

Disability Programs Frequently Asked Questions

Where are your programs located?

- Northern Hub – Boon Lane Gungahlin (behind the Communities at Work Administration Building at 47 Ernest Cavanagh St, Gungahlin;
- Southern Hub – 43 Pittman St, Greenway (behind the AMF Bowling Centre and Department of Health Building. The entrance is opposite the Southern Cross Club); and
- Malkara Holiday Program – Malkara Specialist School – 43 Wisdom St, Garran (school holidays only)

How can I contact the centre staff once I am registered?

Contact details can be found in your Service Agreement. Below are the specific details for each site:

- Southern Hub Senior Facilitator can be contacted on 0417 043 761 or 6293 6500
 - Program Mobile – South 1 – 0415 228 691
 - Program Mobile – South 2 – 0409 774 927
 - Program Mobile – South 3 – 0109 860 477 (term only)
- Northern Hub Senior Facilitator can be contacted on 0407 180 017 or 6293 6500
 - Program Mobile – North 1 - 0439 858 229
 - Program Mobile – North 2 - 0408 480 936
 - Program Mobile – North 3 - 0427 827 474
- Malkara Facilitator can be contacted on 0409 860 477 (phone monitored intermittently during school term) or 6293 6500
- General enquiries, questions or changes to Service Agreements or bookings can be made via the Operations Coordinator or Manager on 6293 6500 or 6228 9200
- You can also email us via disability@commsatwork.org – this email is monitored by a group of our staff and can be used so a response can be made in a timely manner in case someone is on leave for a day or extended period of time.

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What age groups do you cater for?

Children (5 - 12-year-olds): We operate a holiday program at the Malkara Specialist School during 10 weeks of the holidays;

Teens (12 – 18-year-olds): We have 2 After School programs and 2 Holiday programs that operate from the Northern Hub and Southern Hub

Adults / Young Adults (18 years and over): We operate 3 programs for Adults. At the Southern Hub we have 2 separate programs, one for young adults and one for adults over 30. In the Northern Hub we run a Young Adults program only.

When do your programs close?

Traditionally we close at the end of the year as we approach Christmas and reopen the day after the New Year's Day public holiday.

The end of year date is usually based on the last day of school term in December however, we may close a few days earlier to facilitate staff training and planning for the New Year.

Are there any other days that you close?

We do not operate on weekends or public holidays. The Adults program in the South does not operate in the school holiday times. The Malkara Holiday program does not operate in the last week of the January holidays due to Malkara School Staff requiring the building for staff development.

What are your operating hours?

Holiday programs operate Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm (except on public holidays); Adult/Young Adult Programs operate 8:30-4pm and After School Programs operate from 3.00pm to 6.00pm; and

Other times for closures would be notified in advance to allow you to make other arrangements for supports.

Do I have to come for the whole day?

To get the most out of the day it is ideal to come for a whole day however, you can choose to come for half a day (minimum 4 hours).

Do I have to attend all 5 weekdays or specific day?

No, there is no obligation to come every day. We do ask that your booking is recurring for Adults and Teens After School Programs so that we can ensure correct staffing each week. There is, however, no

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recurring booking available for the School Holiday Program for Children and Teens. You will need to book into each holiday program when Booking Forms are distributed.

You can choose which days you attend based on your preferences and interests however, we also need to match clients in groups and keep to funded ratios. We will work with you to find the best days available that suit your needs.

Can I change the days that I attend?

If you would like to change your days, please speak with our Operations Coordinator or Manager to arrange this. We will need some notice before this can occur so that we can look at capacity for other days and staffing. Please refer to your Service Agreement for details

What if I would like to leave or cancel a day?

Details regarding this are located in your Service Agreement under ‘Cancellation Policy’ and ‘Ending a Service Agreement’. You will be required to give the appropriate notification.

Can you provide transport to and from the program?

Communities at Work is unable to provide on-going program specific transport to Adults or Young Adults accessing the program who are outside the immediate Gungahlin/Tuggeranong areas. Transport is being reviewed currently and we may not be able to provide transport long term.

Communities at Work will continue to pick up Teens from specific schools for after school care where Keir’s or Flexible Transport is not available. Parents are expected to organise external transport for Teens at the end of the program and also provide transport for the school holiday programs.

If I have an appointment or need to arrive / leave early or later, what can I do?

If you going to arrive late or early, we will need 2 weeks’ notice (where possible). We understand that this isn’t always possible however, we also need to ensure that we have the correct staffing on to support you. This should be one-off events only and shouldn’t become a regular pattern as this impacts on the program and staffing levels. All early arrivals and late pick-ups will be charged at the NDIS rate that is agreed to in your Service Agreement. If 1:1 support is required for that time period, then it will be charged as such.

What kind of activities and workshops can I undertake at the program?

The activities offered each day include community activities, exercise and skills development workshops that cover the 6 key life skill areas: Self Care, Home Skills, Community Skills, Leisure Skills, Interpersonal Skills, and Basic Work Skills. Each month we implement a theme to focus our workshops and activities on, making them inter-relatable and relevant.

Our staff use their understanding of your NDIS goals and personal interests to create skills workshops that are individualised and meaningful. If there is something you would like to do or learn that is not outlined in your NDIS goals or your registration form, please let us know so that we can try to incorporate it into the program.

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If I would like to see a copy of the organisations Policies and Procedures, how do I do this?

You can either email disability@commsatwork.org or ask a staff person so assist you locate them on our program iPads or computers. We don't have printed copies on site as we believe in continuous improvement and printed copies at the centre means that we may end up with out-dated copies on site. The most up to date policies and procedures are on the computer.

What NDIS line items do you use within the program?

Our centres are based under Core Support however, we are happy to discuss individual needs. Please note that we do claim using the Temporary Transformation Payment (TTP). Your Service Agreement will outline these details for you.

On my Registration form I have written a list of people who can pick up my child. What do I do if I need to change this?

Any changes can be made by emailing disability@commsatwork.org to advise who you would like to add or remove permissions. Should a change be required on the day as a one-off you can either advise by writing the details on the sign in sheet in the comments section or advise in writing via email or message. We will then check the person's ID when they arrive.

What do I do if I need to make a complaint?

Complaints and feedback help us to improve our services. If you are not happy, please refer to the brochure in your welcome pack or speak with the Senior Facilitator on site about how to provide feedback. If you do not feel comfortable doing this, you can follow the steps outlined on page 4 of your Service Agreement as there are ways you can provide feedback anonymously.

For Malkara please note that you can also make a complaint via Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) on 02 6207 1114 or ceca@act.gov.au as our licencing body

On my first day, what can I expect?

We know that first days can be daunting, and our staff will make sure that you feel welcome and safe. They will show you around the centre, introduce you to other staff and clients and make sure you know who will be supporting you. You and your person responsible (staff member or parent/guardian) can be a part of the introduction if you wish. Each day when you arrive you will need to sign in on your evidence sheet (or a representative can do this for you). When you leave in the afternoon, you will need to sign out. You can also see what activities are happening by viewing the calendar on the notice board, or daily allocations sheet. In the afternoon you can show the person picking you up your achievements for the day using your Activity Sheet. This will be ongoing throughout your time in the program. We know that you may be nervous and that you may not remember everyone's name. That's ok. It will take time but we will help you to communicate with everyone and ensure your needs are met throughout the day.

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Can I bring my own lunch to cook / make at the centre?

Yes, you can and if you need assistance with cooking or making your lunch on the day a staff person is able to assist you. Please check the calendar for days that we are cooking as we provide the ingredients on these days. We endeavour to cater for all dietary requirements so you may not need to bring ingredients for lunch (unless you want to). On the days that the calendar says “bring lunch or money for lunch’ you can also choose to bring your own ingredients to make your lunch or a staff person can assist you to purchase your lunch at a local food outlet. Please be mindful if we are going out for a picnic as you would need suitable ingredients and cooler bag to take to ensure food stays safe to eat.

What if I am sick during the day or hurt myself?

If you are sick or something happens at the centre, you need to let a staff person know (if they don’t already know). This person and the Senior Facilitator will assist you with First Aid procedures and contact your Emergency Contact. If you are sick/injured you may need to go home or to seek medical assistance. Our staff cannot take you to the doctor, hospital or take you home. If the injury is serious enough for an ambulance to be called, we will communicate this with you and your representative so that they can meet you at the hospital or go with you in the ambulance.

If I have specific medical conditions that require treatment during the day, how will I be supported?

Information regarding any medical conditions should be discussed with the Coordinator or Manager during the intake process. We will work with you to ensure that you receive support appropriate to your needs and in accordance with medical plans written, signed and dated by your treating doctor or specialist. These include, but are not limited to, Epilepsy, asthma, PEG feeding.

These plans need to be reviewed at least annually with your treating doctor or specialist and updated plans must be provided as soon as you receive them. Where medication or conditions change a new plan must be written by the GP/specialist and a copy presented to us as soon as you receive it. All medications you take, regardless of where you take them, should be noted on your registration form. Any updates or changes to medications must be advised in writing within 48 hours of the change. Please see our medication policy for more details.

We encourage clients to administer their own medications where possible. If your medical plan states that under specific conditions, we must call an ambulance that is what we will do. When we do this, we must provide information to the first responder about the person including medications and other personal details. We will follow the advice from the ambulance officer at the time. If, after a medical episode, you are required to rest, you must arrange for someone to take you home to ensure that you obtain appropriate rest as per medical advice as we aren’t able to accommodate this at the centre.

If Behaviours of Concern put others at risk or if I hurt someone, what will happen?

We will talk with you and/or your carer to find out what may have impacted upon this situation. We will see if we can work out a way forward together. In some instances where there is a repeated incident (or

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an impact of high severity) you will be suspended from services for at least one day effective immediately after the incident. Future instances may require suspension for more than 1 day or an extended period and your place in the program may cease.

If I don't have a Positive Behaviour Support Plan, can you help me to get one?

Communities at Work is happy to support you through the process of working with a professional to undertake this, however our staff are not qualified to write the plan for you. All PBSP's should be written by an NDIS Approved Behaviour Therapist. A Supports Coordinator or a representative from Local Area Coordination can assist you with finding a suitable therapist if you aren't already connected.

Communities at Work will work with you and the therapist to assist with information that may be suitable in developing and implementing strategies for your support whilst at the program

Can I request a report for the NDIA when my plan is being reviewed?

Yes. We encourage everyone to approach us in advance so that we can write an accurate and detailed report for the NDIA. This report will include details of your attendance,

If I have more questions, or need clarification, where can I ask?

Please email our team on disability@commsatwork.org and we'll be happy to answer these for you.

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