

This document outlines the end-to-end process for designing, constructing, certifying, and enrolling a Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) dwelling under the NDIS framework.

Steps to SDA Approval (*design, build, certification*)

1. SDA-aligned design development

The proposed dwelling is designed to meet the **NDIS SDA Design Standard** for the intended design category (e.g. **High Physical Support**), along with the relevant building codes, accessibility standards, and state and local planning requirements.

2. Independent SDA design assessment (provisional stage)

An accredited, independent SDA assessor reviews the design documentation. If the design meets the SDA Design Standard, the assessor issues a Design (Provisional) Certificate, confirming the design is compliant in principle before construction.

3. Planning and building approvals

The project is submitted for the required statutory approvals, such as development approval and building permit, through the relevant local authority or certifier. These approvals are separate from SDA certification but are mandatory before construction can begin.

4. Construction of the SDA dwelling

Construction commences once approvals are granted. The dwelling is built in accordance with the approved plans and the provisionally certified SDA design.

5. Quality assurance during construction (recommended)

While not mandated by the NDIA, many projects elect to include interim inspections or reviews by the SDA assessor during construction to ensure the build remains aligned with the certified design and to minimise the risk of non-compliance at completion.

6. Practical completion and occupancy approval

When construction is finished, the dwelling receives the required completion and occupancy approvals under state or local building regulations, confirming it is safe and fit for occupation.

7. Final SDA assessment (as-built stage)

The accredited SDA assessor undertakes a final site inspection of the completed dwelling. If the dwelling has been built in accordance with the SDA Design Standard, the assessor issues a Final As-Built Certificate of SDA Category Compliance, along with the required assessment summary documentation.

8. SDA provider eligibility


The organisation intending to operate or manage the dwelling as SDA must be a registered NDIS provider with the Specialist Disability Accommodation registration group, meeting all governance and compliance requirements.

9. NDIA dwelling enrolment application

The registered SDA provider submits an application through the NDIS provider portal to have the completed dwelling formally enrolled as SDA, including all required evidence such as the final SDA compliance certification.

10. NDIA enrolment decision

Following assessment, the NDIA enrolls the dwelling as an approved SDA dwelling. Once enrolled, the dwelling can be used to deliver SDA supports to eligible NDIS participants and is **recognised within the national SDA framework**.



Why SDA is important to the future of WA Health

In 2022 the WA Auditor General found that patients are staying in public hospitals for weeks, months and in some cases years beyond medical necessity, largely due to the absence of appropriate disability, aged care, mental health and housing supports.

“Around 200 hospital beds per day in WA are occupied by people waiting for care or housing”
ABC News July 2025

SDA design, build and approval pathway

1 BUILT TO SDA DESIGN STANDARD

2 INDEPENDENT SDA DESIGN CERTIFICATION

3 PLANNING AND BUILDING APPROVALS

4 CONSTRUCTION OF DWELLING

5 FINAL AS-BUILT SDA CERTIFICATION

6 NDIA DWELLING ENROLMENT

Specialist Disability Accommodation can play a critical role in supporting timely hospital discharge for people with complex physical needs whose requirements cannot be safely met in standard housing.

Purpose-built SDA can help reduce unnecessary length of stay in hospitals, prevent avoidable readmissions, and support continuity of care across the health, disability, and housing systems.



High Physical Support (HPS) is the SDA design category intended for people with very high physical and clinical support needs, incorporating advanced accessibility, assistive technology readiness, and infrastructure to support 24/7 care and safe delivery of supports.