

# Your Life Your Choice

## Buying supports and services

This Your Life Your Choice (YLYC) buying supports and services guide should be read in conjunction with other YLYC resources.

It provides useful information to assist your decision-making about the purchase of reasonable and necessary supports to help you achieve your goals for a good life.

When the word 'your' is used in this document it refers to the person with disability.

The document provides information under six broad topics:

- planning for a good life
- buying reasonable and necessary supports and services
- checklists for decision-making about the purchases of reasonable and necessary supports
- Disability Services assessed service categories
- examples of what you generally can and cannot purchase under the Disability Services service categories
- links to useful information and resources.

Self-directing your funding under YLYC provides you with greater control over your disability supports and services. This means that you can have more choice over whom, where and how your disability supports and services are provided. You are able to design and manage services in the way that best suits you. You are able to choose the person or service you want to provide your disability support. You can choose when the support is provided and you can buy more or less supports or services so they are more responsive to your disability needs as you work towards your goals and priorities. In some cases, for example, where a restrictive practice is in place, you may be required to purchase your supports in a particular manner.

Disability Services understands that everyone's needs, goals and priorities are different and recognises that each person buys supports and services to suit their individual circumstances. Disability Services recognises that funding itself does not create a good life for a person. It's about using these funds together with all the other opportunities and supports in your life to create a good life for yourself.

The following information will help you make informed decisions about the purchase of your reasonable and necessary support and services and should be read in conjunction with the other YLYC resources. There are some case study examples which may help you with your decision-making about the purchase of reasonable and necessary supports under YLYC.

## Planning

Planning will help you to consider how your support today might help you to live a more interesting and fulfilling life, have new experiences, learn new skills, meet new people and connect with family and friends. Your planning will help you work towards the future you want and assist you to achieve your goals such as increasing your independence, moving into your own home, participating in community activities or taking part in employment.

Links to planning resources and other useful information are included on page 11.

## Buying reasonable and necessary supports and services

Disability Services funding is available to meet reasonable and necessary supports in line with your assessed needs.

The YLYC Self-directed Support Framework defines reasonable and necessary supports as those that promote positive outcomes for the person with disability.

These supports are outlined in a person's plan and should be:

- of benefit to the person
- supports that are appropriate to the person's needs
- delivered by an appropriate service provider
- cost effective.

Purchases that are not considered reasonable and necessary supports and services include:

- day-to-day living expenses
- supports or services that can be accessed through other schemes or programs such as the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS), the Vehicle Options Subsidy Scheme (VOSS) and programs offered via Queensland Health, Queensland Transport or the Queensland Department of Education and Training.
- items or activities that are illegal, or detrimental to health (e.g. cigarettes)
- activities that place the person or others at risk of harm.

The following checklists provide questions you can ask yourself to determine if something you want to buy would be considered *reasonable and necessary*.

**Checklists for decision-making about your purchases:**

<b>When support and services <i>WOULD</i> be considered reasonable and necessary</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
Will the funding be used to purchase services and supports that help you to achieve your goals and priorities?	
Is the funding being used to purchase services and supports that are directly related to your Disability Services assessed need (the service category)? (See information below for explanation of service categories and types.)	
Is the funding being used to purchase supports and services as outlined in your agreement with the host provider or the department? (You must discuss the support or service with your host provider if appropriate or identify the support or service on your Statement of Support and Funding if you are a Direct Payments participant.)	
Is the funding being used to purchase supports or services which are a direct benefit to you?	
Is the funding being used to purchase supports and services that are effective and represent the best value to you? You may want to consider the cost, quality, availability and appropriateness of support and services before buying.	
Is the funding being used to purchase supports and services that you require as a result of your disability? (The support and services should assist with the impact of your disability on your functional capacity and independence.)	
<b>You must answer YES to all of the above questions for support and services to be considered reasonable and necessary</b>	

<b>When support and services <i>WOULD NOT</i> be considered reasonable and necessary</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
Is the funding being used to purchase support or services that can be provided from either informal networks or from other organisations (formal support via, for example, Queensland Health or the Department of Education and Training)?	
Is the funding being used as income support (including using funding to alleviate your personal or financial hardship, or that of your family or networks)?	
Is the funding being used to pay for supports or services that can be accessed through other subsidy schemes or programs (such as Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme, Vehicle Options Subsidy Scheme)?	
Is the funding being used to purchase something that any community member would be reasonably expected to pay for with their own money (for example, electricity, gas, telephone and internet, general household fittings, furniture and whitegoods not used by the person with disability in meeting their disability support needs, food, groceries, rent, or the purchase, running or maintenance costs of vehicles)?	
Is the funding being used to purchase items or activities that are illegal or detrimental to your health (such as cigarettes) or that place you or other people at risk of harm?	
<b>If you answered YES to any of the above questions then support and services would NOT be considered reasonable and necessary</b>	

## **Your assessed service categories**

Disability Services undertakes an assessment of your disability support needs and then determines the types of services that best meet these needs. These services sit within six service categories and are known as service types.

Once you have expressed interest in YLYC, Disability Services provides you:

- with a letter advising you of your assessed service categories
- the amount of your funding and where applicable
- confirms the use of a restrictive practice if it is known.

The following are possible service categories a person with disability might be assessed for:

- Accommodation support
- Community support
- Community access
- Respite
- Alternative forms of communication
- Goods and services.

Within each service category there are a number of service types that describe the options you can buy. For example, under the respite category there are a range of respite types such as in-home respite, centre-based respite and flexible respite.

If it suits your needs, you can choose not just one service type but any service type that sits under the service category.

## **Examples of what you can and cannot purchase under the service categories**

Tables One to Six on the following pages contain examples of supports and services that would be considered to generally fit, or not fit, into the requirements in each service category. These tables assume you have said *yes* to all of the questions about reasonable and necessary supports in the YLYC Self-directed Support Framework and that you have also considered other YLYC requirements.

**Table One: Service Category – Accommodation Support**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people can generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b><u>Accommodation support</u></b> (1)</p> <p><i>Description:</i> Accommodation support services are designed to support people with a disability to have choice and to live as independently as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large or small residential places (1.01 – 1.04)</li> <li>• hostels (1.044)</li> <li>• group homes</li> <li>• attendant care/personal care (1.044 – 1.06)</li> <li>• in-home accommodation support (1.06)</li> <li>• alternative family placement (1.07)</li> <li>• other accommodation support (1.08)</li> </ul>	<p>You could buy services related to accommodation support whether you live alone, live with family or wherever you are at the time (e.g. taking your personal care support while on holidays). Support generally means you would be assisted by the person or service of your choice with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal care for daily tasks such as hygiene, bathing, dressing</li> <li>• domestic assistance if you are not able to undertake these yourself or need assistance to be more independent with domestic tasks</li> <li>• eating and drinking</li> <li>• attending appointments</li> <li>• budgeting, banking and shopping</li> <li>• assistance in planning, preparation and cooking meals</li> <li>• employee-related costs for these supports e.g. costs associated with employing your own workers including superannuation, insurance, award entitlements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rent</li> <li>• personal or household items (e.g. toiletries, clothing and linen)</li> <li>• household bills (e.g. electricity, telephone, internet)</li> <li>• furniture and appliances (e.g. fridge)</li> <li>• vehicles</li> <li>• accommodation, airfares, cruise costs</li> <li>• buying a home or home renovations</li> <li>• food, restaurant or grocery items</li> <li>• medication</li> <li>• items or support for another family member or person</li> </ul> <p>These are items that community members are expected to pay for themselves.</p>
<p><b><u>Joe’s purchase of accommodation support during a planned holiday</u></b></p> <p>Joe is 20 years old and lives at home with his family. He wants to move out of home and live with his best mate Greg. Greg also receives disability services funding. Before self-directing under YLYC, Joe received in-home support and attended a respite centre twice a month for overnight stays. He likes cooking shows, is interested in learning how to cook and has a dream to work as a chef one day.</p> <p>Joe’s plan is to move out and share a house with Greg. Joe and Greg are working on this plan and with the help of their families; each employ their own support workers. One support worker also works as a chef at a local restaurant and has agreed to teach Joe how to cook, as well as connect him with some networks in hospitality. Joe is hopeful this may lead to some work experience.</p> <p>Joe and Greg are planning a holiday together to see if they <i>can live together</i>. While on holiday, Joe and Greg will pay for their accommodation costs, food and entertainment with their own income and will use their disability funding to pay their support workers’ wages and conditions. Because the employment award for the support staff provides certain entitlements while they are away from home, Joe and Greg will negotiate holiday wage rates and develop an agreement with their support workers prior to their holiday. When Joe and Greg go on holiday, Joe’s mum will also be able to have a break from providing some of Joe’s supports.</p>			

**Table Two: Service Category – Community Support**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people could generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b>Community support (2)</b></p> <p><i><b>Description:</b> Specialised therapeutic care service intended to improve, maintain or slow deterioration of a person’s functional performance, and/or assist in the assessment and recommendation of equipment to live as independently as possible in the community</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• therapy support (2.01)</li> <li>• early childhood intervention</li> <li>• behaviour/ specialist intervention (2.02)</li> <li>• counselling (2.04)</li> <li>• case management (2.062)</li> <li>• other community supports (2.07)</li> </ul>	<p>You could buy services from a clinically trained or qualified practitioner of your choice, where it relates to the person’s disability, particularly to improve and maintain their functional ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• therapy such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy</li> <li>• psychologist</li> <li>• social work</li> <li>• early childhood intervention</li> <li>• counselling</li> <li>• support with accessing mainstream services</li> <li>• planning and case management</li> <li>• assessment for disability equipment needs</li> <li>• assessment to determine needs</li> <li>• assistance with the following to live in the community - PEG feeding, catheter changes, skin integrity checks or tracheostomy tube changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diagnosis or treatment of health conditions (e.g. dietitian, GP, dentist, nurse, hospital or palliative care)</li> <li>• medication</li> <li>• therapy that is experimental or without evidence</li> <li>• companion and assistance animals or pets</li> <li>• relaxation massages</li> <li>• Reiki therapist</li> </ul> <p>Although a person may receive some benefit from these items, they do not relate directly to a disability specific assessed need.</p> <p>These are items that are often the responsibilities of other agencies such as the Queensland Department of Health.</p>
<p><b>Amelia’s purchase of community support</b></p> <p>Brenda’s four year old daughter Amelia has been diagnosed with autism. Like every mum, Brenda would like Amelia to attend her local day care preschool program to help her get ready for school. Prior to YLYC, Brenda received respite support and therapy services, such as speech and occupational therapy for Amelia.</p> <p>Brenda has used Amelia’s disability funding to seek advice from a therapist who specialises in autism. She has been provided with some strategies to assist Amelia to be more independent and to socialise with the kids in the playground. The therapist also provided some strategies for Brenda to discuss with the day care centre. Brenda pays for the child care fees with her own income. Amelia receives funding support through the Education Queensland’s Inclusion Support Program which pays for a worker in a day care centre. Amelia has met a new friend called Ella and they have started to plan play dates. To assist Amelia to have a play date with Ella, increase her communication in a different setting and work on building her fine and gross motor skills, Brenda uses Amelia’s disability services funding to pay for a support worker, who is also a part-time drama student and can provide extra fun with resources to dress up.</p>			

**Table Three: Service Category – Community Access**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people could generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b>Community access (3)</b></p> <p><i>Description: Services that provide support for people to gain greater access and participate in community-based activities. May focus on continuing education or enjoyment, leisure and social interaction</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learning and life skills development (3.01)</li> <li>recreation and holiday programs (3.02)</li> <li>other community access (3.03)</li> </ul>	<p>You could buy community access support to assist you with the following types of supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>your personal care during your community access (e.g. education, recreation, leisure and activities)</li> <li>your personal care when you are employed or running your own business</li> <li>developing and maintaining your friendships and relationships</li> <li>a need that arises as a result of your disability (e.g. targeted muscle strengthening program to improve mobility developed by your physiotherapist (cost of the exercise physiologist) or behaviour management strategies developed by your psychologist)</li> <li>a course to develop your life skills (e.g. social, basic cooking, road safety, literacy and numeracy)</li> <li>your employee related costs for these supports (e.g. superannuation, insurance, award entitlements).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transport or petrol</li> <li>driving lessons</li> <li>club or gym membership fees</li> <li>club, recreation or gym equipment (adjustments due to your disability may be included)</li> <li>course costs that are not related to your disability (e.g. painting, art therapy, guitar lessons, music therapy)</li> <li>entry fees into events (e.g. football, Dreamworld)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sam’s purchase of community access</b></p> <p>Sam is 19 and has an interest in cars. He would like to do a pre-vocational course in automotive mechanical repairs. Sam may require some assistance to get ready for TAFE particularly additional help with literacy and numeracy due to the impact of his intellectual disability.</p> <p>Sam enrolls in a literacy and numeracy course through TAFE which will help him to enhance his skills to better manage assignment writing when he starts his automotive studies. He is able to pay for the literacy and numeracy course fees with his Disability Services funding as this is addressing the impact of his disability and preparing him for future work and study. As the costs for the automotive mechanical repair course is something other young men Sam’s age are expected to pay (they often seek a student loan through VET Fee Help) Sam will pay this with his own income. This includes paying for his resources such as steel cap boots and tools.</p> <p>Sam’s support worker David normally assists Sam with community access and personal care and is a retired mechanic who shares similar interests in cars. Sam is able to negotiate a change in his hours of support, so he gets some initial support while at TAFE and while he is at home. David has agreed to help him with his studies as well.</p>			

**Table Four: Service Category – Respite**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people could generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b>Respite (4)</b></p> <p><i><b>Description:</b> Respite services provide a short-term break for carers to assist in supporting and maintaining the primary care giving relationship, while providing a positive experience for the person with a disability</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respite in own home (4.01)</li> <li>• respite in centre-based (4.021 – 4.022)</li> <li>• peer support respite (4.032)</li> <li>• flexible respite (4.04)</li> <li>• holiday respite (4.052)</li> </ul>	<p>Respite support should, in the first instance, be focused on assisting the person with disability to meet their goals. This provides a flow on effect to carers.</p> <p>It could include the following types of support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing skills and abilities</li> <li>• support to attend social, recreational, vocational, educational and employment activities</li> <li>• a combination of these activities</li> <li>• support in, or out of the home during the day or night</li> <li>• your employee related costs for these supports (e.g. superannuation, insurance, award entitlements).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• child care costs</li> <li>• transport or petrol</li> <li>• club or gym membership fees</li> <li>• club, recreation or gym equipment</li> <li>• course costs that are not related to your disability (e.g. painting, guitar lessons)</li> <li>• entry fees into events (e.g. football, Dreamworld)</li> <li>• food or personal spending</li> <li>• medication</li> <li>• accommodation, airfares, cruise costs</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Kathy's purchase of respite</u></b></p> <p>Kathy is 18 years old and lives at home with her mum Jenny. Jenny and Kathy get on well and like living together. They share costs and enjoy each other's company. Jenny provides a lot of informal support to Kathy particularly with her personal care which includes a lot of lifting which is sometimes tiring for Jenny. Kathy would like her mum, Jenny, to be available to continue to provide some informal support but would like to get out more with her friends.</p> <p>Kathy can use her Disability Services funding to do things that other 18 year olds do which also gives time for Jenny to do the things she likes.</p> <p>Types of services Kathy might purchase include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• paying a support worker to support her in the home</li> <li>• paying a support worker to support her while she stays overnight at a friend's house, or while on holidays</li> <li>• paying a support worker to support her to attend a night club, a movie and engage in hobbies.</li> </ul> <p>Kathy uses her own income to purchase things such as the pizza she has at her friend's house, accommodation when on her holidays, the drinks and popcorn at the movies, and the beads for the jewellery making group. These are expenses all people in the community are generally expected to pay. With the support of her worker, Kathy can do things that other 18 year old women do, while her mum is also catching up with friends. Kathy and Jenny are also exploring equipment and technology options to assist with lifting and plan to talk with Disability Services about what they find.</p>			



**Table Five: Service Category – Alternative forms of Communication (and advocacy and information)**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people could generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b><u>Alternative forms of communication (and advocacy and information) (6)</u></b></p> <p><i><b>Description:</b> Alternative forms of communication for people who by reason of their disabilities are unable to access information provided in the standard format</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interpreter services, radio and alternative formats of print medium (6.05)</li> <li>• information, referral and advocacy services (6.01 – 6.02)</li> </ul>	<p>You could buy alternative forms of communication to assist you with the following types of things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interpreter services, radio and alternative formats of print medium (e.g. TTY, Braille)</li> <li>• an advocacy service for Disability Services purposes (services of this nature are often free for people living in Queensland)</li> <li>• purchase the full or partial cost or lease of communication aids, goods and/or equipment to people needing communication assistance to live safely and independently in the community</li> <li>• services designed to enable people with disability to increase the control they have over their lives through the representation of their interests and views in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an iPod</li> <li>• an iPad or tablet</li> <li>• advocacy for matters unrelated to a person’s disability</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Daniel’s purchase of alternate communication</u></b></p> <p>Daniel, who has a hearing impairment, would like to attend an internet conference about setting up an internet business. He feels this conference will support him to work towards one of his goals of gaining employment.</p> <p>A sign language interpreter is not available at the conference and he would like to know if he can use his Disability Services funds to pay for an interpreter so he is able to attend the conference. Due to Daniels hearing impairment without an interpreter he is unable to attend the conference.</p> <p>Daniel can use his Disability Services funds for the purposes of Auslan interpreting. He can also use his funds to purchase other services that would assist him with his communication needs to enable him to attend the conference.</p> <p>Daniel meets some new friends at the conference who have asked him out with them for dinner. Daniel like anyone else in the community uses his own income to pay for his meal.</p>			

**Table Six: Service Category – Goods and services**

Service category	Service types (see links page 11 for more detail)	Example of the types of things people could generally buy with Disability Services funding	Example of the types of things people can generally not buy with Disability Services funding
<p><b><u>Goods (and services) (7)</u></b></p> <p><b>Description:</b> Provided to maintain independence and current living environment; support socialisation and communication; or support active participation in the community. Items may be purchased or hired</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other supports (7.04)</li> </ul>	<p>You could buy goods and equipment that relate to the person’s disability, that in particular improve and maintain their functional ability and independence as assessed by a clinically trained or appropriately qualified practitioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short term hire, gap payments or buying wheelchairs, walking aids, dressing aids, food thickener and other disability aids <u>after</u> exploring other schemes</li> <li>• items that increase independence in mobility, communication, reading, personal care or community access (including computer software or an application (app) which can be used on a hand-held device, prescribed by a relevant professional)</li> <li>• equipment that reduces the need for personal or household support (e.g. alert system)</li> <li>• purchase the full or partial cost or lease of communication aids, goods and/or equipment to people needing communication assistance to live safely and independently in the community</li> <li>• assessment, training and prescription of equipment.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Costs for self-directing your supports and services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computer software to manage funds and pay workers</li> <li>• assistance or advice in setting up, managing your funds and employing workers (e.g. an accountant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an iPad or tablet</li> <li>• an iPod</li> <li>• iTunes or gaming applications</li> <li>• mobile phone</li> <li>• vehicle</li> <li>• items covered under footwear and orthotics</li> <li>• aid and equipment items available through other schemes</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Participants must have a Disability Services assessed need for specialist disability goods or equipment, and other existing programs and options must be explored first. (For example Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS), Vehicle Options Subsidy Scheme (VOSS), Community Aids Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (CAEATI).)</i></p>
<p><b><u>Elizabeth’s purchase of goods and services</u></b></p> <p>Elizabeth has a physical disability and recently needed to have a reassessment from an occupational therapist for her daily support needs. From this assessment, the occupational therapist recommended Elizabeth buy various household items to assist her, to reduce the deterioration of her skills. Elizabeth purchased the items recommended by the occupational therapist such as a power pour kettle, electric can opener and assorted specialised utensils or equipment. These items help Elizabeth to maintain her independence in daily living tasks.</p> <p><b><u>Purchasing costs to assist with self-directing Cameron’s supports and services</u></b></p> <p>Cameron has a spinal cord injury and lives by himself in a small flat. Cameron sources and contracts his own staff to support him with his accommodation and personal care needs. He has up to four people providing this support on a rotational basis. Cameron likes being independent, but doesn’t want the hassle of doing payroll services for the staff. Cameron decides to employ an accountant for his payroll requirements. He is able to use his Disability Services funding for this cost. It saves him time and he has time to do more of the things he likes doing instead.</p>			

## Links to useful information and resources

Your Life Your Choice	Website: <a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects/your-life-your-choice">www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/key-projects/your-life-your-choice</a> Email: <a href="mailto:yourlifeyourchoice@communities.qld.gov.au">yourlifeyourchoice@communities.qld.gov.au</a>
Your Life Your Choice Direct Payments	Website: <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au/disability/adults/receiving-direct-payments/">www.qld.gov.au/disability/adults/receiving-direct-payments/</a>
Your Life Your Choice Host Providers	Website: <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au/disability/service-providers/being-host-provider/">www.qld.gov.au/disability/service-providers/being-host-provider/</a>
Disability Services Regional Service Centres	Website: <a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/support-and-services/contact-us/disability-services-regional-offices">www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/support-and-services/contact-us/disability-services-regional-offices</a>
Disability Services Output and Output Measures (Service Categories and Service Types)	Website: <a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/support-services/providers/funding/documents/disability-services-outputs-and-output-measures.pdf">www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/support-services/providers/funding/documents/disability-services-outputs-and-output-measures.pdf</a>
Queensland Government	Website: <a href="http://www.qld.gov.au/disability">www.qld.gov.au/disability</a> Phone: 13 QGOV (13 74 68) TTY (telephone typewriter): 133 677 NRS (The National Relay Service): 1300 555 727 TIS (The Translating and Interpreting Service): 13 14 50
National Disability Insurance Scheme	Website: <a href="http://www.ndis.gov.au/">www.ndis.gov.au/</a> Phone: 1800 800 110
NDIS planning guide and workbook	Website: <a href="http://www.ndis.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/planning_guide.pdf">www.ndis.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/planning_guide.pdf</a>