you plan and purchase across all the service categories Disability Services has assessed you as needing. Disability Services will let you know what service categories you have been prioritised for.

Services categories include:

- Accommodation Support
- Community Support
- Community Access
- Respite

You and the host provider will use this information to develop your plan for support and funding. The plan requires you to describe what supports and services you will buy, how many of these will be bought and where they will be bought from.

During the planning process you will be able to decide to purchase across all service categories you are assessed for or just the one you have been prioritised for. During planning you will need to ensure you are able to meet your prioritised need within the funding allocation you receive.

Any supports and services purchased must:

- be directly related to your assessed need
- be outlined in your plan for support and funding
- help you achieve their planned priorities or goals
- directly benefit you
- be cost effective
- represent 'best value' (see glossary).

The purchase of supports through Your Life Your Choice must demonstrate the proper use of public resources and a direct link to your assessed need.

The funding **cannot** be used to pay for:

- supports funded by other local, state and commonwealth government programs
- costs that other community members would be reasonably expected to pay for with their own money, such as electricity, gas, telephone and internet, general household fittings, furniture and whitegoods not used by the person with a disability in meeting their disability support needs, food, groceries, rent or the purchase, running or maintenance costs of vehicles
- illegal activities, gambling or activities that are considered harmful to a person's health.

Taxation

If your funding is paid directly into your bank account by your host provider, you should ask them what will be affected by taxes and what this means for your funding.

The Australian Tax Office provides information at www.ato.gov.au or via phone on 13 28 66.

Where can you buy your supports and services?

You may choose to buy supports and services from:

- certified disability service providers and/or
- non-certified providers (see glossary) and/or
- you may also choose to employ your own workers or to engage contractors.

When you develop your plan for support and funding, you need to talk to your host provider about where you can buy your supports and services. You may also ask your host provider to tell you about the things you need to think about to help you decide where you want to buy your supports and services.

You are responsible for selecting where and how you get your support, the host provider will offer as much or as little support as you have agreed to.

Where you buy supports and services must be included in your plan.

You and your host provider will need to find out about the cost of services and make a decision about whether this represents the best value for money for the services provided. You and the host provider will need to consider the standard awards that will be paid for the service and where necessary align the employment arrangements to fair work practices.

If the host provider has concerns about where you are purchasing your supports from or the rates you are paying, they will discuss this with you.

Certified disability service providers

A certified provider is a non-government disability service provider who must comply with the requirements of *Disability Services Act 2006*. To be certified the service provider has met the requirements Disability Services' quality assurance system. You may know this as the disability service standards.

If you buy your services from a certified provider, you will know that the service provider has policies and processes in place that protect your rights and provides you with safeguards. Host providers must have policies and procedures to protect your rights and keep you safe.

Non-certified providers

Non-certified providers are those that are available to anyone in the community and are not specific disability services. These providers do not get funding from Disability Services.

Disability Services does not monitor or regulate the supports and services provided by non-certified providers. These providers may be regulated under laws that apply to all businesses, such as Australian Consumer Law.

Disability Services cannot assist a person with complaints about the services provided from non-certified providers.

Employment of workers

You may decide to employ your own workers. You should discuss this with your host provider and make sure that you have all the necessary information and support needed to do this.

If you become an employer you will be responsible for setting up your own business and employment structure. You need to consider things like pay roll, work place health and safety, insurance, taxation and superannuation. You need to be sure that you can meet all the requirements of being an employer.

As an employer you will be responsible for monitoring the quality of your workers. If you have concerns about the quality of a service provided by a worker you employ it would need to be managed under workplace relations laws.

You should ask your host provider for more information about becoming an employer and decide whether this is the right choice for you.

Use of contractors

The Australian Taxation Office offers a description of the difference between employees and contractors.

You will be responsible for making sure that you are engaging people to work with you under the right working conditions.

You should ask your host provider for more information about engaging contractors and refer to the Australian Taxation Office website:

<http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.aspx?doc=/content/61920.htm>

Change of circumstances

If your circumstances have changed, or you require or request additional funding, you will need to be reviewed and, if necessary, reassessed by Disability Services.

Changing your host provider or making a complaint

If you are unhappy with the support or services provided by your host provider you need to discuss this with them.

The host provider should talk to you about how they manage any issues that arise, including changing host provider, before you sign an agreement with them.

If the issues you or the host provider have can not be resolved you may decide to find another host provider. You need to do the same things that you did before when choosing a host provider, including agreeing on the supports and services they will provide and their fees.

If you want to make a complaint about the quality of a host provider's services you can make a complaint at your nearest Disability Services regional office. They can discuss the complaint with you and what you could do. If they think that it is necessary to make a formal complaint they may refer you to the Complaints and Review area.

More information about Disability Services' complaint process can be found at:

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/gateway/about-us/feedback-and-complaints>

If you buy a service from a non-certified provider, you need to use the complaints process provided by that service. Disability Services is not able to assist you with this.

Useful Links

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects/your-life-your-choice>

www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au

www.ato.gov.au

www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects/your-life-your-choice

www.justice.qld.gov.au/justice-services/guardianship/adult-guardian

Planning

www.helensandersonassociates.org.uk (see reading room and resources)

<http://www.inclusion.com/> especially <http://www.inclusion.com/path.html>

<http://www.kendrickconsulting.org/Pages/default.aspx> (see publications)

<http://www.familiesleadingplanning.co.uk>

http://www.stlukes.org.au/Pages/Resources/Innovative_Resources.aspx

Glossary – What do the words mean?

Certified provider	A certified provider is a Disability Services service provider who has achieved JAS- ANZ (Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand) certification by conforming to current disability service standards as defined under the Disability Services Act 2006.
Best Value	The process of establishing quality, prices, and availability that provides the best overall benefit to the person.
Direct Payments Model	The Direct Payments Model is where Disability Services deposits money directly into the bank account of a person with disability for the purchase of disability supports and services.
Disability Services	Disability services are those defined by the Disability Service Act 2006 which means one of the following: (a) accommodation support services; (b) respite services; (c) community support services; (d) community access; (e) advocacy or information services or services that provide alternative forms of communication; (f) research, training or development services. In the Your Life Your Choice handbooks these services are referred to as service categories.
Family/families	These words refer to family members of an adult or child with a disability. Family members may or may not live in the same residence as the person with a disability.
Host provider	A host provider is a non-government service provider that has been approved and certified to deliver services under the <i>Disability Services Act 2006</i> and has been endorsed as a host provider. A host provider will assist a person to self direct their individual funding and to have choice and control over the supports and services they receive.
Host Provider Model	The host provider model is a form of self-directed support that lets you make decisions with a host provider about whether you want to take some or all of the responsibility for purchasing and managing your disability supports and services.
Individual – host provider agreement	The agreement between the host provider and the person with disability. The agreement will state the terms and conditions of the management and administration of the host provider arrangement.
Individualised funding	Individualised funding is ongoing funding allocated for a person for the specific purpose of providing disability support for that person.
Non-certified	A non-certified provider is available to anyone in the community

Provider	and is not service specific to disability services. Examples could include a local naturopath, swimming teacher or private physiotherapist.
Person/people	The word 'person' refers to an adult or child with disability.
Plan for support and funding	<p>The plan will have a focus on linking the persons assessed need to the purchases of support and services made with Disability Services funding. The planning process should also maximise the persons opportunity for choice and control over the disability supports they purchase.</p> <p>The planning process will identify how the person will meet their prioritised and assessed needs.</p>
Relevant persons	<p>A relevant person for an adult with disability is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person nominated by the adult to deal with direct support matters on their behalf; or • a guardian or an administrator appointed for the adult; or • An attorney appointed by the adult under the <i>Powers of Attorney Act 1998</i>; • A member of the adult's support network other than a paid carer for the adult within the meaning of the <i>Guardianship and Administration Act 2000</i>. <p>A relevant person for a child with disability is a parent of the child. A parent of a child with disability includes:</p> <p>(a) a person who exercises parental responsibility for the child, other than a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis; and</p> <p>(b) for an Aboriginal child—a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child; and</p> <p>(c) for a Torres Strait Islander child—a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.</p> <p>The relevant person may assist with planning, arranging for the provision of supports, and managing the funding administration arrangement.</p>
Stable	Refers to a person who is not subject to sudden or extreme changes or fluctuations in their health, safety or well-being, as determined by them.
Support network	A person's support network could include their family members, friends, carers, and informal advocates who support the person with disability with planning and achieving their priorities or goals. They may also provide informal support to the person. The term excludes support workers and service providers.