

**CoNSA STATEMENT ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE NURSE CONTINENCE SPECIALIST
IN PROVIDING CONTINENCE CARE TO NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME CLIENTS**

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) codes 15_418_0114_1_3 – *Delivery of Health Supports by a Clinical Nurse Consultant weekday daytime* (\$146.72) versus NDIS 15_051_0114_1_3 – *Community Nursing Care for Continence Aid* (\$124.00), **which one should I use?**

NDIS support co-ordinators and clients often question why a Nurse Continence Specialist uses the NDIS code 15_418_0114_1_3 – *Delivery of Health Supports by a Clinical Nurse Consultant weekday daytime* (\$146.72); the CoNSA statement below will provide clarity to this question.

The difference in NDIS codes and therefore the cost for continence care provided by a Nurse Continence Specialist (NCS)* is related to the type of care the NDIS client will receive.

- The NCS is a Registered Nurse and/or Midwife with relevant post-graduate qualifications and/or skills and expertise, who has defined responsibility for promotion, assessment, management and education related to the care of people who have bladder, bowel and/or pelvic floor dysfunction with a focus on incontinence (Paterson et al., 2016).

Therefore, the NDIS client can expect to receive a comprehensive assessment of their continence health situation, identification of their specific continence needs, the development of a care plan in partnership with the client to meet those needs, and ongoing assessment and support. Continence assessment and management is a lot more complex than most people realise and a high level of expertise is required to produce a high-quality report that addresses all of the complex issues that may be present.

- The provision of continence care to NDIS clients by the NCS ensures that the NDIS client has access to evidence-based knowledge and the advanced practice skills of the NCS rather than the more generalist knowledge and skills of the non-specialist Registered Nurse.

The knowledge and skill utilised by the NCS can be described as advanced nursing practice. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (2020) states that *'Nurses practising at an advanced practice level incorporate professional leadership, education, research and support of systems into their practice. Their practice includes relevant expertise, critical thinking, complex decision-making, autonomous practice and is effective and safe. They work within a generalist or specialist context and they are*

responsible and accountable in managing people who have complex healthcare requirements. Advanced practice in nursing is demonstrated by a level of practice and is not by a job title or level of remuneration” (p. 1).

- Additionally, the NCS’s practice is guided by the CoNSA Practice Standards for Nurse Continence Specialists. These standards define and describe the practice of the NCS throughout Australia and are used to develop, review and appraise the NCS clinical practice.

CoNSA RECCOMENDATION:

CoNSA recommends that given the comprehensive and advanced level of continence nursing practice provided by the Nurse Continence Specialist, the remuneration for NDIS continence related services (which currently still remains below that of a first-year allied health professional such as a physiotherapist or OT despite the NCS significant expertise and experience) should be the higher rate for Nurse Continence Specialist working within their scope of practice (NDIS code 15_418_0114_1_3 – *Delivery of Health Supports by a Clinical Nurse Consultant weekday daytime*).

Date: 16 December 2020

***Additional notes:**

- The title ‘Nurse Continence Specialist’ is the role title approved by the Continence Nurses Society of Australia, and a role title that is used internationally. Some Nurse Continence Specialists will also use other titles, for example, clinical nurse consultant or clinical nurse specialist.
- A Registered Nurse or Midwife Registered nurse is a person who has completed the prescribed education preparation, demonstrates competence to practise and is registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as a Registered Nurse or Midwife in Australia (Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia, 2017).
- A Nurse Practitioner (NP) may also be an expert in the care of people with bowel, bladder and pelvic floor dysfunction. A Nurse Practitioner is an advanced practice nurse endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) to practise within their scope under the legislatively protected title ‘nurse practitioner’ (Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia, 2017).