

Functional Capacity Assessments (FCA)

Information for Parents and Caregivers

What to Expect

Functional Capacity Assessments are suitable for individuals aged **6 years and up**, including adolescents and adults. These assessments are often recommended when there are concerns about how someone manages everyday tasks at home, school, work, or in the community.

FCAs are used to evaluate a person's **real-world strengths and support needs** and are especially helpful for individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions (such as autism, ADHD, intellectual disability), physical disabilities, or mental health challenges.

The purpose is not to diagnose but to understand **how someone functions day-to-day**, and to guide **NDIS access, funding reviews, goal setting, or planning interventions and supports**.

Benefits of a Functional Capacity Assessment

A Functional Capacity Assessment provides a clear and practical understanding of how a person manages everyday activities. It identifies both areas of strength and areas requiring support, offering valuable insight for families, therapists, educators, and funding bodies. An FCA helps to:

- Clarify the **level of support** needed across different life domains
- Inform **NDIS access or plan reviews** by providing detailed evidence
- Guide therapy and school teams to tailor supports more effectively
- Track changes or progress over time
- Empower individuals and families with a better understanding of everyday functioning
- Provide a foundation for setting **meaningful, person-centred goals**

By taking a whole-person approach, the FCA supports people to live with greater confidence, independence, and dignity.

Rating Scales and Questionnaires Used

As part of the Functional Capacity Assessment, we use a variety of **evidence-based tools** to understand how the individual functions in everyday life. These tools are carefully selected based on age, developmental profile, and referral needs. They help us gather input from parents, teachers, caregivers, or the individual themselves to create a well-rounded picture of support needs.

Common tools include:

- *Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales – 3rd Edition (Vineland-3)*: Assesses communication, daily living skills, socialisation, and motor functioning.
- *Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System – 3rd Edition (ABAS-3)*: Measures functional skills across home, school, work, and community settings.
- *World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule (WHODAS 2.0)*: Evaluates functioning in cognition, self-care, mobility, relationships, life activities, and participation.
- *Sensory Profile 2 (Child, Adolescent, and Adult Versions)*: Explores sensory sensitivities, preferences, and regulation across environments.

- *Life Skills Profile – 16 (LSP-16)*: Assesses everyday abilities like hygiene, safety, communication, and interpersonal interactions.
- *Parent Intake and History Questionnaire / Self-Report Tools*: Used before the interview to gather contextual and developmental information.

At times, we may also consider including additional tools—such as a *Cognitive Assessment (e.g., WISC-V or WAIS-IV)*—if we determine it would meaningfully inform our understanding of functional strengths and support needs.

What to Do Before the Appointment

Before your scheduled Functional Capacity Assessment, we'll send you a questionnaire to complete. This helps us gather important background information about your child's / family members development, daily routines, strengths, challenges, and support needs.

To help you prepare:

- Complete the questionnaire as thoroughly as possible and submit it before your appointment.
- Bring along or email any relevant reports or documents, such as relevant reports, NDIS plans, or therapy summaries.
- Think about your goals – what supports do you hope this assessment might lead to? What areas are you most concerned about?
- Write down any questions you may want to ask during the session.
- This first appointment is a parent-only session, so your child does not need to attend. It's a chance for us to talk openly about what's going well and where extra support may be needed, in a private and compassionate space.

The Assessment Process

Booking Your Assessment:

1. When you call to book the assessment appointments, an email will then be sent to you with instructions regarding the assessment process, along with an intake questionnaire and consent form. You will need to complete these documents and provide contact details of people in your / your child's life (e.g. teachers, carers, supervisors, service providers) that can assist with providing information as part of the assessment process.

You'll also be invited to send any relevant documents such as:

- School or therapy reports
 - NDIS plans or past assessments
 - Any reports that help build a picture of you/ your child's support needs
2. Once we have received this information, we will ask you/parent/carers to complete questionnaires, rating scales and documentation or request input from other people involved in your/ your child's care (with your consent):
 3. Please note: **All assessment forms and questionnaires MUST be completed and returned before the first appointment can be confirmed.** Once this information has been received, we will send you a confirmation email with details of your appointments.

For Adults:

Appointment 1 – Semi-Structure Interview (60-90 mins)

Who attends: Adult (and/or your key support person if appropriate)

Purpose: To explore your functional capacity across:

- Daily living activities
- Work or study
- Community access and participation
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Support needs and goals for independence

Appointment 2 – Observation or Clinical Session (if required 90min)

Optional: This step is most often required for individuals with higher support needs or where more detailed assessment is necessary (e.g., executive functioning, social cognition, or problem-solving skills).

Purpose:

- Observe specific behaviours or skill areas
- Conduct further structured interviews or
- Complete formal cognitive testing

Appointment 3 – Feedback Session and Report Discussion (60 mins)

Who attends: Adult (and/or your key support person if appropriate)

Purpose: Review your written report, which outlines:

- Your current functional capacity
- Areas of strength and support

- Recommendations for next steps (e.g., NDIS planning, therapy referrals)

A **draft report** may be reviewed during this session.

The **final report** will be provided within **10 business days** of your last appointment.

For Children and Adolescents:

Appointment 1 – Parent/Caregiver Interview (60-90 mins)

Who attends: Parent(s) or caregiver(s) only – your child does **not** attend this session

Purpose: To explore your child's functional capacity across:

- Daily routines and self-care
- Communication, behaviour, and learning
- Social and emotional development
- Strengths and challenges at home, school, and in the community
- Current supports and future goals

Appointment 2 – Child Clinical Observation & Assessment (if required 60-90 mins)

Who attends: Your child

Purpose: This session is offered **only when needed**, such as:

- Direct cognitive assessment
- Structured observation of behaviour, play, or problem-solving
- Clarification of specific areas like attention, memory, or social interaction

This session is **not always required** and is based on clinical judgement.

Appointment 3 – Parent Report Discussion (60 mins)

Who attends: Parent(s) or caregiver(s)

Purpose: To go through your child's comprehensive psychological report, including:

- Functional strengths and support needs
- Recommendations for school, therapy, or NDIS
- Next steps in accessing supports or advocating for your child

A **draft report** may be reviewed during this session.

The **final report** will be provided within **10 business days** of your last appointment.

Additional Information Based on Clinical Guidelines

Our Functional Capacity Assessments follow evidence-based guidelines and align with the principles outlined by the NDIS Functional Capacity Assessment Framework and broader clinical standards. These assessments are not diagnostic in nature but instead focus on understanding a person's real-world functioning and how they manage across key life domains.

Assessments are grounded in the following best-practice principles:

- **Whole-Person Perspective:** We look beyond a person's diagnosis to understand their strengths, preferences, challenges, and environment.
- **Contextual Functioning:** We gather information about how the individual functions across settings—including home, school, work, and community.
- **Multiple Informants and Tools:** Functional assessments are most accurate when we combine input from multiple people (e.g., caregivers, educators, support workers) and use a variety of tools, such as interviews, observations, and standardised questionnaires.
- **Cultural and Developmental Considerations:** We consider each person's age, background, language, and support needs, ensuring that assessment tools and interpretation are appropriate.
- **Goal-Oriented:** The assessment helps to inform practical, achievable goals related to building independence, improving quality of life, and accessing appropriate supports.
- Reports are written in line with the expectations of funders like the NDIS and include:
 - Clear evidence of functional capacity across life domains
 - Strengths-based language
 - Recommendations tailored to the person's goals and context
 - Support for service planning, referrals, and funding applications or reviews

We aim to conduct each assessment with compassion, professionalism, and respect for the individual's lived experience and neurodiversity.

Assessment Costs

FCA assessments are funded under NDIS. A typical FCA will take 9 hours. Fees are set in accordance with current NDIS rates for psychology (\$232.99/hr). At times, we may also consider including additional tools—such as a *Cognitive Assessment (e.g., WISC-V or WAIS-IV)*—if we determine it would meaningfully inform our understanding of functional strengths and support needs. In this case an additional charge of \$232.99 will be added to the total cost of the assessment.

Session	Cost / Fee Payable	Duration of Charge
Appt 1 - Interview	\$524.32	135mins
Appt 2 - Observation/Additional	\$524.32	135mins
Appt 3 - Feedback & Discussion	\$524.32	135mins
Report Writing Fee – <i>On completion</i>	\$524.32	135mins
Total	\$2096.91	

Fee Transparency Statement

At Empowr Health Collective, we believe in clear and transparent pricing so that you know exactly what you are paying for.

How Assessment Fees Are Calculated

Our NDIS-funded assessment fees are based on:

- **Total duration of time required:** this includes direct assessment sessions, scoring, interpretation, report writing, and feedback.
- **NDIS hourly rate:** assessments are charged in line with the NDIS Price Guide.
- **Survey and materials cost:** this covers the use of evidence-based, standardised questionnaires used as part of the assessment process.

Typical Assessment Duration

9 hours **Functional Capacity Assessment**

Hourly Rate

- \$232.99 per hour **NDIS Psychology Rate as per the NDIS fee schedule)**

Payment Process

- The **total assessment cost is divided evenly into four instalments**, payable across the assessment process.
- Costs are generally **claimed directly from your NDIS plan funding** (under *Capacity Building – Improved Daily Living*).
- No Medicare rebates apply to NDIS-funded assessments.

What's Included in Your Fee

Your investment covers more than just the time spent face-to-face. It includes:

- Clinical interviews and assessment sessions
- Administration and scoring of assessment tools
- Evidence-based questionnaires (survey cost)
- Detailed analysis and interpretation
- Report writing
- Feedback session to explain results and recommendations

Please Email contact@empowr.com.au to arrange an FCA assessment.
We look forward to supporting you on your journey!

Empowering your Wellbeing . . . Inspiring your growth