



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

Inclusion Support Programme

User Guide

Version 1.2

Version Control

Date	Version	Description
17 June 2016	1.0	ISP User Guide release 1 including information on roles and responsibilities, the Inclusion Support Portal and the Strategic Inclusion Plan.
8 July 2016	1.1	ISP User Guide released. Adds the following sections to ISP User Guide release 1 – Inclusion Development Fund, Specialist Equipment.
17 January 2017	1.2	Update to reflect new strategies added to the IS Portal.

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Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCMS	Child Care Management System
ECCC service	Early childhood and child care service
FDC	Family day care
IA	Inclusion Agency
IDF	Inclusion Development Fund
IDF Manager	Inclusion Development Fund Manager
IPSP	Inclusion and Professional Support Program
ISP	Inclusion Support Programme
ISS	Inclusion Support Subsidy
IS Portal	Inclusion Support Portal
SEL	Specialist equipment library
SIP	Strategic Inclusion Plan

1 Introduction

1.1 About the Inclusion Support Programme User Guide

The Inclusion Support Programme (ISP) User Guide provides operational guidance to early childhood and child care (ECCC) services, Inclusion Agencies (IA) and the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) Manager about the ISP and the Inclusion Support Programme Portal (IS Portal) which supports the programme's delivery.

The User Guide also sets out the roles and responsibilities of IAs and the IDF Manager delivering the programme and the expectation of ECCC services when accessing support from the programme.

Further information about the ISP can be found in the [ISP Guidelines 2016-17 to 2018-19](#). The Guidelines provide comprehensive information about the programme including:

- programme objectives;
- types of support available;
- eligibility requirements, and
- how to access support.

This User Guide should be read in conjunction with these Guidelines.

To support the initial rollout of the IS Portal, the ISP User Guide will be released in sections. The first release will include information about:

- Roles and responsibilities of IAs, the IDF Manager and ECCC services
- Inclusion Support Portal
- Strategic Inclusion Plan

By the end of June 2016, the department will issue the remainder of the ISP User Guide, which will include information about:

- Inclusion Development Fund (IDF), and accessing IDF through the IS Portal

1.2 About the Inclusion Support Programme

The ISP is a key component of the Australian Government's Child Care Safety Net and will provide support to ECCC services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services; providing them with an opportunity to learn and develop alongside their typically developing peers.

ISP provides support directly to ECCC services, however families and children with additional needs benefit through improved inclusion and capability for mainstream ECCC services to provide quality inclusive practices and address barriers to include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers.

Support available through the ISP includes:

- Support from an inclusion professional employed by the **IA** to assist services to build their capacity and capability to provide and embed inclusive practice in their delivery of early learning and care programmes. This will occur through the development of a **Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP)**, which looks at the current capacity and capability of a service through a strengths based approach.
- **Specialist Equipment** to facilitate and support the inclusion of a child or children with additional needs.
- Funding from the **Inclusion Development Fund** to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be resolved through support from an Inclusion Agency or the Specialist Equipment Library (SEL).

2 Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of Inclusion Agencies (IA) and the IDF Manager delivering the ISP. It also sets expectations of ECCC services when accessing support from the programme.

2.1 Inclusion Agencies

IAs will employ skilled inclusion professionals who are able to provide both one-off and intensive support to eligible ECCC services to address inclusion barriers and develop their overall inclusion capability.

As part of this process, the inclusion professional will:

- Explain clearly what good inclusive practices are and the benefit of implementing inclusion practices in ECCC services.
- Assist ECCC services review their current inclusion practices and identify barriers they experience to include children with additional needs.
- Observe educators and children in the care environment to provide practical advice and techniques to facilitate the inclusive participation of a child (or children) with additional needs in the ECCC service and enable interaction with their typically developing peers.
- Assist services to consider flexible and innovative solutions to inclusion barriers, which may include short term strategies to assist with settling a child through the provision of bicultural support.
- Consider the best support available for ECCC services to overcome inclusion barriers by maintaining knowledge of relevant supports at the local and national level to ensure high levels of funding assistance from ISP are only provided when needed. This will maximise the number of children receiving assistance from ISP.
- Identify and provide assistance for ECCC services to access resources that reduce or remove inclusion barriers. This may include support available through the ISP, such as specialist equipment or the IDF, or referring services to access relevant community support organisations.
- Ensure the support provided is flexible, responsive and remains appropriate to the service.
- Assist the service to develop a community outreach strategy to encourage families of children with additional needs to access mainstream ECCC services.
- Manage the Specialist Equipment Library (SEL) so it has appropriate equipment available to facilitate and support the inclusion of a child or children with additional needs.

2.2 ECCC services

ECCC services accessing inclusion support through this programme are making a commitment to building their capacity and capability to ensure inclusion practices are part of their everyday service delivery.

This commitment includes:

- Developing a SIP and undertaking a review of the SIP at least once in a 12 month period, demonstrating a commitment to continuously improve the service's inclusive capacity.
- Demonstrating, through their policies, a commitment to an inclusive philosophy and to staff development to support the goals of the SIP.
- Active community outreach and engagement to encourage families of children with additional needs to access mainstream ECCC services.

2.3 Inclusion Development Fund Manager

The IDF Manager will provide nationally consistent and equitable management of the IDF through assessing applications for funding and communicating outcomes to ECCC services.

As part of this process, the IDF Manager will:

- Assess applications for assistance from the IDF made by eligible ECCC services.
- Ensure applications are assessed consistently and within timeframes that support ECCC services to provide quality inclusive care environments.
- Administer and assess applications for the IDF within the budget amount as advised by the Department and in accordance with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines.
- Notify services of the outcome of their application.
- Facilitate equitable access to IDF assistance for eligible ECCC services.
- Engage with ECCC services and IAs regarding IDF eligibility requirements, application processes and funding levels.
- Respond to queries and complaints made by ECCC services and IAs regarding the IDF.

3 Inclusion Support Portal

3.1 About the IS Portal

The IS Portal is a web-based application that will facilitate ECCC services interaction with the ISP. IAs and the IDF Manager will also access the IS Portal to administer the programme.

All eligible ECCC services seeking assistance and support from the ISP must use the IS Portal, unless they do not have access to appropriate technology such as Budget Based Funded (BBF) services¹. Where this occurs, the IA may provide the service with paper-based information to complete.

The IS Portal will enable an **ECCC** service to:

- Complete and manage their SIP
- Apply for funding assistance from all streams of the IDF and submit to their IA for endorsement
- Declare funding expenditure for Innovative Solutions
- Provide other users in the ECCC service with access to the IS Portal.

Information about applications for funding, known as 'Inclusion Support Cases' or 'Innovative Solutions Cases', will also be available from a service's Child Care Management System (CCMS) software product. This information will include the key details about the application, including the amount of funding approved and the duration of the funding.

The IA and IDF Manager are responsible for managing service delivery of their programme using the IS Portal.

The IS Portal will enable an **IA** to:

- Assist services to complete a SIP
- Review a service's SIP
- Review and endorse services' applications for funding through the IDF and submit to the IDF Manager for their assessment
- Provide the first user in an ECCC service with access to the IS Portal.

The IS Portal will enable the **IDF Manager** to:

- Assess and approve funding applications for the IDF, using information provided in the service's SIP, previous cases approved for the service/child.

The IS Portal can be accessed via the Department of Education and Training webpage:

<https://www.education.gov.au/isp>.

3.2 Accessing the IS Portal

The Australian Government standard for all online services is that individual users must be identified when accessing government services online. As the IS Portal collects and stores personal information, there is a requirement that the Department provides appropriate authentication to ensure all users are authorised to access the system.

To meet this standard, the Department is requiring IS Portal users to use AUSkey.

AUSkey is a secure login that identifies you when you use participating government online services on behalf of a business. Obtaining an AUSkey number is free, however it requires a software product (which can be downloaded for free from the Australian Business Register website) to be installed on your computer or USB. Where AUSkey is installed on a USB, you are able to use it on multiple devices. AUSkey cannot be used on mobile devices (such as phones or tablets).

¹ To avoid any doubt, continuing ECCC services which were previously funded under the BBF Program and are now funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy are eligible to receive support under the Inclusion Development Fund.

Each AUSKey is linked to an Australian Business Number (ABN). How to get an AUSKey and how long it will take depends on whether the business ABN already has an AUSKey issued. If so, anyone with an Administrator AUSKey can approve requests for standard AUSKey. If the business does not have an AUSKey, an eligible associate recorded on the Australian Business Register for that ABN must register themselves, or someone else for the first AUSKey for the ABN.

More information about AUSKey is available on the Australian Business Register Website <https://abr.gov.au/AUSKey/>.

3.2.1 Key requirements for accessing the new IS Portal

For ECCC services:

- all IS Portal users must be listed as an authorised or key person for the ECCC service on the CCMS Personnel Record and have a unique email address that is not shared between other personnel records for different people. This email address must be stored on their CCMS Personnel Record.
- each person/s responsible for accessing the IS Portal in the service must have registered the email address for an AUSKey.

The ECCC service must advise their IA that they require inclusion support through ISP. The IA is responsible for searching or generating a record for the Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) in the system for the ECCC service, and issuing the Letter of Introduction to the ECCC service.

3.2.2 Proof of Record Ownership Process

To access the IS Portal, the user/s at the ECCC service will be required to complete a Proof of Record Ownership (PORO) by entering the same email address that is listed on their CCMS Personnel Record and that has been registered with AUSKey the first time they log in to the IS Portal.

An email with an activation code will be generated and sent to the email address. The user will enter this activation code to access the IS Portal. Once the PORO has been completed once, the user/s will be able to access the IS Portal using their AUSKey access, without the need for an additional password.

3.3 Providing users access to the IS Portal

3.3.1 User Provisioning

IAs will be responsible for provisioning the first user at an ECCC service who requires access to the IS Portal. This will occur through using the 'Provision a Service Provider User' tile available on the IA homepage of the IS Portal.

This will occur after the IA searches for/creates a SIP record in the IS Portal for the service, and issues the ECCC service with a Letter of Introduction.

ECCC services will provide the SIP ID (available on the Letter of Introduction), the CCB Approval ID and the email address of the user to be provisioned. IAs will use this information to search and select the person to be provisioned from the personnel list associated to that CCB Approval.

The first person provisioned at the ECCC service can then provision user access for other staff at the service using the 'User Provisioning' tile available through their IS Portal homepage. The person/s to be provisioned is selected from the personnel list available at the ECCC service.

3.4 Transition to the new IS Portal

3.4.1 Legacy Cases

All IS Cases approved in the IS Portal under IPSP will be available in the IS Portal supporting ISP as a Legacy Case. These will be in a read only format for ECCC services and the IA.

3.4.2 Set up in the new IS Portal

If an ECCC service was approved for ISS under IPSP, a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) record will be automatically be created for the service in the IS Portal. If the ECCC service also had an active, approved IS Case at the end of June 2016, a new care environment for each unique room/carer name of the Inclusion Improvement Plan associated to these IS Cases will be created in the system.

The ECCC service should review these care environments, and can update the status of the care environment to “Active” or “Inactive” as appropriate. Reviews will be generated on the SIP once the Service Profile and the Inclusion Profile (in your care environment) are submitted and showing as Current. A Service Profile and Inclusion Profile are current once the date of effect, set by the ECCC service, are reached.

Further information will be issued by the Department on how ECCC services can manage the data that was migrated as part of the new IS Portal.

3.4.3 Transition arrangements from IPSP

As part of the transition arrangements, outlined in Section 7 of the ISP Guidelines, where changes need to be made to an Approved IS Case, a new application must be submitted and assessed under the ISP Guidelines. Further information about how to apply for support under ISP is outlined in this ISP User Guide.

Any valid documentary evidence attached to a Legacy IS Case, such as evidence of permanent diagnosis or evidence of undergoing assessment for disability, can be reused for any future applications for funding under ISP. These will be stored in the Legacy IS Case. As the new IS Portal requires documentary evidence to be stored on the individual child record, to reuse this evidence it must be attached to the child record.

1. Service locates documentary evidence on existing IS Case and saves to their local computer
2. Service uploads documentary evidence to appropriate child record on the SIP

A new [Permission to Share Personal Information for the purposes of Inclusion Support Programme](#) form must be completed for each child included on an IS Case under ISP. Parent consent obtained under IPSP will not be accepted for new cases.

3.5 Communication from the IS Portal

All communication sent from the IS Portal will be distributed to the first email address the system finds populated out of the following records of the service’s Child Care Management System (CCMS) software:

- Message preferences email address on the primary CCB Approval ID selected in the SIP
- General email address on the organisation attached to the primary CCB Approval ID selected in the SIP
- Financial email address on the organisation attached to the primary CCB Approval ID selected in the SIP

This will include approval letters, application declined letters, emails indicating further action is required by the service on the SIP or IS Case.

All communication will be sent from the email address isp_noreply@dss.gov.au.

4 Strategic Inclusion Plan

A Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is a self-guided inclusion assessment and planning tool for ECCC services accessing the ISP. The SIP includes short and long-term strategies for improving and embedding inclusive practice for the inclusion of children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers. The development of a SIP recognises a service's current inclusive capacity and capability and outlines objectives for inclusion practices.

The development of a SIP is the first step to accessing support from the ISP, including funding through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF).

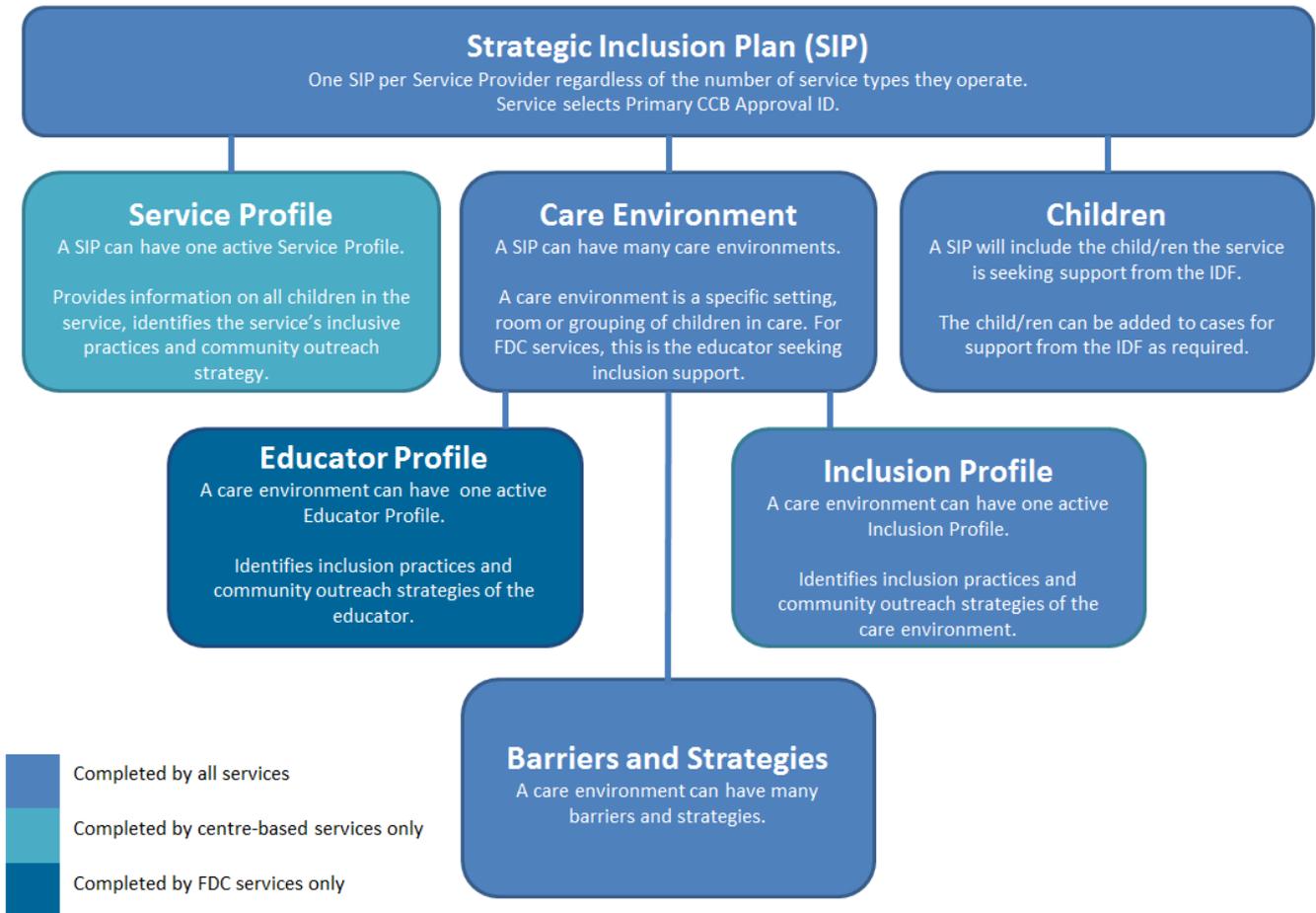
An Inclusion Agency (IA) will be responsible for creating a SIP record in the Inclusion Support Portal (IS Portal) and working collaboratively with ECCC services to complete the SIP.

Each service provider requiring inclusion support through ISP will have one SIP regardless of the number of service types they operate. A service provider is the individual child care service.

- A large child care operator with multiple child care services at different locations would have multiple SIPs – one for each service location.
- Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services that operate three services types (before school care, after school care and vacation care) will have one SIP for the three service types. A primary CCB Approval ID must be selected on the SIP.

A SIP will include:

- A **Service Profile** for centre-based services
- A **care environment** where the service is seeking inclusion assistance through ISP
 - A care environment for the whole service may be created to consider whole of service inclusion barriers and strategies.
- An **Inclusion Profile** for each care environment
- An **Educator Profile** for Family Day Care (FDC) services
- **Barriers and Strategies**
- Information on **children** requiring support
- **Contacts** for the ECCC service
- **Reviews**



The SIP must be in a status of 'Active' before the ECCC service will be able to complete the following components.

4.1 Manage SIP and CCB Approvals

Manage SIP and CCB Approvals provides contact details for the ECCC service, IA and IDF Manager. It also allows services to select a primary CCB Approval ID (where one service operates multiple service types).

4.2 Service Profile

The Service Profile will be completed by centre-based services accessing ISP.

The purpose of the Service Profile is to identify the service provider seeking support through the ISP. It also builds a profile of the ECCC service for the IA to understand their inclusion needs and practices of the service.

In the Service Profile, the ECCC service provides information on the number of children enrolled in the service broken down by the cohorts the programme supports. This includes:

- children with disability (including those undergoing assessment for disability)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children from refugee/humanitarian background
- children presenting with language and speech delays
- children presenting with disruptive behaviour

ECCC services detail their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs and develop a community outreach strategy through responding to the following questions:

Service Profile – Question 1 – How does your service promote learning experiences, interactions and participation to build on children's strengths and encourage involvement?

Reflective questions for the service to consider in responding to this question include:

- What does the service do on a daily basis to show their commitment to the inclusion of all children?
- What is the service's philosophy and policies in relation to inclusion?
- How is this reflected in the service's practices?
 - How does the service ensure their programme and daily routines cater to all children?
 - How is the physical environment organised to encourage participation and interaction between peers?
 - What strategies do educators use to encourage participation and interaction between peers?
 - How does the service identify and build on children's strengths?
 - What resources do educators use or modifications are made to encourage children's engagement?
 - What professional development is provided to educators to increase use of inclusive practices?
 - What are the service's strengths in regards to inclusion of all children?
 - What would the service like to do to build on their strengths in this area?

Service Profile – Question 2 – How will your service engage with families in the community who do not currently access ECCC services?

Reflective questions for the service to consider in responding to this question include:

- How will the service target and promote their service to families not accessing their services? E.g. CALD families, Aboriginal families.
- How will the service promote the educational benefits for children of attending their service in their local community?
- How will the service demonstrate to the local community that they offer an inclusive programme open to all children?
- What involvement does the service have in the local community? How will the service utilise these opportunities to promote access for all children and families?

- How will the service liaise with other sectors and local agencies/groups (e.g. health, migrant services and the other educational institutions in the local area) to build educator knowledge and build community links?
- How will the service seek feedback from the community to identify if their service is catering to the needs of the community and local families?

The Service Profile also seeks to understand any support that the service received through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP), which ceases 30 June 2016.

4.3 Educator Profile

The Educator Profile must be completed for FDC services accessing ISP.

The Educator Profile identifies the FDC educator's capacity and capability to include children with additional needs. It also identifies the FDC educator's inclusion practices and community outreach strategies through responding to the following questions.

- How does your service promote learning experiences, interactions and participation to build on children's strengths and encourage involvement?
- How will your service engage with families in the community who do not currently access ECCC services?

The Educator Profile also seeks to understand any support that the service received through the IPSP.

4.4 Care Environment

A care environment is a specific setting, room or grouping of children in care. For centre-based services, the service will identify a care environment name and provide a short description of the care environment.

For FDC services, the care environment is the educator seeking inclusion support. The service is able to identify the FDC educator from their personnel records submitted to their CCMS from their CCMS software and include a short description.

Each care environment will contain an inclusion profile and identifies the barriers and strategies to inclusion for each care environment. Over time, the inclusion profile, barriers and strategies will demonstrate the progress the service has made in improving their inclusive capacity and capability.

Where a service would like to identify inclusion barriers and strategies in the context of the whole service, a care environment can be established for the whole service.

4.4.1 Inclusion Profile

The Inclusion Profile will be completed by all services accessing ISP.

The Inclusion Profile is in the context of the care environment. A separate Inclusion Profile must be completed for each care environment the service is requiring inclusion support.

The Inclusion Profile will identify:

- the number and age of children in the care environment
- the number of educators per standard week
- all educator's confidence to include children with additional needs. The service should consider, on average, the confidence of all educators to include children with additional needs for the majority of time.

4.4.2 Barriers and Strategies

Barriers and Strategies will be completed by all services accessing ISP and is completed in the context of the care environment.

The ECCC service will identify the barriers that impact their capacity to include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers. Services will be able to choose from a list of pre-defined barriers or develop a custom barrier as required.

A barrier must have a start date equal to or greater than the date the barrier is entered. This identifies when the barrier was identified in the care environment for the programme. When a barrier is no longer relevant for the care environment, the service may provide an end date to indicate it is no longer a consideration for the care environment.

A care environment can identify many barriers to inclusion. One barrier may have many strategies in place to address the barrier.

4.4.2.1 Barriers

Barriers available for selecting in the IS Portal are listed in the table below. The service is also able to identify an 'Other' barrier.

Barrier Category	Barrier	Definition
Child specific barriers	Absconder	A child attempts to leave the service unattended
	Challenging behaviours	Behaviours that threaten the quality of life and/or physical safety of an individual or others
	Difficulty feeding	Child/ren may require more assistance with feeding
	Difficulty settling/sleeping	Child/ren may require more assistance when settling and sleeping
	Limited communication skills	Child/ren are unable to communicate effectively
	Limited mobility	Child/ren with additional needs has limited mobility and needs assistance moving around the care environment
	Limited social skills	Child/ren has limited social skills and need assistance interacting with peers
	Sensory issues	Child/ren experience sensory issues which may require assistance participating in the care environment
	Toileting requirements	Child/ren require assistance when toileting
	Transition between experiences	Child/ren may require assistance to successfully transition between experiences in the care environment
	Transition to/from the service	Child/ren may require assistance to successfully transition to and from the care environment at drop off and pick up times
	Unsuitable equipment	Equipment available in the care environment may not be suitable for all children
Educator	English as a second language	Educators with English as a second language may present language barriers, which effects communication between staff and parent/guardians
	High staff turnover	ECCC service experiences high staff turnover
	Lack of team work	Educators are unable to work as a team effectively
	Limited experience-child care	Educator has limited experience working in child care
	Limited knowledge-inclusion	Educator has limited knowledge of working with children with additional needs
	Limited options-training	Educators are limited in the types of training they can attend
	Limited reflection/planning time	Educators have limited opportunity for reflection and planning time in the care environment
	Limited time-training	Educators are limited in opportunity to attend training and professional development courses
	Staff changes-care environment	Staff changes within a care environment, including educators moving between rooms regularly, which can be unsettling and disruptive to the care environment
Parent/guardian concerns	Communication with educators	Limited opportunity for parent/guardian to communicate with the educators
	Limited educator knowledge	Parent/guardian concerned about educators knowledge or experience working with children with additional needs

	Parent/guardian expectations	Parent/guardian expectations may be different to the support the educators can provide the child
	Parent/guardian not receptive	The parent/guardian may not accept the child has additional needs and the service is unable to seek the support required
Physical environment	Access to toileting facilities	Toileting facilities may be in another room or other location away from the care environment
	Environment not suitable	The care environment may not be suitable to cater for all children, particularly those with limited mobility
	Multiple use building	Building may be used for other purposes and the resources must be packed away after each session
	Non-purpose built building	The building is not built for the purposes of providing child care
	Physical access limitations	Physical access to the ECCC service or care environment may be limited, in particular for child/ren with limited mobility
Program structure	Child/ren's ages/needs vary	Children of varying ages and abilities are in the same care environment, most common in OSHC services
	Educator to child ratios	Ratios are met under the NQF however these are not sufficient to include a child/ren with additional needs
	Financial viability	The ECCC service may experience financial implications when they enrol a child/ren with additional needs in the service.
	Inflexible routines	Programme structure doesn't offer flexibility to include all children in the care environment
	Limited planning time	Educators have limited opportunity to effectively plan and implement a suitable programme structure
	Transition between experiences	Child/ren may require assistance to successfully transition between experiences in the care environment
Supervision of all children	Child/ren's ages/needs vary	Children of varying ages and abilities are in the same care environment, most common in OSHC services
	Limited educator communication	Limited opportunity for educators to communicate with each other
	Limited visibility	Educators are unable to provide adequate supervision of all children in the care environment. This may be due to the physical layout of the building, outdoor environment or other factors.
	Single-educator care model	One educator is present in the care environment and supervision may be limited, most common in OSHC services

4.4.2.2 Strategies

For each barrier identified, the ECCC service must propose a strategy to overcome the barrier to inclusion. Services will be able to choose from a list of pre-defined strategies or develop a custom strategy as required.

Strategy	Definition
Access appropriate language resources	Contact the appropriate organisations or services to access resources to assist with language and communication skills
Access bicultural support	Contact an appropriate organisation that offers bicultural support for assistance with supporting a child or children in the care environment
Access to toileting/change room facilities	Provide appropriate access to toileting and/or change room facilities
Adjust program structure and activities	Adjust the program structure and activities to ensure all children are included in the care environment
Assistance to settle children	Assist children to settle in the care environment
Assistance with entering and leaving the care environment	Assist families and children to enter and leave the care environment safely
Assistance with toileting	Assist children with toileting requirements
Attend appropriate language courses	Educators to attend appropriate courses or forums to develop and build language and communication skills

Attend appropriate staff training	Educators to attend appropriate training courses and forums, including specialists courses to address inclusion barriers
Build educator skills, knowledge and confidence	Provide opportunities to educators to build their skills, knowledge and confidence when supporting children in the care environment
Build on children's strengths and interests	Encourage and scaffold children's play based on their interests and strengths
Build self-help skills	Assist children to build skills to enable them to undertake tasks on their own, such as eating and toileting
Building modifications	Undertake building modifications to make the care environment suitable for all children
Changes to physical environment	Change the layout in a care environment to make it suitable for all children
Choice for non-sleepers	Provide other activities in the care environment for children who do not sleep during the day
Collaborate with allied health professionals	Work collaboratively with allied health professionals to support children in the care environment
Considerations to room layout	Consider the way a care environment is set up to ensure all children can participate
Consistent approach to behaviour management	Educators to discuss and implement a consistent approach to manage the behaviours of all children in the care environment
Consistent behaviour guidance strategies	Develop and implement strategies to provide consistent behaviour guidance to all children in the care environment
Develop collaborative relationships between educators and families	Work collaboratively with families and educators to support all children in the care environment
Diversity of educator roles	Educators have the opportunity to learn new skills and take on different roles within the care environment or the service
Establish communication board	Educators to provide a visual communication board to communicate effectively with children in the care environment. For example advising of transition to another activity
Establish communication book	Educators to establish a communication book in the care environment as an effective method of recording progress and information for any child/ren with a requirement to have one
Establish quiet areas	Educators to set up quiet areas in the care environment to accommodate children who may be overstimulated and require a calm environment
Flexibility with activities	Flexibility in the program structure to allow for children to participate in activities that interest them
Flexibility with meal times	Flexibility in the program structure to allow for staggered meal times
Flexibility with rest times	Flexibility in the program structure to allow for staggered rest times
Flexibility with transitions	Flexibility in the program structure to assist children who have difficulty transitioning from activities
Flexible and responsive practices for all children	The care environment should be flexible and responsive to all children's needs, interest and abilities to ensure a well organised and structured learning environment.
IA attendance at staff meetings	Where appropriate, Inclusion Agencies to attend staff meetings to provide support and assistance to ensure all children are included in the care environment
IDF Funding	Where funding through the IDF Subsidy is the most appropriate solution to overcome an inclusion barrier
Implement a supervision plan	Educators to develop and implement a supervision plan to ensure all children are adequately supervised in the care environment
Implement Behaviour Management Plan	Educators develop and implement a Behaviour Management Plan for all children in the care environment
Implement consistent educator practices	Ensure consistent practices are implemented by all educators in the care environment
Implement safe lifting and positioning techniques	Ensure all educators are aware of safe lifting and positioning practices

Implement Social Skills program	Implement social skills programs that aim to enhance the personal and social skills of all children
Inclusive policies and practices	Ensure all policies and practices in place at the ECCC service are inclusive of all children
Knowledge sharing between educators	Educators to share knowledge between themselves, in particular those familiar with caring for children with additional needs
Mentoring for educators	Provide mentoring for educators to develop their skills to support children in the care environment
Modelling behaviours	Educators model the behaviours expected by all children in the care environment
Monitor and remove hazards	Remove anything that may be a hazard to children in the care environment
Offer indoor/outdoor program	Develop a program that offers both indoor and outdoor activities for children in the care environment
On the job learning	Assist educators learn new skills or processes within the normal work environment
Open communication between educators	Ensure educators communicate openly and effectively to ensure all educators and children are supported in the care environment
Peer support initiative for children	Establish a peer support system for children in the care environment, to encourage children to support their peers in the care environment
Positioning of educator/s	Ensure educators are positioned for maximum supervision in the care environment
Practices to consider all children's needs	Ensure all policies and practices in place at the ECCC service consider all children in the care environment
Prior warning for transitions	Establish a system to ensure children are giving prior warning for transitions, such as a visual board
Provide calming resources	Provide calming resources, such as fidget toys or weighted blankets, for children to use when required
Provide planning time	Educators to have adequate planning time away from the care environment
Reflective conversations	Reflective conversations encourage educators to critically reflect and learn through the reflective process. They provide a means to build capacity for critical reflection and embed reflective thinking as part of the work environment
Review and develop educator practices	The use of self-assessment, reflection and peer review to evaluate current educator practices to identify strengths and areas that need improvement.
Revise staff structure	Ensure an effective staff structure is in place to allow for maximum supervision and care in the care environment
Roster for planning time	Develop a roster to allow educators receive adequate planning time away from the care environment
Small group times	Establish small group times as part of the program structure
Specialist equipment	Access specialist equipment to include a child/ren with additional needs in the care environment
Staff meetings to assist in planning	Schedule regular staff meetings to assist educators effectively plan a program for their care environment. This will allow conversations and knowledge sharing between educators
Storage solution	Provide adequate storage for resources, in particular if the ECCC service is in a shared environment
Use Auslan	Use Auslan as a communication method for child or children who are hearing impaired. This can also be taught to all children in the care environment so they can effectively communicate with child/ren who are hearing impaired
Use Key Word Sign	Use Key Word Sign hand signs and natural gestures concurrently with speech to support children's language development.
Use sensory aids and supports	Provide sensory aids to include a child/ren with additional needs in the care environment
Use visual aids and reminders	Use visual aids, such as a communication board, to effectively communicate with all children in the care environment

4.4.2.3 Action Items and Progress Notes

Each strategy should have at least one action item that will outline how the service will implement the strategy and what, if any, resources will be used. If the same strategy is proposed to overcome multiple inclusion barriers, the action items and progress notes will be recorded against the strategy for all inclusion barriers it is associated with.

Progress notes can be added for each action item.

Where a service has selected the strategy of “IDF Funding” to overcome an inclusion barrier/s, the Action Items and Progress Notes will provide supporting evidence of how the service will use the relevant stream of the IDF to address the inclusion barrier. This information will be used as part of the IDF Manager’s assessment of the applications for the IDF.

4.5 Children

Where an ECCC service requires support from the IDF for an Additional Educator, Immediate/Time Limited Support and FDC Top Up, the service is required to include information about the specific child that supports their request for funding.

Information about the eligible child or children will be added by the service to the SIP. This child can then be added to each relevant case for the IDF. This approach enables the service to re-use information about a child as required.

The following information is collected about the child for each stream of the IDF.

	Inclusion Support Case			Innovative Solutions Case
	IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	IDF FDC Top Up	IDF Innovative Solutions Support
Parent/Guardian Consent	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Documentary evidence	Yes	No	Yes	No
Date of Birth	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Demographic information, such as Indigenous status, cultural and linguistic diverse background	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Information about disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Additional information about disability	No	Yes	No	No

Once a child has been added to an IS Case, the child cannot be deleted from the SIP. If the child’s record is no longer applicable for the purposes of ISP, the child status on the SIP can be made inactive.

4.6 Authorised Personnel

A SIP will include at least one contact within the service, which will be the primary contact for the SIP. This must be sourced from the service’s Authorised or Key Personnel list from the service’s CCMS software.

Additional staff members who are involved in the SIP can be added to the contact list from the service’s Authorised or Key Personnel from the service’s CCMS software.

To add a staff member as an Authorised or Key Personnel, the service must first do so via their CCMS software.

4.7 Reviews

There are three types of reviews of the SIP that will be completed by the IA.

Where the service has applied for funding through the IDF, the IA will be unable to submit an IS Case for approval without reviewing the relevant component of the SIP. In most cases, this will include a review of the Service Profile and Care Environment, including the Barriers and Strategies identified for the particular care environment.

IA review findings are a key piece of information for the IDF Manager in their assessment of the IS Cases for the service and care environment.

4.7.1 Service Profile review

When a Service Profile is submitted by the ECCC service and the date of effect is reached, a Service Profile review record will be created for the IA. The IA is expected to review and report findings on their review of the Service Profile. These findings will be visible to the ECCC service, IDF Manager and IA.

4.7.2 Care Environment review

When an Inclusion Profile for a Care Environment is submitted by the ECCC service and the date of effect is reached, a Care Environment review record will be created for the IA. The IA is expected to review and report on findings for the care environment. These findings will be visible to the ECCC service, IDF Manager and IA.

As part of the Care Environment review, the IA should review the Inclusion Profile and Barriers and Strategies associated to the particular Care Environment.

Where the strategy of "IDF Funding" is added to a barrier (either an existing barrier or a new barrier), a new review record for the Care Environment will be created as it is assumed that a new application or change of circumstances application for the IDF will be submitted by the service.

4.7.3 Yearly SIP review

The IA will undertake a yearly review of the SIP at least once in a 12 month period. It is expected this will be done in consultation with the service, and updates will be made to the SIP as appropriate by the ECCC service. The IA can commence the yearly review 300 days from the Start Date of the first Service Profile or Care Environment review. This will support applications for renewal of funding from the IDF where appropriate.

The purpose of the yearly review is for the service to reflect on the changes they have applied through implementing the SIP. ECCC services should consider their current inclusive capacity and capability and how this has helped progress the strategies in place to address the inclusion barriers identified for each care environment.

4.8 SIP support for applications through the Inclusion Development Fund

The table below outlines each component of the SIP that must be completed and reviewed by the IA to apply for each stream of the IDF.

- **Note:** Where an Inclusion Profile is required, ECCC services will be unable to submit an IS Case if they do not have an inclusion barrier with a strategy that identifies IDF funding.

	IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	IDF Family Day Care Top Up	IDF Innovative Solutions Support	
				Relating to service	Relating to care environment
Service Profile	Yes	No	No	Yes (centre-based only)	Yes (centre-based only)
Care Environment	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Inclusion Profile	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Educator Profile	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (FDC only)
Barriers and Strategies	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

5 Inclusion Development Fund

The IDF provides funding to assist eligible ECCC services to address an inclusion barrier that cannot be resolved by support provided by an IA. There are four discrete streams of IDF support, which have different eligibility criteria, application processes and approved funding processes.

The four streams of support are:

- IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator
- IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support
- IDF Subsidy – Family Day Care (FDC) Top Up, and
- IDF Innovative Solutions Support.

ECCC services apply for support through the IS Portal by creating an Inclusion Support (IS) Case or Innovative Solutions Case.

Inclusion Support Cases are for:

- IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator
- IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support, or
- IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up.

Innovative Solutions Cases are for:

- IDF Innovative Solutions Support.

5.1 IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

The IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator provides per hour funding to subsidise the employment of an additional educator to increase the educator to child ratio in the care environment to support the inclusion of a child or children with disability, with ongoing high support needs alongside their typically developing peers.

Each care environment requiring support of an additional educator requires an individual Inclusion Support Case. If the service provides care during school terms and school holiday periods and different hours of support are required for each period, the care environment will have two IS Cases, one for each care provision.

5.1.1 Eligibility requirements

Approved centre based ECCC services are eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.

To access funding, an eligible ECCC service must be seeking to include a child or children with disability, or undergoing assessment for disability, with ongoing high support needs.

5.1.2 Applying for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

ECCC services must complete a SIP in collaboration with its IA. If the development of a SIP identifies a barrier or inclusion barriers for which an additional educator is required to address the inclusion barrier, the service may make an application under the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.

The following components of the SIP must be completed before an application for IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator can be submitted for approval.

	Service Profile	Care Environment	Inclusion Profile	Barriers and Strategies
IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*

*An application will not be able to be submitted by an ECCC service where they do not have an inclusion strategy that identifies IDF funding in the Barriers and Strategies for the care environment.

The following sections of the IS Portal must be completed when applying for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator. Further information on each of these sections is outlined below.

	Children and enrolments	Care week profile	Day summary	All support hours	Authorised personnel	Notes
IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not mandatory

5.1.3 Case Details

The Case Details requires the ECCC service applying for support under the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator to:

- Identify the Care Environment for the IS Case. All Care Environments identified on the SIP will be available from which the service can select.
- Select the funding support they are applying for: **IDF Subsidy**. **IDF Subsidy** is used for applications for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.
- Select if the care provision is for:
 - Regular Care Year Round
 - Regular Care School Term Only
 - School Holidays Only
- Select the purpose of application:
 - **New** – the care environment has not received assistance of an additional educator previously.

Note: All applications will be considered “New” for the first time they access support through the Inclusion Development Fund, regardless of whether they accessed support through the Inclusion Support Subsidy under IPSP.

- **Change of circumstance** – the care environment has a current approved IS Case, and the service needs to change details. Change of circumstance applications will not adjust the end date of the approval period for the current approved case in the care environment. A change of circumstance may occur where an eligible child enrolls in the service and the service is requesting additional or less hours of support.

Note: The IS Portal will allow the IS Case to be copied and adjusted as required.
Where additional support is requested, the service should demonstrate progress made in implementing strategies for the care environment in the SIP. This can be done through progress notes on existing Action Items, or adding new Action Items.

- **Renewal** – the care environment is requesting an additional approval period, renewing the assistance which is currently approved.

Note: The IS Portal will allow the IS Case to be copied and adjusted as required.
An application for a renewal should occur before the renewal date to ensure continuity of funding if the renewal application is approved.
The service should demonstrate progress made in implementing strategies for the care environment in the SIP. This can be done through progress notes on existing Action Items, or adding new Action Items.

- Select the Start and End Date of the IS Case. If approved, this is the period over which the funding can be claimed. This period can be up to 52 weeks for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.

- Enter the number of weeks the service needs funding for within the above period. This should consider any close down period of the service over Christmas and New Year etc.

For example, IS Cases with a Care Provision of “School Holidays only” will require approximately 12 weeks of funding over a 52 week period.

5.1.4 Care Environment

The care environment identifies information about the total number of enrolled children, educators providing care to children and licensed places for the care environment. Each child and educator should be counted once, regardless of whether the child and educator attend multiple days. The typical number of staff is the number of educators that provide support to that care environment.

Each care environment includes a daily profile, which provides information about the number of children and staff in the environment on a daily basis. The information will assist the IA and IDF Manager to ensure the support requested is adequate to the care environment’s needs, and the application meets requirements of the ISP Guidelines, including:

- the staff to child ratio – and how it relates to the ratios recommended under the [National Quality Framework](#) for that age group, and
- total hours of support for the care environment, considering the number of additional educators requested.

In the daily profile, the service must indicate the following for each day:

- Total number of children in the care environment
- The number of children eligible for the IDF in the care environment
- Typical number of educators providing care to children in the environment
- Number of additional educators requested – that is, the number of educators to be subsidised
- Number of children 0 to 2 years in the environment
- Number of children 2 to 3 years in the environment
- Number of children 3 years to preschool age in the environment
- Number of children over preschool age in the environment

Note: The daily profile questions must be answered for each field for each day, even if the answer is ‘0’.

5.1.5 Children and enrolments

Children and enrolments allows an ECCC service to indicate which child from the SIP should be associated with the IS Case. Information about the child from the child’s record in the SIP will automatically populate in the IS Case.

To apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator, all children will be required to have:

- a signed ‘Permission to Share Personal Information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme’ form, and
- documentary evidence that confirms a diagnosed disability/medical condition, or a current and ongoing assessment for disability.

These documents must be uploaded under the correct document type, these are:

- Family Consent Form
- Permanent Disability
- Undergoing Assessment
- Health Care Card
- NDIS Participant

The IS Case cannot be submitted without the appropriate attachments.

5.1.6 Care week profile

The care week profile must be completed for each child associated with the IS Case. The care week profile provides information about the sessions of care for all eligible children associated to the IS Case.

The service must add a session of care for each day the eligible child is enrolled and for which the service is seeking funding support. The information required includes:

- The day of the session
- The payment type the session relates to
 - IDF Subsidy – Centre Based Care
 - IDF Subsidy – Pupil Free Day. To be used where the child is expected to attend the service on pupil free days over the Approval Period of the case
- Whether the child attends a state funded kindergarten/preschool programme (if the service has indicated in the Inclusion Profile that the care environment delivers such a programme)
- Whether the child's attendance varies each week
 - No – the child attends this session each week
 - Other – the child has an irregular pattern of attendance
 - Rostered care – the child's attendance depends on parents' roster, or
 - Week On/Week Off – the child attends this session each fortnight
- The normal attendance (in and out times) of the child, and
- How many hours of support are requested from the IDF Subsidy for this session.

Sessions in the care week profile can be copied to allow the service to update one or more field to create all sessions for the child (or children) associated with the IS Case.

5.1.7 Day summary

The Day Summary provides an overview of the service's funding support requested each day for all eligible children.

The Day Summary also provides the total sum of the total requested hours each week, for each payment type.

The service must update or confirm the hours requested each day, including where there is a shared care arrangement (see 5.1.7.1) in place. For example, if the service has indicated in their care week profile two children attend the service on a Monday and requested 5 hours for each child, the Day Summary will initially calculate a total requested hours of 10 (2 children, 5 hours requested for each). Where the requested hours are for a single additional educator, the ECCC service should update the requested hours to 5 hours.

If more than one educator is required, the ECCC service must indicate the total number of requested hours for each educator on that day. For example, if two educators are required for the 5 hours on a Monday, the requested hours for Monday is 10 hours. A comment should be added to the requested hours explaining the need for more than one educator.

5.1.7.1 Shared Care arrangement

Where more than one child with disability with ongoing high support needs is in attendance in the same care environment on the same day, the service must explore the use of a Shared Care arrangement. A Shared Care arrangement occurs where one additional educator is employed to support the inclusion of more than one child with ongoing high support needs in the care environment.

Where a Shared Care arrangement occurs in a single care environment, the service is eligible for to receive up to 40 hours per week for an Additional Educator.

5.1.8 All Support Hours

All support hours provides a summary of the service's requested hours for the care environment. This calculates the number of hours requested each week, and total requested hours for the IS Case by payment type.

5.1.8.1 Hours Override for Variable Days

Where the service has indicated the child has an irregular pattern of attendance, that is, variable days, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

Variable days occur when a child or children do not attend the service for the same number of hours and the same days each week. If a child or children have variable days of attendance, the hours override will allow you to reduce your requested hours each week to ensure you are only requesting the required hours of support for the case.

Over a typical 4 week period, ECCC services must indicate which weeks each child is expected to be in care and to identify potential overlaps of children's attendance. For each combination of children, the service must provide the required hours for each week and how many weeks the service requires these hours. The total number of weeks required across all combinations cannot exceed the maximum operational weeks of the IS Case.

5.1.8.2 Hours Override for Pupil Free Days

Where a service has requested hours for the Payment Type of Pupil Free Day, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

The Hours Override asks the service to identify how many days the service requires the requested hours for an Additional Educator over the life of the case.

5.1.9 Authorised Personnel

The authorised personnel identifies the person who can be contacted at the service regarding the IS Case. More than one authorised personnel can be added to the case.

The authorised personnel selected on the IS Case will be listed on the SIP and any associated IS Cases.

5.1.10 Notes

The notes page allows general notes to be added about the IS Case by the service, IA and IDF Manager. While notes are not mandatory, services are encouraged to use them as they can assist communication between the service, IA and IDF Manager.

5.1.11 Endorsements

The IA must endorse the IS Case before submitting it to the IDF Manager for assessment. Before endorsing the IS Case, the IA must complete a review of the Service Profile and the Inclusion Profile for the relevant care environment on the SIP. The endorsement and notes from the IA will be considered as part of the IDF Manager's assessment of the IS Case.

The IA may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This may occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted for IA endorsement, however the IA will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.1.12 Approval

The IDF Manager will assess the information in the IS Case and SIP, including the relevant Inclusion Profile and Barriers and Strategies associated with the care environment to determine the funding support required by the service. They will also take into consideration the IA review and endorsement notes.

The IDF Manager may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This will occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted, however the IDF Manager will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.1.12.1 If funding is approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with an Approval Letter attached, providing the details of their approved IS Case and the Approval Period over which claims can be made. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

5.1.12.2 If funding is not approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with an Application Declined letter attached. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

The outcome of the assessment will also be available as an 'Assessment Outcome' note on the IS Case.

5.1.13 Claiming the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

Once approved for funding, ECCC services receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator by submitting claims retrospectively using their CCMS software. ECCC services must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved IS Case attended the service (60 day rule). There will be no automated payment for claims made outside the 60 day rule and ECCC services should contact the IDF Manager (also see paragraphs 5.1.14 and 5.1.15).

When submitting claims, services are required to:

- identify the Additional Educator/s
- provide details of the hours each Additional Educator attended the care environment, and
- provide details of which eligible child or children on the approved IS Case attended the care environment for this week. **Note** this is not required where the service is claiming Non Face-to-Face hours.

The system will validate the hours submitted for each additional educator against the total attendance hours for each child (or children) listed on the claim before a payment is calculated and made to the service.

The IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator is paid directly to the ECCC service, from the department, to the same payee details nominated to receive their child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families.

5.1.14 Inactivated IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the Approval Period, the IS Case will automatically be inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. IS Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If a service requires their case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.1.15 Withdrawn IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days of the Case Start Date, the IS Case will automatically be withdrawn and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager, and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If a service requires their case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.1.16 Ending an IS Case – ECCC services responsibility

If the service no longer requires the Approved IS Case for an Additional Educator, they must notify the IDF Manager within 10 business days of becoming aware of this. The ECCC service will be required to provide the date that funding should cease (i.e. the new end date of the Approval Period) and a reason funding is no longer required.

5.2 IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support enables centre-based services to engage an Additional Educator immediately for a time limited period, while an alternative and more stable solution is being determined.

IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support can be approved for up to 8 weeks for one child per care environment. The 8 weeks can be claimed occur over a 52 week Approval Period. If the service requires ongoing support from an Additional Educator to include the child, the service should apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.

Requests for IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator must be submitted on the IS Portal a minimum of 4 weeks prior to date the support is required which will provide continuity of funding if both applications are approved.

5.2.1 Eligibility requirements

Approved centre based ECCC services are eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support.

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support can be accessed where there is an immediate barrier associated with enrolling a child, for which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate short-term solution.

5.2.2 Applying for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

The ECCC service seeking the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support is not required to develop a completed SIP at the time of application. The following components of the SIP must be completed before an application can be submitted.

	Service Profile	Care Environment	Inclusion Profile	Barriers and Strategies
IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	No	Yes	No	No

The ECCC service must complete the SIP following the assessment and outcome of the application.

	Children and enrolments	Care week profile	Day summary	All support hours	Authorised Personnel	Notes
IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not mandatory

5.2.3 Case Details

The Case Details requires the ECCC service applying for support under the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support to:

- Identify the Care Environment for the IS Case. All Care Environments identified on the SIP will be available from which the service can select.
- Select the funding support they are applying for: **IDF Subsidy Immediate Support**
- Indicate if the outcome of the IS Case is routine or urgent. This will default to urgent, requiring the IDF Manager to action within five business days. Note that the IA can indicate the urgency of the IS Case and this will be the urgency that the IDF Manager uses to assess and notify the service of the outcome of funding.
- Select if the care provision is for:
 - Regular Care Year Round
 - Regular Care School Term Only
 - School Holidays Only

- Select the purpose of application:
 - **New** – the eligible child has not received assistance of an additional educator previously through Immediate/Time Limited Support.

Note: All applications will be considered “New” for the first time they access support through the Inclusion Development Fund, regardless of whether they accessed support through the Inclusion Support Subsidy under IPSP.

- **Change of circumstance** – an existing case for Immediate/Time Limited Support requires changes due to circumstances that require additional or less hours of support. Change of circumstances applications will not adjust the end date of the approval period.

Note: The IS Portal will allow the IS Case to be copied and adjusted as required.

- **Renewal** –An ECCC service cannot apply for a renewal of funding for Immediate/Time Limited support for a child who has previously been approved for this support. It is expected that the ECCC service determine a longer term solution for including the child in the service during the Approval Period of their Immediate/Time Limited case.
- Select the Start and End Date of the IS Case. If approved, this is the period over which the funding can be claimed. This period can be up to 52 weeks for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support.
- Enter the number of weeks the service needs funding for within the above period. This can be up to 8 weeks for IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support.

5.2.4 Care Environment

The care environment identifies information about the total number of enrolled children, educators providing care to children and licensed places for the care environment. Each child and educator should be counted once, regardless of whether the child and educator attend multiple days. The typical number of staff is the number of educators that provide support to that care environment.

Each care environment includes a daily profile, which provides information about the number of children and staff in the environment on a daily basis. The information will assist the IA and IDF Manager to ensure the support requested is adequate to the care environment’s needs, and the application meets requirements of the ISP Guidelines, including:

- the staff to child ratio – and how it relates to the ratios recommended under the [National Quality Framework](#) for that age group, and
- total hours of support for the care environment, considering the number of additional educators requested.

In the daily profile, the service must indicate the following for each day:

- Total number of children in the care environment
- The number of children eligible for the IDF in the care environment
- Typical number of educators providing care to children in the environment
- Number of additional educators requested – that is, the number of educators to be subsidised
- Number of children 0 to 2 years in the environment
- Number of children 2 to 3 years in the environment
- Number of children 3 years to preschool age in the environment
- Number of children over preschool age in the environment

Note: The daily profile questions must be answered for each field for each day, even if the answer is ‘0’.

5.2.5 Children and enrolments

Children and enrolments allows an ECCC service to indicate which child from the SIP should be associated with the IS Case. Disability information and attachments from the child record in the SIP will automatically populate in the IS Case.

ECCC services will be required to complete additional information about the child that explains the reasons why the service requires the short term support of an additional educator for the inclusion of this child. This includes indicating if the child has a language or speech delay, a disability or disruptive behaviours.

To apply for IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support, the child will be required to have:

- A signed 'Permission to Share Personal Information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme' form

These documents must be uploaded under the correct document type, this is:

- Family Consent Form

The IS Case will not be able to be submitted without the appropriate attachments.

5.2.6 Care week profile

The care week profile provides information about the sessions of care for the eligible child associated to the IS Case.

The service must add a session of care for day the eligible child is enrolled, which indicates:

- The day of the session
- The payment type the session relates to
 - IDF Subsidy – Immediate Support
 - IDF Subsidy – Pupil Free Day. To be used where the child is expected to attend the service on pupil free days over the Approval Period of the case
- Whether the child attends a state funded kindergarten/preschool programme (if the service has indicated in the Inclusion Profile that the care environment delivers a programme)
- Whether the child's attendance varies each week
 - No – the child attends this session each week
 - Other – the child has an irregular pattern of attendance
 - Rostered care – the child's attendance depends on parents roster
 - Week On/Week Off – the child attends this session each fortnight
- The normal attendance (in and out times) of the child, and
- How many hours of support are requested from the IDF Subsidy for this session.

Sessions in the care week profile can be copied to allow the service to update one or more field to create all sessions for the child (or children) associated to the IS Case.

5.2.7 Day summary

The Day Summary provides an overview of the service's funding support requested each day for the eligible child. It provides the total sum of the total requested hours each week, for each payment type.

The service must update or confirm the hours requested each day.

5.2.8 All Support Hours

All support hours provides a summary of the service's requested hours for the care environment. This calculates the number of hours requested each week, and total requested hours for the IS Case by payment type.

5.2.8.1 Hours Override for Variable Days

Where the service has indicated the child has an irregular pattern of attendance, that is, variable days, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

Variable days occur when a child or children do not attend the service for the same number of hours and the same days each week. If a child or children have variable days of attendance, the hours override will allow you to reduce your requested hours each week to ensure you are only requesting the required hours of support for the case.

Over a typical 4 week period, ECCC services must indicate which weeks each child is expected to be in care and to identify potential overlaps of a children's attendance. For each combination of children, the service must provide the required hours for each week and how many weeks the service requires these hours. The total number of weeks required across all combinations cannot exceed the maximum operational weeks of the IS Case.

5.2.8.2 Hours Override for Pupil Free Days

Where a service has requested hours for the Payment Type of Pupil Free Day, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

The Hours Override asks the service to identify how many days the service requires the requested hours for an Additional Educator over the life of the case.

5.2.9 Authorised Personnel

The authorised personnel identifies the person who can be contacted at the service regarding the IS Case. More than one authorised personnel can be added to the case.

The authorised personnel selected on the IS Case will be listed on the SIP and any associated IS Cases.

5.2.10 Notes

The notes page allows general notes to be added about the IS Case by the service, IA and IDF Manager. While notes are not mandatory, services are encouraged to use them as they can assist communication between the service, IA and IDF Manager.

5.2.11 Endorsements

The IA must endorse the IS Case before submitting it to the IDF Manager for assessment. Before endorsing the IS Case, the IA must review the content of the IS Case. The endorsement and notes from the IA will be considered as part of the IDF Manager's assessment of the IS Case.

The IA will be able to indicate if the outcome of the IS Case is routine or urgent, taking into consideration the ECCC service's indication. This will be defaulted to urgent for all IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited cases. This status determines how quickly the IDF Manager is required to assess and notify the ECCC service of the outcome of the IS Case.

The IA may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This may occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted to the IA for endorsement, however the IA will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.2.12 Approval

The IDF Manager will assess the information in the IS Case to determine the funding support required by the service. They will also take into consideration the IA endorsement notes.

The IDF Manager may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This will occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted, however the IDF Manager will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.2.12.1 If funding is approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with an Approval Letter attached, providing the details of their approved IS Case and the Approval Period over which claims can be made. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

5.2.12.2 If funding is not approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with an Application Declined letter attached. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

5.2.13 Claiming the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

Once approved for funding, services receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support by submitting claims retrospectively through the CCMS. ECCC services must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved case attended the service (60 day rule). There will be no automated payment for claims made outside the 60 day rule and ECCC services should contact the IDF Manager (also see paragraphs 5.2.14 and 5.2.15).

When submitting claims, services are required to:

- identify the Additional Educator
- provide details of the hours the Additional Educator attended the care environment, and
- provide details of the eligible child in the care environment. Note this is not required where the service is claiming Non Face-to-Face hours.

The system will validate the hours identified for the additional educator against the total attendance hours for the children listed on the claim before payment is calculated and made to the service.

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support is paid directly to the ECCC service, from the department, to the same payee details nominated to receive their child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families.

5.2.14 Inactivated IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the Approval Period, the IS Case will automatically be inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager, and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If a service requires their case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.2.15 Withdrawn IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days of the Case Start Date, the IS Case will automatically be withdrawn and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager, and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If a service requires their case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.2.16 Ending an IS Case – ECCC services responsibility

If the service no longer requires the Approved IS Case for an Additional Educator, they must notify the IDF Manager within 10 business days of becoming aware of this. The ECCC service will be required to provide the date that funding should cease (i.e. the new end date of the Approval Period) and a reason funding is no longer required.

5.3 IDF Subsidy – Family Day Care Top Up

The IDF Family Day Care (FDC) Top Up supports eligible FDC services to include children with disability with ongoing high support needs, by providing a fee top up payment where including the child results in the educator being unable to enrol the maximum number of children as allowed under the National Law.

Each educator requiring support through the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up requires an individual Inclusion Support Case. If the educator provides care during school terms and school holiday periods and different hours of support are required for each period, the educator will have two IS Cases.

5.3.1 Eligibility requirements

Approved FDC services are eligible for the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up.

To access funding, an eligible ECCC service must be seeking to include a child or children with disability, or undergoing assessment for disability, with ongoing high support needs.

5.3.2 Applying for IDF FDC Top Up

FDC services must complete a SIP in collaboration with its IA. If the development of a SIP identifies a barrier or inclusion barriers for which additional funding support would assist with the inclusion of the child, the FDC service may make an application under the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up.

The following sections of a SIP must be completed when applying for the IDF FDC Top Up.

	Service Profile	Educator Profile	Inclusion Profile	Barriers and Strategies
IDF FDC Top Up	No	Yes	Yes	Yes*

*An application will not be able to be submitted by an FDC service where they do not have an inclusion strategy that identifies IDF funding in the Barriers and Strategies for the educator.

The following sections of the IS Portal must be completed when applying for the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up. Further information on each of these sections is outlined below.

	Children and enrolments	Care week profile	Day summary	All support hours	Authorised Personnel	Notes
IDF FDC Top Up	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not mandatory

5.3.3 Case Details

The Case Details requires the FDC service applying for support under the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up to:

- Identify the FDC educator the IS Case is for. All FDC educators identified on the SIP will be available for the service to choose.
- Select the funding support they are applying for: **IDF Subsidy FDC Top Up**
- Select if the care provision is for:
 - Regular Care Year Round
 - Regular Care School Term Only
 - School Holidays Only
- Select the purpose of application:
 - **New** - the FDC educator has not received assistance previously

Note: All applications will be considered “New” for the first time they access support through the Inclusion Development Fund, regardless of whether they accessed support through the Inclusion Support Subsidy under IPSP.

- **Change of circumstance** – the FDC educator has a current approved IS Case, and they need to change details. Change of circumstance will not adjust the end date of the approval period. This may occur where an eligible child enrolls in the FDC service and the FDC service is requesting additional or less hours of support.

Note: The IS Portal will allow the IS Case to be copied and adjusted as required.

Where additional support is requested, the service should demonstrate progress made in implementing strategies for the educator in the SIP. This can be done through progress notes on existing Action Items, or adding new Action Items.

- **Renewal** – the FDC educator is requesting an additional approval period, renewing the assistance which is currently approved.

Note: The IS Portal will allow the IS Case to be copied and adjusted as required.

An application for a renewal should occur before the renewal data to ensure continuity of funding if the renewal application is approved.

The service should demonstrate progress made in implementing strategies for the educator in the SIP. This can be done through progress notes on existing Action Items, or adding new Action Items.

- Select the Start and End Date of the IS Case. If approved, this is the period the funding can be claimed for. This period can be up to 52 weeks for the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up.
- Enter the number of weeks the FDC educator needs funding for within the above period. This should consider any close down period of the FDC service over Christmas and New Year etc.

For example, IS Cases with a Care Provision of “School Holidays only” will require approximately 12 weeks of funding over a 52 week period.

5.3.4 Care Environment

The Care Environment is in the context of the FDC educator. This identifies information about the total number of enrolled children, licensed places for the FDC educator. Each child should be counted once, regardless if the child attends multiple days.

Each care environment includes a daily profile, which provides information about the specific care environment the FDC service is seeking assistance through the IDF Subsidy FDC Top Up. The information will assist the IA and IDF Manager to ensure the support requested is adequate to the FDC educator’s needs, and the application meets requirements of the ISP Guidelines, including:

- The staff to child ratio – and how it relates to the ratios recommended under the [National Quality Framework](#) for that age group
- The total hours of support for the care environment.

The service must indicate the following for each day:

- The number of children eligible for the IDF in the care environment
- Total number of children in the care environment
- Typical number of educators providing care to children in the environment (this should be entered as ‘1’)
- Number of additional educators requested – that is, the number of educator’s to be subsidised (for FDC, this should be entered as ‘0’)
- Number of children 0 to 2 years in the environment
- Number of children 2 to 3 years in the environment
- Number of children 3 years to preschool age in the environment
- Number of children over preschool age in the environment

Note: The daily profile questions must be answered for each field for each day, even if the answer is ‘0’.

5.3.5 Children and enrolments

Children and enrolments allows an FDC service to indicate which child (or children) from the SIP should be associated with the IS Case. Disability information and attachments from the child record in the SIP will automatically populate in the IS Case.

To apply for the IDF FDC Top Up, all children will be required to have:

- a signed 'Permission to Share Personal Information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme' form, and
- documentary evidence that confirms a diagnosed disability/medical condition, or a current and ongoing assessment for disability.

These documents must be uploaded under the correct document type, these are:

- Family Consent Form
- Permanent Disability
- Undergoing Assessment
- Health Care Card
- NDIS Participant

The IS Case cannot be submitted without the appropriate attachments.

5.3.6 Care week profile

The care week profile must be completed for each child associated to the IS Case. The care week profile provides information about the sessions of care for all eligible children associated to the IS Case.

The service must add a session of care for day the eligible child is enrolled and for which the service is seeking funding support. This information required includes:

- The day of the session
- The payment type the session relates to
 - IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up
 - IDF Subsidy – FDC Pupil Free Day. To be used where the child is expected to attend the service on pupil free days over the Approval Period of the case
- Whether the child's attendance varies each week
 - No – the child attends this session each week
 - Other – the child has an irregular pattern of attendance
 - Rostered care – the child's attendance depends on parents roster
 - Week On/Week Off – the child attends this session each fortnight
- The normal attendance (in and out times) of the child, and
- How many hours of support is requested from the IDF Subsidy for this session

Sessions in the care week profile can be copied to allow the service to update one or more field to create all sessions for the child (or children) associated to the IS Case.

5.3.7 Day summary

The Day Summary provides an overview of the service's funding support requested each day for all eligible children. It provides the total sum of the total requested hours each week, for each payment type.

The FDC service must update or confirm the hours requested each day.

5.3.8 All Support Hours

All support hours provides a summary of the requested hours for the care environment. This calculates the number of hours requested each week, and total requested hours for the IS Case by payment type.

5.3.8.1 Hours Override for Variable Days

Where the service has indicated the child has an irregular pattern of attendances, that is, variable days, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

Variable days occur when a child or children do not attend the service for the same number of hours and the same days each week. If a child or children have variable days of attendance, the hours override will allow you to reduce your requested hours each week to ensure you are only requesting the required hours of support for the case.

Over a typical 4 week period, ECCC services must indicate which weeks each child is expected to be in care to identify potential overlaps of children's attendance. For each combination of children, the service must provide the required hours for each week and how many weeks the service requires these hours. The total number of weeks required across all combinations cannot exceed the maximum operational weeks of the IS Case.

5.3.8.2 Hours Override for Pupil Free Days

Where a service has requested hours for the Payment Type of Pupil Free Day, the service is required to complete an Hours Override.

The Hours Override asks the service to identify how many days the service requires the requested hours for an Additional Educator over the life of the case.

5.3.9 Authorised Personnel

The authorised personnel identifies the person who can be contacted at the FDC service regarding the IS Case. More than one authorised personnel can be added to the case.

The authorised personnel selected on the IS Case will be listed on the SIP and any associated IS Cases.

5.3.10 Educators

The educators page lists the primary FDC educator for which the FDC service is seeking support. Other educators can be listed here too, such as back up educators.

5.3.11 Notes

The notes page allows general notes to be added about the IS Case by the service, IA and IDF Manager. While notes are not mandatory, services are encouraged to use them as they can assist communication between the service, IA and IDF Manager.

5.3.12 Endorsements

The IA must endorse the IS Case before submitting it to the IDF Manager for assessment. Before endorsing the IS Case, the IA must complete a review of the Inclusion Profile for the relevant educator on the SIP. The endorsement and notes from the IA will be considered as part of the IDF Manager's assessment of the IS Case.

The IA may seek additional information from the FDC service. This may occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted to the IA for endorsement, however the IA will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.3.13 Approval

The IDF Manager will assess the information in the IS Case and SIP, including the relevant Inclusion Profile and Barriers and Strategies associated with the care environment to determine the funding support required by the service. They will also take into consideration the IA review and endorsement notes.

The IDF Manager may seek additional information from the FDC service. This will occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case outlining the additional required information. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted, however the IDF Manager will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.3.13.1 If funding is approved

The FDC service will receive an email with an Approval Letter attached, providing the details of their approved IS Case and the Approval Period over which claims can be made. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

5.3.13.2 If funding is not approved

The FDC service will receive an email with an Application Declined letter attached. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

The outcome of the assessment will be available as an 'Assessment Outcome' note on the IS Case.

5.3.14 Claiming the IDF Subsidy – FDC Top Up

Once approved for funding, services receive payment for the IDF Subsidy - FDC Top Up by submitting claims retrospectively through the CCMS. The FDC service must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved case attended the service (60 day rule). There will be no automated payment for claims made outside the 60 day rule and ECCC services should contact the IDF Manager (also see paragraphs 5.3.14 and 5.3.15).

When submitting claims, services are required to:

- outline the number of hours they are claiming the FDC Top Up, and
- provide details of the eligible child (or children) in the care environment they are claiming funding for.

The system will validate the hours identified against the total hours for the child (or children) listed on the claim before payment is calculated and made to the service.

The IDF FDC Top Up is paid directly to the ECCC service, from the department, to the same payee details nominated to receive their child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families. The FDC service is required to pass the payment directly on to the relevant FDC Educator.

The IDF FDC Top Up is limited to one payment per FDC educator.

5.3.15 Inactivated IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the Approval Period, the IS Case will automatically be inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager, and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If an FDC service requires their IS Case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.3.16 Withdrawn IS Case

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days of the Case Start Date, the IS Case will automatically be withdrawn and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated at the agreement of the IDF Manager, and once reactivated, new claims must be submitted according to the 60 day rule. If a service requires there is Case to be reactivated, they should contact the IDF Manager.

5.3.17 Ending an IS Case

If the FDC service no longer requires the Approved IS Case for an Additional Educator, they must notify the IDF Manager within 10 business days of becoming aware of this. The ECCC service will be required to provide the date that funding should cease (i.e. the new end date of the Approval Period) and a reason funding is no longer required.

5.4 IDF Innovative Solutions Support

The IDF Innovative Solutions Support assists eligible ECCC services to fund innovative and flexible solutions to inclusion, where a barrier has been identified and it cannot be addressed by the support provided by its IA.

The approved limit for the IDF Innovative Solutions Support is between \$300 and \$3000. Applications may be made over \$3000, which will be considered by the Department and assessed based on value for money criteria as outlined in the ISP Guidelines (Section F2.3).

An application for the IDF Innovative Solutions Support may relate to a particular care environment where the inclusion barrier is presented or in the context of the whole ECCC service. If an FDC Service is applying for funding other than the whole FDC service, the care environment will be the FDC educator/s to which the funding proposal relates.

An IDF Innovative Solutions Support Case has a Start and End Date, which is indicative of when you expect the project to commence and end. The End Date will be used to remind ECCC services to submit their declaration of funding online using the IS Portal.

5.4.1 Eligibility requirements

Services eligible to apply for IDF Innovative Solutions Support are:

- Long day care
- OSHC, including vacation care services
- Family day care
- Occasional care
- Mobile services
- Budget Based Funded (BBF) Programme services²

An ECCC service seeking to include children, where a barrier to inclusion can be demonstrated, is eligible to apply for assistance and could include, but is not limited to, children from the following cohorts:

- Children with disability including those undergoing assessment for disability
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- Children from a refugee or humanitarian background
- Children with serious medical condition/s
- Children presenting with language and speech delays
- Children presenting with disruptive behaviours

5.4.2 Applying for IDF Innovative Solutions Support

ECCC services must complete a SIP in collaboration with its IA. If the development of a SIP identifies a barrier or inclusion barriers for which additional funding support would assist in addressing the inclusion barrier, the service may make an application under the IDF Innovative Solutions Support. The SIP will form a component of the application for funding.

The following sections of the SIP must be completed to submit an application for IDF Innovative Solutions Support.

² To avoid any doubt, continuing ECCC services which were previously funded under the BBF Program and are now funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy are eligible to receive support under the Inclusion Development Fund.

	Service Profile	Care Environment	Inclusion Profile	Educator Profile	Barriers and Strategies
IDF Innovative Solutions Support (relating to service)	Yes (centre-based only)	No	No	No	No
IDF Innovative Solutions Support (relating to care environment)	Yes (centre-based only)	Yes	Yes	Yes (FDC only)	Yes*

*An application will not be able to be submitted by an ECCC service where they do not have an inclusion strategy that identifies IDF funding in the Barriers and Strategies for the care environment.

The following sections in the IS Portal must be completed in the IS Portal when applying for the IDF Innovative Solutions Support.

	Funding proposal	Authorised Personnel	Notes	Attachments
IDF Innovative Solutions Support (relating to service)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IDF Innovative Solutions Support (relating to care environment)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5.4.3 Case details

In the case details, ECCC services applying for funding through the Innovative Solutions Support must select the care environment or the CCB Approval ID to which the funding proposal relates.

5.4.4 Funding Proposal and Budget

ECCC services must provide a funding proposal that outlines the inclusion barrier/s and why funding is needed to address it, a description of the innovative solutions support project and the intended outcome of the project.

The service must indicate that there are children with additional needs enrolled in the service and select all cohorts of children that the funding proposal will assist.

ECCC services must provide the budget items for the project, providing individual line items as described in their quote. The total amount of requested funding must match the quote provided to support the funding proposal. All budget line items must be quoted in GST exclusive figures.

5.4.5 Authorised Personnel

The authorised personnel identifies the person who can be contacted at the ECCC service about the Innovative Solutions Support case. More than one authorised personnel can be added to the case.

The authorised personnel selected on the Innovative Solutions support Case will be listed on the SIP and any associated Innovative Solutions Cases.

5.4.6 Notes

Notes can be added to an Innovative Solutions Case by the ECCC service, IA and IDF Manager. Notes are not mandatory however, services are encouraged to use them as they can assist communication between the service, IA and IDF Manager.

5.4.7 Attachments

ECCC services must attach at least one quote for goods and services to support their funding proposal to their Innovative Solutions Case.

The Attachments section of the IS Portal will also allow ECCC services to view attachments relating to their Innovative Solutions Support case, including their Letter of Offer.

5.4.8 Endorsements

The IA must endorse the Innovative Solutions Case before submitting it to the IDF Manager for assessment. If the case relates to a particular care environment, the IA must complete a review of the Inclusion Profile for the relevant care environment on the SIP. The endorsement and notes from the IA will be considered as part of the IDF Manager's assessment of the Innovative Solutions Case.

The IA will be able to indicate if the outcome of the Innovative Solutions Case is routine or urgent, taking into consideration of the ECCC service's view. This status determines how quickly the IDF Manager is required to assess and notify the ECCC service of the outcome of the Innovative Solutions Case.

The IA may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This may occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the case stating what the additional information is. The service will receive notification to the Organisation Email on the primary CCB Approval ID to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The case is required to be resubmitted for IA endorsement, however the IA will monitor IS Cases previously endorsed and prioritise when the case is resubmitted.

5.4.9 Approval

The IDF Manager will assess the information in the Innovative Solutions Case. If the case relates to a particular care environment, the IDF Manager will also review the relevant Inclusion Profile and Barriers and Strategies associated with the care environment as well as the IA review and endorsement notes in assessing the service's application.

The IDF Manager may seek additional information from the ECCC service. This will occur through adding a 'Service Action Required' note to the IS Case stating what the additional information is. The service will receive notification to log into the IS Portal to view the note and provide the information required. The IS Case is required to be resubmitted, however the IDF Manager will monitor IS Cases previously assessed and prioritise when the IS Case is resubmitted.

5.4.9.1 If funding is approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with a Letter of Offer attached, providing the details of their approved Innovative Solutions Case. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

This letter must be signed and returned to the IDF Manager at idfminnovative@ku.com.au. Once the IDF Manager executes the agreement, payment will be made directly to the service from the department, to the same payee details it has nominated to receive its child care fee assistance payment on behalf of the families.

5.4.9.2 If funding is not approved

The ECCC service will receive an email with an Application Declined letter attached. This will be sent from ISP_noreply@dss.gov.au to the email address as outlined in Section 3.5 of the ISP User Guide.

The outcome of the assessment will be available as an 'Assessment Outcome' note on the IS Case.

5.4.10 Expenditure of Funding

At the completion of the project, which may be during or after the Approval Period, the ECCC service must complete an online declaration through the IS Portal. The online declaration must be completed online no later than 10 business days from the end date of the Approval Period.

Within this declaration, the ECCC service must provide details of the outcomes of the Project, including confirmation that the Project was delivered as approved or with the agreed change (see section 5.4.11).

Where the ECCC service did not spend any of the funding on the Project, or received duplicate funding, they must declare the Project was not started and provide reasons for this.

The ECCC service will receive an email one month prior to the end date of the Approval Period as a reminder to submit the online declaration. If the service requires an extension of the Approval Period, they are required to contact the IDF Manager.

5.4.11 Changing the way the ECCC service spends the IDF Innovative Solutions Support funding

If an ECCC service does not spend the full amount of funding on the Project, they must speak to their IA. If their IA agrees in writing, the ECCC service may spend the remaining funds on inclusion related activities to overcome the same or similar inclusion barriers outlined in your initial application. Any additional activity undertaken in line with the agreed change must be declared when completing the online declaration of funding.

5.4.12 Repayment of the IDF Innovative Solutions Support funding

If an ECCC service does not spend any of the funding on the Project as outlined in the Letter of Offer, they must declare this. The Department will issue an invoice to repay the full amount to the Commonwealth within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

If an ECCC service receives duplicate funding for the same or similar purposes, they are required to notify the IDF Manager within 5 days from approval of the duplicate funding. The ECCC service may be required to repay the IDF Innovative Solutions Support funding.

6 Specialist Equipment Library

ECCC services can access a range of specialist equipment, managed by the IA, to facilitate and support the inclusion of a child or children with disability with ongoing high support needs in the care environment. The need for specialist equipment must be identified in a SIP or be recommended by a relevant professional, such as an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, with knowledge of the child's biomechanical functional needs.

Equipment available from the SEL may include (but is not limited to):

- portable ramps to create access to the care environment
- standing frames and full support swings to allow a child with high physical needs to participate in the daily programme and activities
- hoists, slings, harnesses, change tables, toilet sets or steps, potty chairs, mobile stools and seating or posture aids for educators to assist them to lift and transfer children safely when carrying out basic care functions, such as changing or going to the toilet
- specialised inclusion toys such as switch toys
- specialised furniture such as chairs, tables, desk and positioning equipment
- communication cards or charts, and Auslan dictionaries to enable the child and educators to communicate effectively.

It is the responsibility of each ECCC service accessing equipment from the SEL to ensure it is fitted by an appropriate professional, such as an occupational therapist, physiotherapist or in some cases the IA. The person installing the equipment should have knowledge of the child's biomechanical functioning and needs.

A service seeking equipment from the SEL must sign a Loan Agreement Form with its IA prior to accessing equipment, which sets out the Terms and Conditions associated with borrowing equipment from the SEL.

The process for accessing equipment from the SEL, including expected timeframes, transportation arrangements, return arrangements and the Terms and Conditions associated with borrowing the equipment, are determined by each IA and may vary across jurisdictions.

7 Who to contact for assistance

ECCC services should contact their IA for any assistance using the IS Portal, including any technical assistance. Contact details are available on the Department's website at: <https://www.education.gov.au/isp-contact-us>

ECCC services should contact the IDF Manager if they wish to enquire about the outcome of an IDF application or if they require any other information in relation to the IDF Case.

A complaint handling process has been established for ECCC services. More information can be found on the IDF Manager's website at www.idfm.org.au

The ISP Guidelines and more information about the programme can be found on the department's website: <http://www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-programme>