

# Lifetime Care

# Social Supports Policy





## Contents

1.	Background and context .....	3
2.	Purpose .....	3
3.	Policy Principles .....	3
4.	Scope .....	3
5.	When can Lifetime Care fund social supports? .....	3
6.	When is Lifetime Care unable to fund social supports? .....	4
7.	Are there circumstances where Lifetime Care may consider funding Social Supports that are not treatment/rehabilitation related? .....	4
8.	What information does Lifetime Care require to consider these requests under exceptional circumstances? .....	4
9.	Alternate options for Social Supports .....	5

## 1. Background and context

The Lifetime Care and Support Scheme (Lifetime Care) pays for treatment, rehabilitation and care for people who have been severely injured in a motor accident in NSW, under the Motor Accidents (Lifetime Care and Support) Act 2006. Following severe injury, it is not uncommon for participants of Lifetime Care to require support to address social issues as they progress through their rehabilitation journey.

For the purposes of this policy, Social Support is defined as the provision of practical assistance to address and/or alleviate social stressors. Social support can be provided by a person's informal and/or formal supports. Social stressors may include, for example, accommodation issues, financial difficulty, access to services, or legal matters.

Lifetime Care may consider a request for treatment, rehabilitation and care relating to the management of social issues if the services are reasonable and necessary and are required as a direct result of the motor vehicle accident.

Lifetime Care recognises that in some exceptional circumstances, participants may require assistance to resolve social issues that are not injury, treatment or rehabilitation related. When requests of this nature are made, Lifetime Care requires additional information to be provided to ensure these decisions can be made in a timely manner.

Provision of social supports or services may be undertaken by a variety of allied health professionals, case managers, or other funded and non-funded services.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Social Supports Policy is to provide guidance on the circumstances in which Lifetime Care will fund Social Supports.

The policy clarifies the scope of Lifetime Care funding and provides guidance on the type of information Lifetime Care requires to support decision-making about requests relating to social supports.

The policy promotes transparency in Lifetime Care decision making by outlining the circumstances and additional factors that may be considered when reviewing a request for social supports.

## 3. Policy Principles

1. Lifetime Care recognises the impact that severe injury can have on a person's ability to manage and respond to changes in their social circumstances or significant social issues.
2. Social Supports considered to be treatment or rehabilitation-related are typically part of a rehabilitation plan, with associated capacity-building therapeutic goals, strategies, and outcomes to enable the participant to complete these tasks independently in the future.
3. Lifetime Care may consider a request relating to the provision of Social Supports for other specific reasons, where those supports are to alleviate a significant specific barrier to the engagement with treatment and rehabilitation services
4. Provision of social supports or services may be undertaken by a variety of allied health professionals, case managers, or other funded and non-funded services.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All participants in the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme
- Lifetime Care staff and service providers engaged by Lifetime Care, who are supporting participants requesting social supports
- Lifetime Care staff making decisions about requests for Social Supports

## 5. When can Lifetime Care fund social supports?

Lifetime Care can fund reasonable and necessary Social Supports for participants of the scheme where the services are considered to be treatment, rehabilitation and care and related to the motor accident. Requests for social supports are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and consider the participant's individual circumstances and context.

Social Supports considered to be treatment or rehabilitation-related are typically part of a rehabilitation plan, with associated capacity-building therapeutic goals, strategies, and outcomes to enable the participant to complete these tasks independently in the future.

## 6. When is Lifetime Care unable to fund social supports?

Some requests for social supports involve supporting participants with tasks that are either not considered to be treatment, rehabilitation and care, or not related to their motor accident injury. Examples of this are assistance with visa applications, managing financial obligations, or attending to legal or court matters.

Generally, these types of supports are provided by informal supports, or accessed through other government agencies and non-government organisations.

## 7. Are there circumstances where Lifetime Care may consider funding Social Supports that are not treatment/rehabilitation related?

It is acknowledged that at times assisting a participant to resolve other social issues not relating to treatment or rehabilitation can facilitate their ability to engage in their injury-related rehabilitation activities, and access other funded disability services for activities/supports outside the scope of Lifetime Care funding.

In some exceptional circumstances, Lifetime Care may fund Social Supports to assist a participant to address an acute accommodation related need, and/or apply for other key disability or injury-related agencies or schemes, for example the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This is because it is recognised that stable accommodation facilitates a person's ability to engage in their rehabilitation activities, and that the person may require other funded disability supports for activities that are outside of the scope of Lifetime Care funding.

The reasons Lifetime Care might consider a request to manage these exceptional circumstances may include, for example, if a participant is unable to complete this task themselves due to the nature of their injury, and they do not have a person responsible, appointed Guardian or informal supports who can assist them. Information required for a request of this nature is included in Section 8.

## 8. What information does Lifetime Care require to consider these requests under exceptional circumstances?

Where there are exceptional circumstances, a request for non-treatment/rehabilitation related social supports must include the following information:

- the factors that present as barriers to the participant completing the task independently, or with their current formal or informal supports;
- the steps taken to date by the participant/their supports/their therapists to address or manage the task;
- reasons as to why other publicly funded services are not suitable to resolve the current issue;
- a clear outline of the plan for the intervention. This should include a breakdown of the steps required, with information about the timeframe, goal of the intervention, and a transition plan to long-term and sustainable supports

The request should outline a differentiation of the services, ensuring concurrent or duplicating services are not being provided. Where publicly funded services are available to assist in resolving the issue, it is an expectation that the participant is referred to the most appropriate service.

Lifetime Care is unable to provide funding for services where this information is not clearly articulated.

In these situations, we may be able to provide a specific amount of funding for one of the participant's treating team to assist with addressing these social issues. This may include up to 4 hours to support NDIS applications, and up to 10 hours to support the resolution of an acute accommodation crisis (e.g. housing applications, referrals to specialist housing services, etc). Discussion with your icare contact is required about possible funding.

## 9. Alternate options for Social Supports

Often participants have informal supports, a person responsible or a guardian who are better placed to support them with managing social stressors, for example, attending to financial, legal or government department matters.

Referral to other government agencies, non-government organisations, crisis services, or advocacy services may be the most appropriate option to assist participants with managing a social stressor. Many of these agencies specialise in managing and alleviating social stressors for people with disability and complex needs. It may be considered reasonable for Lifetime Care to support the participant or their treating team member to identify appropriate referral pathways.

Crisis services and helplines include:

- Domestic Violence Line - 1800 656 463
- Link2home Homelessness - 1800 152 152
- Child Protection Helpline - 13 21 11
- Additional NSW crisis services - [Crisis numbers and helplines](#).

Other social support services include:

- **Advocacy:** Peak disability organisations like Spinal Cord Injuries Australia and Synapse have advocacy services. Disability Advocacy NSW are also a publicly available service.
- **Centrelink:** [In-house social work service](#)
- **Homelessness (or risk of homelessness):** Link2Home - statewide homelessness information and referral telephone service, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.
- **National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):** Local Area Coordinators and Planners.
- **Court and legal matters:**
  - Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS)
  - Criminal Justice Support Network (CJSN)
  - Justice Advocacy Service (JAS).
- **Parenting/family support matters:**
  - The NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- **NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT):** An advocate is the most appropriate service to assist a participant in accessing the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT), the NSW Public Guardian or the NSW Trustee and Guardian.
- **Mental Health Services and related supports** - [Mental health services and support contact list - Services and programs \(nsw.gov.au\)](#).

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1	21/03/2024	SIE Team	Approved by Dr Nick Allsop
	March 2025	SIE Team	Policy review