

The Key Worker Model at Plumtree

We believe that families are the experts about their child. We as professionals will come and go, but families are always an integral part of children's lives.

Our role is to support you with the information and skills to achieve the goals that are important to you, and to provide support and guidance in these early years when needed. We do this by working in partnership with you, using the Key Worker model.

The Key Worker model is evidence based and recommended as best practice by Early Childhood Intervention Australia and the NDIS.

Our staff are trained as Key Workers

Our team at Plumtree have university training in allied health, education, psychology or behaviour. They have also completed accredited Key Worker training and are supported with further on the job training at Plumtree. This means that they can seamlessly switch roles from being your Therapist or Educator to being your Key Worker. This can save time and money but above all, it supports a high quality service.

Your Key Worker can provide five types of support

Our highly qualified team can provide you with information and skills relating to their professional background. In addition, as Key Workers, they can provide the following if needed:

1. Information and advice to navigate services and access resources
2. Opportunities to identify your priorities and goals, then work on these together with you
3. Advocacy for your child and family
4. Co-ordination of your child's services
5. Emotional support

If you see more than one therapist at Plumtree, one of them will be your Key Worker. Your Key Worker:

- Is the person you will see and talk to the most at Plumtree
- Is the main worker involved with your family
- Organises the service you receive from us
- Coordinates the team who supports your child
- Listens to your concerns about any aspect of your child's development or its impact on your family, and links you to people who can assist you, if needed.



The whole team at Plumtree support your Key Worker, providing access to a deep pool of information, expertise and resources. The team can support your Key Worker by:

- Giving specialist advice and support relating to your child's and family's needs
- Providing your Key Worker with ideas, strategies and techniques that will meet your child's individual needs that can be implemented into your everyday family routine
- Providing advice if needed to people outside of Plumtree who are involved in supporting your child, including staff at childcare, preschool, school and community activities, private therapists and medical staff.

A quality service depends on some non face-to-face time

Most of the five roles of a Key Worker can be worked through alongside you, during your sessions. However, if more time is needed outside of your sessions, this will be discussed with you and we will only go ahead if you agree. Your Key Worker will report back to you about how the time has been spent. Some families spend just a few hours each year talking to their Therapist as a Key Worker, while others will use this resource regularly.

If you don't want your Therapist to also be a Key Worker, please contact our Customer Relationship Manager so she can make a note of this. Please also feel welcome to contact to her if you change your mind and you do want one of your team to take on the role of Key Worker at a later stage.

Billable under the NDIS

- Your appointment time
- Agreed non face to face time to achieve your goals including telephone conversations
- Making resources
- Report writing and assessment

Time spent scheduling your appointments is not billable.

Each family's circumstances are different and here are a just two examples of how families use their Key Worker.

Rocco (aged 4) has Speech Therapy at Plumtree. His Speech Pathologist (SP) visits him and his mum, Jenny, at home. From time to time she also visits his Preschool. To begin with, Jenny was not interested in having a Key Worker. His Plumtree SP focused mainly on his speech and language, but talked to Jenny about how other aspects of his development could be effecting his communication. Increasingly, Jenny found it useful to ask her SP about Rocco's play and his sensory needs. The SP was able to put on her 'Key Worker hat' and support Jenny to explore the big picture of Rocco's needs. With her SP's encouragement, Jenny set up a meeting at Preschool so that everyone could share their thoughts. Jenny engaged an Occupational Therapist, and is now happy to have her Plumtree SP act as Key Worker.

Amira (aged 6) sees both an Occupational Therapist (OT) and Speech Pathologist from Plumtree. Her mum, Maha, was keen from the start to have a Key Worker. Because Amira has Speech Pathology at school and OT at home, her OT was the obvious choice. The OT is Maha's first point of contact and coordinates Amira's services. She assists Maha to keep track of progress and reconsider her goals when priorities change. Sometimes, Maha finds it useful to talk to her OT about her broader worries, including her concerns about her older daughter, and her OT has helped her to find services that can assist. Sometimes, the OT spends time back in the office following things up for Maha, but more often they work through things together during their fortnightly sessions. Most of the time is still spent working towards Amira's OT goals, but Maha values the flexibility that the Key Worker role provides.