

## DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY AND THE NDIS

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR NDIS PARTICIPANTS

#### WHAT IS DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY?

*'Dance movement therapists combine the elements of dance, movement systems, creative processes, and psychological and scientific theories, to address the specific needs of groups and individuals.'* ([www.dtaa.org.au](http://www.dtaa.org.au))

Dance movement therapy (DMT) is delivered by professionally trained practitioners who have Provisional Professional or Professional registration with the Dance Movement Therapy Association of Australasia (DTAA). DM Therapists utilise person-centred and inclusive approaches to promote verbal and non-verbal attunement with their clients, nurturing safe, confidential and supportive therapeutic relationships. These enable clients to work towards a range of therapeutic outcomes meaningful to them. More detailed information and definitions are available on the DTAA website at: <https://dtaa.org.au/therapy/>

#### WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY?

DMT is an inclusive and outcomes oriented practice. Previous experience in dance is not necessary to take part in DMT and people of all ages and movement abilities can access it. DMT is facilitated in educational, medical, community and private practice settings; often in collaboration with other allied health or educational services. It can be facilitated for individuals, groups or in family therapy settings. There are established working models and practice with a range of people with disabilities including with those in early years or childhood, with cognitive disabilities, on the autism spectrum, with physical disabilities, mental health or neurological conditions and those with Acquired Brain Injury.

#### WHAT TYPES OUTCOMES CAN DMT HELP YOU WORK TOWARDS?

DMT goals are agreed upon by the client and their DM Therapist and they will align with the goals developed in their NDIS Plan. If desired, a DM Therapist can also collaborate or talk with a client's family, support networks and Allied Health workers. DMT goals will be specific to each individual but some broad wellbeing areas DMT practice can support include developing physical and cognitive functioning, self-expression and creativity, emotional literacy and regulation and social skills.

#### DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY IS...

*'...the relational and therapeutic use of dance and movement to further the physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural functioning of a person. DMT is based on the empirically-supported unity of body and mind. It recognizes that change and growth in one supports change and growth in the other.'*

[www.dtaa.org.au](http://www.dtaa.org.au)



## WHAT DOES A DMT SESSION LOOK LIKE?

This depends on an individual's preferences and goals and whether a session is for an individual or group. However, there are often common threads across DMT sessions which can include:

- Warm ups and dance activities through guided or improvised movement
- Opportunities to build on coordination, strength and agility through targeted dance/movement
- Opportunities for shared or mirrored movement interactions and attunement with others and/or a therapist through movement
- The use of props and music to support movement exploration and creative dance
- The opportunity to have your creative movement witnessed by a therapist and/or peers
- Creative approaches to therapeutic interactions to promote engagement in sessions
- Opportunities for reflective discussion or art making after a dance experience
- Guided relaxation that utilizes breath and body work

## HOW DO I FIND A QUALIFIED DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPIST?

Only Provisional Professional and Professional Members of the DTAA are practitioners that the DTAA recognise as DM Therapists. These members undergo application and review processes to ensure they are trained at a level approved by the DTAA and that they have completed the required number of clinical practice, supervision and Professional Development hours stipulated by their membership level. These members are bound by the DTAA's code of ethics (<https://dtaa.org.au/about/ethics/>), and there are DTAA board approved complaints procedures on the website also. The DTAA website has a list of qualified Dance Movement Therapists who are currently in practice across Australia. These listings provide brief professional biographies, geographical working locations and contact details for each member. You can find this listing at [www.dtaa.org.au/members](http://www.dtaa.org.au/members) Those who are registered with the NDIS will have a NDIS logo next to their profile. Please also note though that that some of these DM Therapists may not be NDIS registered as individuals but work for NDIS registered organisations.

## HOW DO I USE MY NDIS FUNDS TO ACCESS DMT?

The way an NDIS plan is managed will guide the way DMT is paid for. Self-managed clients can pay the DM Therapist directly or elect their own third party to manage payments and does not require a DM Therapist to be registered with the NDIS. Plan-Managed clients will use a third party such as a community organisation to manages their funds and the DM therapist invoices them, these DM Therapists will be working within a registered organisation rather than independently. This organisation or the DM therapist will create a Service Agreement with a client to plan how they will work towards their goals. This document will also outline the timing and number of sessions, Service Agreement review strategies, payment methods and plans for if a session cannot be attended or go ahead. The DTAA website ([www.dtaa.org.au](http://www.dtaa.org.au)) has links to examples of an Intake form, Service Agreement and reporting templates that a DM Therapist may use to support the use of NDIS funds for DMT sessions.

## ARTICLES AND FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT DMT

There is a growing body of literature that describes and evidences the use of DMT to support people with disabilities to increase their wellbeing. Some links and examples can be found on the DTAA website,

<https://dtaa.org.au/therapy/ndis-dance-movement-therapists/>

An Easy Read description of DMT with visuals is also available on the DMT website at this same link.