

Disability Support Services e-newsletter

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From Toni Atkinson Group Manager, Disability Support Services



Disability Support Services is settling into the new financial year with a new budget and a number of workstreams and major projects continuing.

The New Model work in the Bay of Plenty continues to develop with stronger numbers for all three new initiatives. The service is busy working with other parts of the Ministry to ensure the new Paid Family Carers policy will be operational by 1 October 2013. The pricing project continues, following recent forums with the sector which were very well received. The next part of this work will be collecting and collating data from providers. The Behaviour Support and ASD work programmes continue, both of which are working to further develop services.

I hope you enjoy this update from Disability Support Services and I look forward to continuing to work with the sector over the 2013/14 year.

Contents

From Toni Atkinson, Group Manager, Disability Support Services	1	Recent disability events	6
DSS – New ASD Relationship Manager	2	Helen Keller Communication Day	6
DSS News	2	Hearing therapy presentation to the 7th Adult Aural Rehabilitation Conference	7
Enabling Good Lives	2	Altogether Autism conference: ‘Inspiring Excellence in Autism’	8
DSS New Model	3	DSS project updates	8
Growing up with Autism	3	The New Model for Supporting Disabled People	8
New web-based tool for getting funding for equipment or modifications	4	Individualised Funding	9
Health passport	5	Environmental Support Services	10
Disability in New Zealand – what does it look like?	5	Disability Workforce Action Plan	12
		Faiva Ora – National Pasifika Disability Plan	12
		DSS pricing model review project	13
		NGO Desk updates	13

DSS – New ASD Relationship Manager

The Family and Community Support Team is pleased to introduce Natasha Gartner as the new Relationship Manager – Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Natasha has been with the Ministry of Health for seven years as a Contract Relationship Manager. For four of these years, she managed the Respite and Carer support portfolios. Natasha is committed to developing high quality and responsive services that support people on the autism spectrum and is looking forward to working with the ASD sector, community and families.



DSS News

Enabling Good Lives

Work has started on a three-year demonstration of Enabling Good Lives in Christchurch, following Cabinet approval in mid-July.

Christchurch school leavers with disabilities will be the first to benefit from Enabling Good Lives – a new way of supporting disabled people that offers people greater choice and control over the supports they receive and the lives they lead. The demonstration will eventually encompass a far wider group in Christchurch.

A director will be responsible for leading the demonstration and will be supported by a local advisory group.

Enabling Good Lives involves the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Development, who will also be working with ACC.

Disabled people and the wider disability sector will also have significant roles in decision making under Enabling Good Lives. A local advisory group will co-design the demonstration with staff from each of the government agencies. A national Enabling Good Lives leadership group will provide advice to the local advisory group, and to government agencies and Ministers.

Enabling Good Lives arose from a 2011 report from the disability sector to the Minister for Disability Issues that recommended transforming the disability support system. In September 2012, the Ministerial Committee for Disability Issues agreed to a vision, and a long-term change of direction and set of principles to guide changes to the system. The vision and principles will guide the Christchurch demonstration.

The Enabling Good Lives demonstration will draw on the experience of the Ministry of Health's New Model for Supporting Disabled People, which is seeking to transform parts of the Ministry of Health's disability support system.

DSS New Model

Stories recently gathered in the Bay of Plenty show how the Ministry of Health's demonstration of the New Model for Supporting Disabled People is making a difference in people's lives. In this story, Tania shares her experience of Local Area Coordination.

Planning for her future became a pressing need for Tania, following the death of her parents in 2010. When the family home in Katikati went on the market, Tania had to find somewhere else to live.

Her brother Steven wanted to ensure Tania would be properly supported. Steven had heard about how Local Area Coordinators work alongside disabled people and their families and got in touch with Katikati-based coordinator Debbie Davidson. Tania told Debbie that her number one goal was to live in her own home.

'I began identifying Tania's competencies and her strengths – and to reassure her brother that Tania was ready for this,' says Debbie.

With some planning and safeguards in place, Tania moved into her own home in Katikati in mid-May. 'What a beautiful life it is for me now,' says Tania. 'It has opened so many new doors.'

Formal support is available if needed, but so far Tania has not required it. She bikes to the local supermarket for groceries, cooks her own meals, keeps a cashbook and maintains a well-cared for home. 'We drew up a plan to reconnect her with her community and so now half the time I can't catch up with Tania because she's out having coffee!' says Debbie.

She has also started doing voluntary work at a local secondhand clothes shop.

'Through meeting Debbie, I have the courage and confidence to walk on and find a new pathway through my life,' says Tania.



Katikati-based Local Area Coordinator Debbie Davidson (left) heard 'very clearly' that Tania (right) wanted to live in her own home.

Growing up with Autism

The Ministries of Health and Education are pleased to advise that IDEA services will be the government-funded provider of the Growing Up With Autism programme.

Growing up with Autism is an education and skills training programme over 20 weeks for parents of adolescents with autism. It is delivered through 10, 90-minute small group sessions alternating with 10, one hour individual family sessions.

Each programme is run by trained facilitators. Training of the facilitators will start shortly so that the programmes can be delivered in the main centres across the country as soon as possible.

New web-based tool for getting funding for equipment or modifications

The Disability Support Services is implementing a new web-based tool that will determine funding for equipment or modifications based on need and the ability to benefit from the proposed equipment or modifications. Project Manager Clare Kirk tells us about it.

Historically, we've had a long waiting list for high cost equipment and modifications or complex solutions, and quite simply, there weren't enough dollars for the amount of requests. Also the current process is not seen as fair or transparent. We decided to look at how we could improve the process, so that those disabled people with the greatest need and the ability to benefit from the equipment or modifications weren't waiting so long to have their needs met. We decided on a prioritisation tool that uses a similar method to that used for some elective surgery. It focuses on three main components: current need; risk; and the person's ability to benefit from the equipment or modifications. The web-based tool will give a prioritisation score which will immediately indicate whether the client is able to receive Ministry of Health funding for the proposed equipment or modifications.

An important part of the tool is the Impact on Life questionnaire which allows people with disabilities to identify the impact of their disability on their lives. It gives the disabled person and, where it is appropriate, their family or whānau, an opportunity to have a 'voice' in the assessment process. A working group of practising clinicians has helped to develop the tool and we have consulted extensively with consumers throughout the project. We ran a pilot and the independent evaluation was very positive. The tool will provide a nationally consistent process which will be fairer and more transparent. It will eliminate waiting lists and the immediate score will give instant clarity for disabled people, and their family or whānau, around what to expect.

We're now working on training for the approximately 2500 Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) Assessors (mainly occupational therapists and physiotherapists) before implementation of the tool nationwide. We are developing an online training resource which will outline the principles of prioritisation, provide guidance for introducing the tool during the assessment process, as well as walking EMS Assessors through the practical steps of using the prioritisation tool to complete the assessment/service request process.

The tool will be implemented in stages commencing late 2013, with national implementation by mid-2014. The Impact on Life questionnaire will be available in eight languages including New Zealand Sign Language, and produced in braille, audio and large print, to ensure it is accessible by all members of our community.

This project has been a long time in the making, and it's exciting to see it coming to fruition. We're really looking forward to the positive impact it will have on the day-to-day lives of people living with disabilities.

Health passports

What is a health passport?

A health passport is a booklet that you can carry with you when attending hospitals or other providers of health and disability services. It contains information about how you want people to communicate with you and support you.

Introducing the health passport

The Health and Disability Commissioner is working with district health boards (DHBs) throughout New Zealand to introduce the health passport into our hospitals.

To date, there are several DHBs using the health passport as a key tool for patient care. The Health and Disability Commissioner is working closely with other DHBs to introduce the health passport.

Since 1 July 2013, the Health and Disability Commissioner has also been working directly with community organisations to give passports to consumers nationwide. Advocates from the Nationwide Health and Disability Advocacy Service will help HDC with the distribution of health passports in all rest homes and disability residential homes throughout the country.

You can now take your health passport to your local hospital irrespective of the region you live in.

For more information on health passports or to order a copy of the passport, please visit:

www.hdc.org.nz/about-us/disability/health-passport

Disability in New Zealand – what does it look like?

Over 600,000 New Zealanders live with a disability in New Zealand. The 2013 Disability Survey, which began on 24 July, will allow these people to have their voices heard.

The New Zealand Disability Survey is a national survey of children and adults, with 23,000 disabled and non-disabled people selected for interview. Approximately 1000 adults living in residential facilities will also be interviewed.

‘The Disability Survey is the most comprehensive source of data on disabled people living in New Zealand. It provides information on the needs of disabled people and the nature of their impairments,’ social and cultural statistics manager Steve Manning said.

Survey participants have been randomly selected from respondents to the 2013 Census and will have received an invitation letter from Statistics NZ. All individual information is confidential and cannot be shared with other agencies.

Information collected in the survey, which runs over the next couple of months, will include the number of people in New Zealand living with a disability, and the nature, cause and duration of impairments. The survey also looks at issues such as human rights, social attitudes, education and employment, recreation and lifestyle, public services, and support systems.

Results from the survey will be released in the middle of next year.

Recent disability events

Helen Keller Communication Day

On 28 June, Disability Support Services welcomed Merv Cox, President, Deafblind (NZ) Incorporated, to join us in celebration of Helen Keller Communication Day.

We were extremely honoured to welcome Dawon Choias as a guest speaker. Dawon shared his inspirational story with Ministry staff and other invited guests.

Dawon is a budding computer graphic designer and artist who is Deafblind. He first arrived in New Zealand in 1997, initially for six months to see if his family could live here. They moved to Christchurch in 2000 as this was where Dawon could learn English and New Zealand Sign Language at an Asch Deaf Education Centre. At that time, he had very few communication skills other than a grasp of Korean and a 'home' sign.

Over the next few years, he learnt New Zealand Sign Language and manual signed English and can now communicate in Korean.

He mixes and matches to whomever he is communicating with. Dawon spoke to us through an interpreter, using New Zealand Sign Language – the interpreter needs to sit very close to him so that he is able to see her signing. Dawon showed us that he is a very capable and talented young man and we were delighted to see several examples of his outstanding graphic design art work.

Dawon faces many challenges which he is working to overcome – he has a particular eye condition which affects his ability to focus on detail and requires his canvas to be very close to his eyes enabling him to see the area of the art work he is working on. Dawon colours with lead pencil and bright markers as he cannot differentiate colour differences using standard artist paints. He wears tinted glasses to minimise glare. He attends Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology where he is supported by the polytech and the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind. Dawon told us that one of his main challenges is the amount of funding available for sufficient interpreter services to support him during his studies. Other challenges he faces on a daily basis are social isolation and difficulty getting around safely and independently.

Given the right opportunities, we were all left with no doubt that Dawon will become a very successful computer graphic designer and artist – some people attending the session were already making enquiries about making purchases!

Dawon very kindly donated a piece of his incredible artwork to the Ministry and this was accepted by Toni Atkinson, Group Manager, Disability Support Services.

Other invited guests included representatives from Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind, Deaf Aotearoa and the Ministry of Education.



Toni Atkinson, Group Manager, Disability Support Services with Dawon Choias (holding the artwork he donated).

Hearing therapy presentation to the 7th Adult Aural Rehabilitation Conference

Exciting news from Trish Carraher and Jenny Southee, hearing therapists employed by Life Unlimited Hearing Therapy Services, which provides a free, nationwide, community-based aural rehabilitation service to adults.



Trish Carraher and Jenny Southee

Life Unlimited Hearing Therapy Services had a wonderful opportunity to present at the 7th Adult Aural Rehabilitation Conference St Pete Beach, Florida in May this year.

The conference was hosted by the Hearing Rehabilitation Foundation and the University of South Florida. This conference represents a unique opportunity for clinicians and researchers involved in aural rehabilitation to meet and exchange ideas with colleagues from around the world, and to discuss areas of mutual interest and possible collaboration.

The theme of the conference was 'Maximising the benefits of technology through innovative intervention'. It also included a special half-day presentation by representatives of the Academy of Rehabilitative Audiology. There was a large number of contributed papers presented by US and international researchers and practitioners.

Keynote speakers at the conference included an impressive list of highly regarded professionals in the field of aural rehabilitation. Many of the presenters are authors of the theory and practice concepts that underpin Hearing Therapy intervention in New Zealand.

The Life Unlimited Hearing Therapy Services presentation 'Independence through innovative application of technology – a Hearing Therapy perspective' shared two quite different case studies that captured how Aural Rehabilitation and hearing assistive technology have been holistically applied to enhance physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

They showed that maximising the benefits of technology for clients is not just about knowing the equipment itself but more about being able to apply it effectively for each individual.

The presentation received some amazing feedback:

'I wish my students were here to hear this! Fantastic case studies, true meaning of AR.'
Jean Pierre Gagne – Professor, Université de Montréal

'I loved your talk; it made me want to cry, very inspiring!'
Samira Anderson, keynote speaker – University of Maryland

'Your personalised stories were so real to me. To see how you can make changes to peoples' lives.'
Mary Compton – University of North Carolina

'Thank you for taking the science out and putting the people back in.'
Michelle Nealon, research student – Deaf & Blind Institute, NSW

It was rewarding and motivating to receive this level of confirmation for the practice of Hearing Therapy in New Zealand. We feel very privileged to have represented Life Unlimited Hearing Therapy Services at this aural rehabilitation conference.

Altogether Autism conference: 'Inspiring Excellence in Autism'

Amanda Bleckmann and Natasha Gartner attended the July 2013 conference held by Altogether Autism: 'Inspiring Excellence in Autism'. It was well attended with 180 registered delegates. The keynote speakers included active members of the autism community Matt Frost and Paula Jessop and a number of professionals such as Dr David Newman, Dr Matt Eggleston and Tanya Breen. Not only were the topics and workshop sessions thought provoking and exciting but the conference also provided a great opportunity for networking and meeting others. We were also really pleased to see so many DHB ASD developmental coordinators at the conference. Conference presentations are available here: www.altogetherautism.org.nz/page/111-conference-2013

DSS project updates

The New Model for Supporting Disabled People

Catherine Bennett, Programme Leader

The New Model programme team is pleased to be supporting Enabling Good Lives as it begins in Canterbury. Expertise has been made available from the Ministry of Health in the way of policy advice, support with communications and a senior advisor. The Programme Leader for the New Model has been invited to talk with the EGL National Leadership Group, with the intention of sharing learnings from the New Model and discussing ongoing ways of working together.

Enhanced Individualised Funding /Individualised Funding

We are pleased to report that 52 people in the demonstration region are now using Enhanced Individualised Funding. Further work on promoting Enhanced Individualised Funding to people living in the Bay of Plenty is planned for the next month.

The expansion of the national Individualised Funding framework to include respite care is well under way. This will enable families and disabled people to access respite care at a time and in a way that suits their personal needs.

Local Area Coordination

Fifty-nine people have now requested to work with an Local Area Coordinator (LAC) long term and are planning for how they want to be supported. Many other people access LAC on a short term and/or intermittent basis.

Four community based meetings were recently held in the Western Bay of Plenty and led to a number of additional enquiries to LACs. Good relationships are being built with Whānau Ora providers and there are some excellent examples of collaboration such as a joint visit to whānau by an LAC and a Whānau Ora provider nurse in the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

Funding Allocation Tool Development

Development of the Funding Allocation Tool is on track. The first stage of work to 31 July has been focused on re-engaging with all key stakeholders, and detailed refinement of the Assessment Form.

Choice in Community Living

Twelve people have now fully transitioned through Choice in Community Living to living in their own arrangements in the community. The Choice in Community Living project team is looking to further raise the profile of the initiative. It is also considering how it can better support providers and the NASCs as they help people transition to often significantly different ways of living.

Individualised Funding

Karen Smith, Development Manager, Family and Community Support Team

Within the next few months disabled people and their families/whānau will be able to use Individualised Funding to purchase home and community support services and respite.

Traditionally the Ministry of Health's Individualised Funding Scheme has only been available for those who have home and community support service allocations. Individualised Funding offers people more flexibility if they want to manage the support services they have been allocated. It is expected to be extended to people who are eligible for home and community support services and respite, once training has been completed with Needs Assessment and Service Coordination agencies and Individualised Funding hosts, and contracting arrangements are in place.

Individuals who have been allocated the following support combinations will be able to consider Individualised Funding as an option:

- respite (on its own)
- respite and carer support
- home and community support services and carer support.

It will be possible to purchase respite under Individualised Funding in more flexible and tailored ways that suit individual circumstances of the disabled person and their family.

Individuals will be able to access Individualised Funding (for home and community support services and respite) through their Needs Assessment and Service Coordination agency. The Needs Assessment and Service Coordination agency will refer the person to an Individualised Funding host who will work with individuals to manage their support allocations.

The expansion of Individualised Funding shifts it closer to the Ministry of Health's New Model for supporting disabled people which is being demonstrated in the Western and Eastern Bay of Plenty. Enhanced Individualised Funding is part of the demonstration. This is an even more flexible approach to purchasing supports than Individualised Funding, but is as yet only available in the demonstration area

More information on Individualised Funding can be found on the Ministry of Health website www.health.govt.nz. Search for individualised funding project.

Behaviour support services project

Tony Blackett, Development Manager, Family and Community Support Services

As this newsletter goes to print the Family and Community Team is engaged in the procurement of national behaviour support services. This procurement is for a newly funded Children and Young Persons service (as an early intervention service aimed at preventing challenging behaviours from becoming entrenched) together with re-tendering for general behaviour support services. The tender is under one amended service specification – the development of which has been overseen by a sub-committee of the Behaviour Support Advisory Group.

You can find more information about the tendering process on the Government Electronic Tendering Services.

Environmental Support Services

Sue Primrose, Development Manager, Service Access Team

Equipment and Modification Services Prioritisation Tool

Work is progressing well on developing an online training resource for Equipment and Modification Services Assessors to support them once the Prioritisation Tool is introduced.

Disabled people, through the Disability Support Services Consumer Consortium, have given feedback on how they would like the Equipment and Modification Services Assessor to deliver the outcome of the prioritisation process, should they not meet the threshold score for access to Ministry funding. In such cases, they would like the Equipment and Modification Services Assessor to discuss other options and be informed that, should their needs change in the future, another assessment can be undertaken.

A group of experienced Equipment and Modification Services Assessors are helping with case studies for the online training resource that will reflect all the different specialty areas (eg, children's services, hearing assistive technology, vehicle modifications and purchase, housing modifications).

A staged approach to implementation will now be undertaken to allow gathering of more information. From a quality perspective, this will provide greater confidence in setting the score threshold.

The Equipment and Modification Services Prioritisation Project strives to meet the Code of Funding Practice. The seven core codes being Respect, Cultural Context, Transparency, Open Communication, Flexibility and Innovation, Integrity and Accountability.

Children's Spectacle Subsidy

Following the completion of a review of the Children's Spectacle Subsidy in late 2012, a reference group was established to consider the findings of the review and focus on recommendations for service improvements that would allow the subsidy to continue to be sustainable and effective into the future.

Members of the reference group have considered the following.

- **Access pathways:** looking at current eligibility, referral pathways and awareness factors. It has been established during the course of the review that even with significant emphasis placed upon the development and dissemination of brochures about the subsidy, there are still many people who are unaware of its availability. The reference group also recommended that no changes were made to the referral pathways. This means that families or whānau can seek an assessment (funded by the Ministry for eligible children and young people) directly with an optometrist if they are concerned about their child's vision.
- **Clinical guidelines:** scoping the feasibility and development of clinical guidelines and preparing draft guidelines. These draft guidelines have now been circulated for consultation with all registered optometrists in New Zealand. Once feedback has been received from optometrists, a decision will be made by the Ministry regarding the introduction of clinical guidelines for access to the subsidy.

Auditory Processing Disorder

The Ministries of Health and Ministry of Education commissioned Sapere Research Group (Sapere) to undertake independent research from which to develop a position paper. This paper will identify best practice and make recommendations for the management of auditory processing disorder in children (age 0 to 21 years) and, in particular, the provision of hearing devices for these children. Sapere reports that there has been strong interest in this research project from parents, audiologists and other interested parties.

Due to the high level of interest in the project, the timeframe for receipt of the final paper from Sapere has been extended – this is now expected in early August. Once the paper has been received it will be considered by both Ministries and a summary report will be made available.

Lifelong Design Advisory Service

The Ministry of Health and the Office of Senior Citizens at the Ministry of Social Development contracted Enable New Zealand to provide an Advisory Service in the Canterbury region for a contract term from January 2013 to June 2013. The service provided free advice about lifelong housing design to the people of Canterbury who have been significantly impacted by the earthquakes. Its aim was to encourage people to consider using lifelong design features which would support their changing needs throughout their lifetime, but in particular, as they age.

Marketing the service and creating information and supporting material for Canterbury residents were the service's initial focus. This was followed by meetings with key community organisations and individuals who requested advice. The volume of people requesting assistance was relatively low, but not surprising given the stage that people are at within the context of the overall Christchurch rebuild.

The Ministry is now considering whether this service could be extended for another twelve months to support people as the rebuild gains momentum.

Disability Workforce Action Plan

Feala Afoa, Development Manager, Strategy and Contracts Team

New Draft Disability Workforce Action Plan 2013–2016

The final draft disability workforce plan has been completed and is due to be approved in early August. An annual implementation plan 2013/14 will also be finalised for noting and approval.

Disability Workforce Development Innovation Fund

A Workforce Innovation Fund has been established to support workforce development innovations and initiatives that are aligned with the new workforce action plan. This one-off fund, to be administered by Te Pou is a reallocation of existing training grants and will be open for applications once the new workforce action plan is finalised and approved by the Ministry in August.

Graduate Diploma in Education (Disability Specialisation)

All 14 students enrolled in the Graduate Diploma in Education attended the Winter school programme delivered by the University of Auckland from 3 to 5 July. The programme provided students with support for academic and practice skills and presentations introducing students to current and emerging models of practice in NASC agencies. Highlights included student meetings with the independent supervisors for the practice papers and a presentation from the new model programme team currently being demonstrated in the Bay of Plenty area.

Faiva Ora – National Pasifika Disability Plan

Feala Afoa, Development Manager, Strategy and Contracts Team

New Draft Faiva Ora Plan 2013-2016

The final draft Faiva Ora plan 2013/16 has been completed and it is due to be approved in early August.

Le Va has been contracted for three years to implement agreed actions of the new Faiva Ora Plan by 30 June 2016. Le Va have developed an annual work plan 2013/14, which outlines actions and deliverables of the Faiva Ora plan to be delivered and achieved. The Faiva Ora Leadership Group meets 6-monthly to monitor and advise on progress in implementing the plan.

Tender for service to undertake research into Pasifika disabled children, youth and their families

The tender process is still in progress and it is intended that negotiations will be completed by the end of July 2013 for the work to commence by the end of August 2013. This research is critical to identify issues and challenges for the growing group of Pasifika disabled children, youth and their families, as well as the current and likely future impact of these matters on Ministry-funded disability support services.

DSS pricing model review project

Barbara Crawford, Manager – Strategy and Contracts Team

Pricing principles workshops were hosted in July in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. Facilitated by KPMG, and attended by DSS managers and staff, these workshops aimed to obtain the sector's views on the principles that should guide the development of pricing models.

The workshops were well attended, predominantly by disability support providers, and also by people with disabilities, and family members. Feedback was very positive and the engagement resulted in useful information which KPMG has used to develop draft pricing principles to be reviewed and approved by the Ministry.

KPMG also conducted face-to-face meetings with 23 providers around the country in July. These providers were selected to represent a mix of provider sizes, types and locations. The aim of the meetings was to ensure that KPMG had a good understanding of the different pressures on prices providers face.

KPMG is now developing a provider survey which will obtain financial and non-financial information that will be used to develop pricing models for the following service streams: Community Residential Services, Home and Community Services, Respite, Child Development Services, Assessment Treatment and Rehabilitation, and Supported Independent Living Services. A separate survey will be developed for the Carer Support pricing review, and carers will be invited to participate in this.

The provider survey will be trialled on 21 providers during August. It will then be amended as needed and sent to all providers within the scope of the project. It is important to note that no identifiable financial information will be provided to the Ministry. KPMG will provide aggregated data only.

Two more sector consultation rounds are scheduled to occur in October (to review the draft pricing models) and November (to be informed of the final pricing models and implementation plan).

If you have any queries about the project please contact either Peter Chew at KPMG pchew1@kpmg.co.nz or Barbara Crawford at the Ministry of Health barbara_crawford@moh.govt.nz

NGO Desk updates

The Ministry of Health's NGO Desk keeps up to date on activity within the Ministry of Health and also in the wider health and disability NGO sector. The NGO Desk sends a regular update of relevant items to anyone wishing to receive it.

If you wish to subscribe, please send your name, organisation name and contact details to ngo@moh.govt.nz.

For more information go to: <http://ngo.health.govt.nz/news-updates/ngo-desk-updates>



Contact Disability Support Services

Email: disability@moh.govt.nz Phone: 0800 DSD MOH (0800 373 664)

Web: www.health.govt.nz/disability

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