



What is an STR?

STR stands for Short Term Respite.

Short Term Respite (STR) is a service that provides temporary respite accommodation and supports for participants who live with their primary carer, and have funding as part of their National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plan.

STR can provide a change for the participant from their usual living arrangements and gives their caregiver a break, or respite.

An STR can also be used when the primary caregiver is unwell, needs surgery, or as part of a transition plan when a participant is preparing to move to Supported Independent Living (SIL), to support increased independence in daily living activities.

What does an STR involve?

STR is essentially a short-term stay at accommodation that is deemed safe and appropriate for a participant. A Support Worker will stay with the participant during the time they are away. An STR is used when a parent or carer needs a short break from their caring role, or if the participants' usual support network is unavailable.



What options does Interchange Illawarra have for Short Term Respite?

At Interchange Illawarra we have a villa at Lake Illawarra and a cottage in Wollongong that are used for Short Term Respite. This accommodation is just like a regular home with a living area, kitchen, bedrooms, outdoor area, laundry and bathroom.

The Villa

- Located within walking distance of lake foreshore and bike paths
- Short drive to Warilla beach, Warilla Grove Shopping Centre and Stockland Shellharbour

The Cottage

- Located within walking distance of the central business district of Wollongong.
- Short drive to Wollongong's beaches and bike paths
- Weekday group activities run in the Evan's Street Centre next door



What's included in an STR?

An STR can include accommodation, personal care, meals, and access to activities tailored to the participant's needs and interests, as well as capacity building activities like grocery shopping, meal preparation and cooking, washing clothes and putting fresh sheets on beds.

The Support Worker will provide as much support as needed with these activities, with the goal of increasing the participant's independence in their daily living skills.

A Support Worker stays with the participant during their stay at an STR, in a separate bedroom.

At the start of the STR the Support Worker will talk to the participant about what kind of activities they would like to do during their stay, and what foods they would like to prepare for mealtimes.

At Interchange Illawarra all food is included during the stay. We use a debit card which has funds on it to cover any basic groceries that are needed. Items like salt and pepper, spices, oil, vinegar, paper towel etc., are always available in the kitchen pantry and do not need to be purchased each time.

If required, our Support Workers can transport participants to their usual therapy appointments, group activities or work commitments during their STR period.



How long is an STR?

The number of days for the STR is determined by the participant and/or their parent/carer. For example, you might want to use it in a block of up to 14 days at a time or for one weekend a month.

Short Term Respite funding can be used flexibly, provided it doesn't exceed the maximum cap of 28 days per year.

How do I know if I have funding for an STR?

You can talk to your Support Coordinator, Planner, or local area coordinator if you are unsure if you have funds available for Short Term Respite.

STR is not available for participants who live in a Supported Independent Living (SIL) arrangement, or if you live alone without support. STR is only available to participants who live with their parents/carers.

You can ask for a modification to your plan if your situation has changed. Or, if you think your current plan doesn't have the Short Term Respite support you and your carers need.

Can STR be delivered to groups?

Yes. At Interchange Illawarra we offer Weekends Away at our cottage in Wollongong, with a group of participants from the Social Support Program. Boys and Girls weekends away are run separately and include fun activities like going out for dinner, day trips and movie nights.

Weekends Away give participants a chance to increase their independence, practice their daily living skills, spend time away from their primary carers while maintaining their informal supports.





Can STR be used for short breaks?

Interchange Illawarra regularly offers short breaks to groups of participants with low to moderate support needs from our Social Support programs. Short breaks can also be arranged on a 1:1 basis if the participant has the appropriate funding in their NDIS plan, and a suitable Support Worker is available.

STR can be used for short breaks at standard accommodation within your home state. Standard accommodation refers to basic, clean accommodation like a hotel, motel, short stay rental, cabin, cottage, hostel or respite accommodation. You can't use your funding to go on a cruise or a tour.

If you live in a remote or very remote area, or a border town, your closest Short Term Respite might be in a neighbouring state or territory. In this situation, you may be able to request respite in another location.

What is an STA?

Some older NDIS plans may refer to Short Term Accommodation or STA. If your plan uses the term Short Term Accommodation, it has the same meaning as Short Term Respite (STR).



Need more information?

For more in-depth information about STA's, we encourage you to visit the NDIS website <https://www.ndis.gov.au/> or call the NDIS on 1800 800 110.

The information provided in this fact sheet is general in nature. Please contact your Support Planner or Coordinator if you need further clarification. We are here to help!