



# Guide Dogs NSW/ACT NDIS Supports



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# Improved Daily Living Skills

## Individualised assessment, therapy and/or training

### Orientation and Mobility (O&M)

O&M training builds the capacity of participants with vision impairment by enhancing their independent mobility skills. O&M is about knowing where you are, where you are going and how to travel there safely, efficiently and with confidence. O&M training can enable participants to pursue educational, employment and recreational activities through greater independence in mobility.

O&M Specialists assess how participants' vision loss affects their mobility and work with them to develop individualised training goals. Training goals often include teaching participants how to travel to, from and around the places they wish to access. Depending on the needs of the individual, this can be anything from learning to get to their mailbox to learning to travel through the busiest city centres using a variety of public transport.

O&M Specialists also conduct comprehensive assessments to determine the most appropriate mobility aid, or aids, for each participant. Each mobility aid has different advantages, but all can be used to assist participants to travel more safely and confidently in their environment. Please refer to the "assistive technology" section of this brochure for descriptions of the mobility aids provided by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

### Early childhood early intervention

It is never too early for infants and young children with vision impairment to receive supports from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. Our early childhood services focus on supporting each child to develop skills which can allow them to participate in everyday activities. We work as a team with family and other professionals to develop an individualised program that reflects each child's goals, age and skill level, as well as family priorities. Supports may include assisting children to:

- make the most of their vision at an early age;
- use their other senses such as hearing, touch and smell to learn about their surroundings; and
- move and explore their environment with confidence – even before they can walk

We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment. Our early childhood early intervention supports are available in participants' homes, at pre-schools, primary schools and within other community settings.



## Neurological vision impairment services

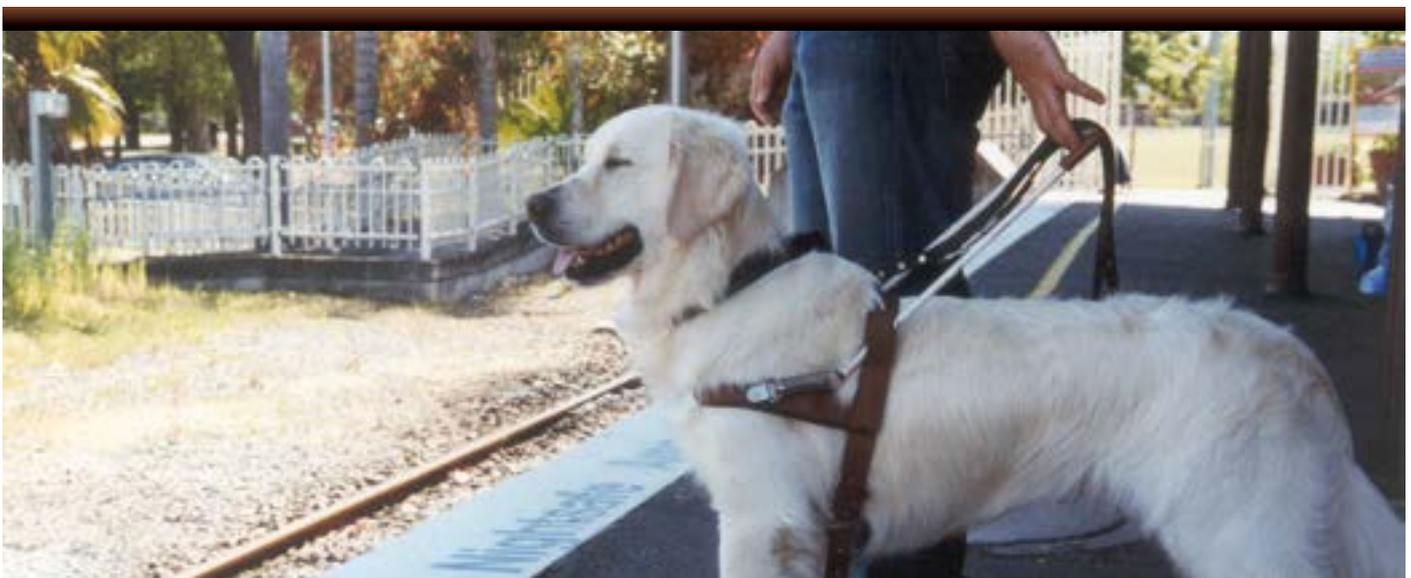
Guide Dogs NSW/ACT specialised O&M program is for participants whose vision has been affected by conditions such as stroke, tumour or brain injury. While individual requirements may vary, our programs teach people how to compensate for their vision loss and restore their confidence, taking into account each person's capabilities. Part of this training includes teaching specific strategies to get the most out of participants' remaining vision and to support them with transitioning from hospital to the community. We also provide education, support and training to family and carers regarding the nature of neurological vision loss. Importantly, follow-up visits are offered to ensure that the participant has maintained the outcomes achieved during the program.

## Guide Dog mobility services

Our Guide Dog Mobility Instructors conduct comprehensive assessments with participants to determine if a Guide Dog is the right mobility aid for their individual needs. If a Guide Dog is the most appropriate option, participants are carefully matched with a Guide Dog that will suit their personality, physical characteristics and lifestyle.

Guide Dog Mobility Instructors provide intensive training programs so that participants are able to use a Guide Dog as a primary mobility aid on routes that they regularly use. During this time, participants receive the knowledge and skills required to handle, support and care for the Guide Dog.

After the initial training has finished, we stay in contact with the participant and carry out follow-up visits at 1, 3, 6 and 12 months (and then annually after that). At any point, the participant can request assistance from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to address any issues they may be experiencing, or to learn how to get to new destinations using their Guide Dog.



## Low vision services

Low vision services support participants with vision impairment to use their remaining vision more effectively and efficiently for everyday activities. Low vision supports can enable participants to maintain independence with visual tasks such as reading, shopping, hobbies and watching television.

Our low vision services are community-based; services are conducted in local clinics, participant homes and other community locations. Participants receive a tailored vision assessment from our low vision specialists who develop an individual program of strategies, training, advice and equipment to support each participant to meet their visual goals. Equipment may include optical and electronic aids and magnifiers, assistive technology and lighting as appropriate.

## Independent living services

Our occupational therapists support participants with vision impairment to engage in activities of daily living and access their communities through the development of independent living skills. Participants develop skills to safely and confidently complete everyday tasks, including:

- Personal care (e.g. clothing identification, grooming, dressing, medication management)
- Household management (e.g. cleaning, gardening)
- Meal preparation (e.g. cutting, measuring ingredients, reading recipes, use of appliances)
- Leisure activities (e.g. social events, outdoor activities and hobbies)
- Financial management (e.g. identifying notes and coins, banking)
- Communication (e.g. home and mobile telephone use, computer use)

Participants receive an assessment from an occupational therapist who works with the participant to develop an individual program of strategies, training, advice and equipment tailored to meet the participant's goals. Our services are community-based; services are conducted in local clinics, participant homes and other community locations.



# Assistive Technology

## Vision equipment

### Long canes

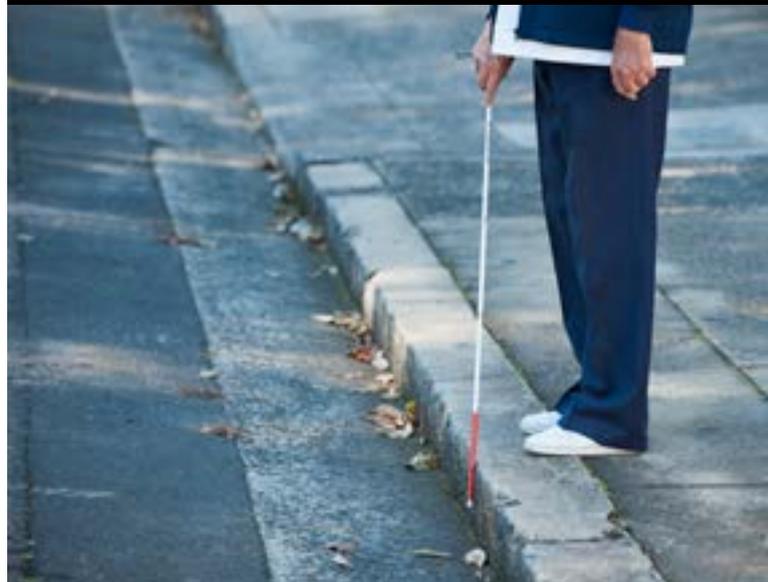
Long canes are used to detect obstacles, changes in the path ahead and also environmental features that can help participants understand where they are. Long canes can be solid, folding, or telescopic with the latter two canes being easy to slip into a handbag or backpack when not in use. Long canes are light, inexpensive and can be paired with a range of replaceable cane tips for travelling over different surfaces. Participants can choose the cane material and tips that suit their needs the best.

### Identification canes

Identification canes (ID canes) are shorter and thinner than long canes and their white and red colours let other people know that the person holding the cane has reduced vision. ID canes can be useful in difficult situations such as negotiating crowds or crossing roads.

### Support canes

Support canes can be useful for people who experience problems with their balance when walking. Our support canes are adjustable in length to ensure that each participant gets the perfect fit. Just like our long canes and identification canes, our support canes also have a white and red coating that lets others know that the user has difficulty with their vision. This can be particularly beneficial when using public transport, shopping or when walking in crowds. Even better, our white and red coating is reflective which makes the user more visible – and safer - when travelling in low light conditions.



## Guide Dogs

Our Guide Dogs are trained to enhance the independent mobility of participants by avoiding obstacles and stopping at steps, kerbs and other important changes on the path ahead. Guide dogs can potentially provide participants with faster and more fluid mobility and they support participants travelling through complex and busy environments with increased confidence.

Guide Dogs can be trained to locate objects such as seats, traffic light poles, doors and shop counters. Guide Dogs can also be trained to assist participants to get to the destinations that they use regularly such as school, work, shops and community venues.

## Miniguides

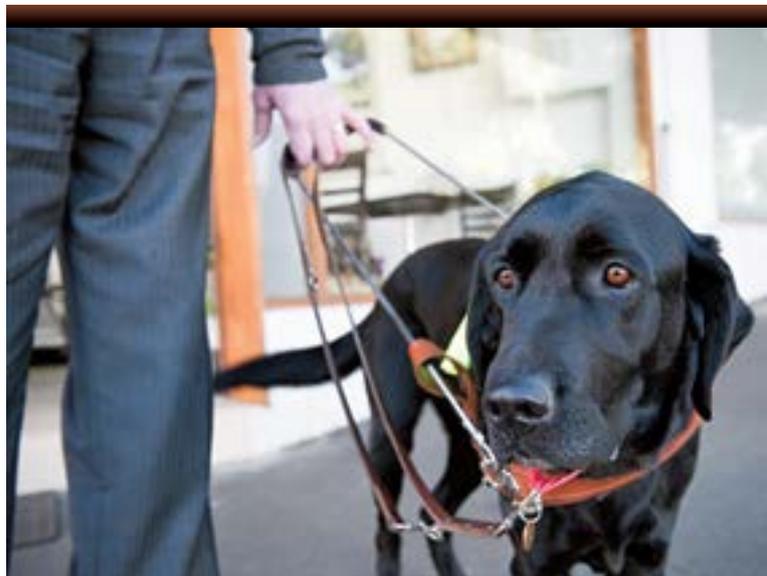
Miniguides are handheld electronic devices that detect objects in the environment using sound waves. Designed to be used with a long cane or Guide Dog, Miniguides are great for detecting objects such as poles, seats or obstacles at head height. Miniguides can even be used to find doorways or gaps between buildings. Miniguides are also useful when travelling indoors in familiar settings.

## Trekker Breeze+

The Trekker Breeze is a handheld GPS device specifically designed for people who are blind or vision impaired. The device speaks the names of streets, intersections and other important places in the environment while the user is travelling on foot or in a vehicle. The Trekker Breeze can also provide the user with information about shops and services that are nearby with the press of a button.

## iPhone GPS

Participants can purchase our industry leading Guide Dogs iPhone GPS App directly from the Apple App Store. Our O&M specialists can then provide training to participants to ensure they have the skills to use the App to support their independent, safe and efficient travel.



If you would like further information about any of the supports we provide you can get in touch by calling 1800 484 333 or by using our online contact form at [www.guidedogs.com.au/contact-us](http://www.guidedogs.com.au/contact-us).

## Office Locations

### Albury

Email: [albury@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:albury@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6041 5201  
Fax: 02 6041 5107

### Ballina

Email: [ballina@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:ballina@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6681 1667  
Fax: 02 6681 1696

### Blacktown

Email: [blacktown@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:blacktown@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 9676 5802  
Fax: 02 9671 6763

### Canberra (ACT)

Email: [canberra@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:canberra@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6285 2988

### Chatswood

Email: [chatswood@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:chatswood@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 9412 9300  
Fax: 02 9412 9388

### Coffs Harbour

Email: [coffsharbour@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:coffsharbour@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6691 8500  
Fax: 02 6651 4082

### Newcastle

Email: [newcastle@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:newcastle@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 4925 3066  
Fax: 02 4925 3011

### Orange

Email: [orange@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:orange@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6362 6625  
Fax: 02 6393 8969

### Tamworth

Email: [tamworth@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:tamworth@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 6761 3152  
Fax: 02 6761 3575

### Wollongong

Email: [wollongong@guidedogs.com.au](mailto:wollongong@guidedogs.com.au)  
Phone: 02 4225 9247  
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