

Who should use the Referral Decision Aid?

The decision aid provides clearer eligibility criteria and referral pathways for children with developmental delays that provide consistency across Melbourne's west.

It can be used in a number of different situations, by:

- Referrers to refer children to an appropriate allied health service.
- Intake staff to assess eligibility of incoming referrals.
- Managers and teams to review referrals and support service planning.

Which children does the Referral Decision Aid apply to?

This resource can be used with children who:

- Have one or more developmental delays
- Are preschool aged (between zero and school-aged)
- Are from Melbourne's west (Brimbank, Hobson's Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham).

How should the Referral Decision Aid be used?

The Referral Decision Aid is not intended to be a diagnostic aid or replace any validated tools you may currently use. It should be used as a guide to help you make decisions about appropriate services and pathways for children with developmental delays.

When you are with a child, work through each of the four steps to help you understand which services the child is eligible for and what referrals you should make.

While the decision aid is accurate for most occasions, there may be individual exceptions. In these instances, it is important that you contact the relevant service before any referrals are made.

Why was the Referral Decision Aid created?

Referrers and service providers in our region indicated that the existing service system for children with developmental delay can be complex, confusing and disjointed. They reported a lack of clarity about service eligibility or knowledge of the services offered by each service. Consultations conducted by HealthWest in early 2017 confirmed this, indicating high numbers of referrals to inappropriate services were being made due to lack of clarity and information for referrers.

The Referral Decision Aid will support referrers to refer children and families to services that will provide appropriate supports to the child. This is essential if timely and appropriate care is to be provided to prepare children for school and beyond.

Can I use the decision aid after the NDIS rolls out?

The Referral Decision Aid has been designed to work with the service system as it is now. It should not be used after the NDIS is rolled out in Melbourne's west. Rollout is currently expected to commence in October 2018.

How was the Referral Decision Aid developed?

Following broad consultations across Melbourne's west, key service providers and agencies formed an Alliance to work together to develop a tool that would support clear and consistent eligibility and referrals across the region. The three domains used in the resource are based on Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) domains.

The following agencies were involved throughout the development of the Referral Decision Aid and have authorised its use:

- Western Health
- Djerriwarrh Health Service
- cohealth
- IPC Health
- Royal Children's Hospital
- Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) intake
- Department of Health and Human Services (Western Region)

This work was funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services as part of the Pathways for Children with Developmental Delays Project.

Where can I find out more about the PCDD project?

The Referral Decision Aid is an outcome of the Pathways for Children with Developmental Delays (PCDD) Project. Visit HealthWest's website for more information on this project, including the report, the decision aid and ongoing work around indicators of social vulnerability:

healthwest.org.au/projects/service-coordination/pathways-for-children-with-developmental-delay/

Download the Referral Decision Aid at healthwest.org.au/referral-decision-aid