

A Guide to Community Engagement with People with Disabilities

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MANATŪ HAUORA



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Introduction

People with disabilities represent a significant percentage of the community.¹ This guide offers practical advice about consulting with people with disabilities and reducing barriers to their full participation in their communities. It was developed in association with disabled people's organisations, to assist agencies such as government departments, local bodies, district health boards, schools and community groups to engage with people with disabilities.

Disabilities are diverse and can range from obvious impairments to invisible conditions. This includes people with:

- a learning/intellectual disability
- physical impairments including mobility impairments, and those who use mobility devices or other assistive technology
- sensory impairments/loss, including those with a vision impairment or who are blind and those with a hearing loss, who are hard of hearing or who are Deaf
- mental health conditions, including those who experience disabling symptoms such as depression, anxiety or psychosis
- neurological impairments such as brain injury and autism
- chronic illness (such as diabetes, arthritis), as well as those whose experience of disability is 'invisible' (eg, people with auditory processing disorders might be able to hear well in one-to-one conversation, but not if there is background noise in a crowded room).

Some people experience multiple forms of disability. The presence of multiple disabilities along with the interaction between them can create high and complex needs resulting in an increased need for awareness and sensitivity around engagement.

This guide focuses on engaging with people with learning/intellectual,² physical and/or sensory disabilities. However, much of its advice can also be applied to work with people who experience mental health conditions.

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), the New Zealand Disability Strategy,^a the Kia Tūtahi Relationship Accord and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the UN Convention) all informed the development of this guide.

The UN Convention was established to 'promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity'. This guide will help organisations to ensure people with disabilities can access, on an equal basis with others, the physical environment, information and communications.^b

¹ In the 2013 New Zealand Disability Survey, almost one in four New Zealanders or 1.1 million people identified as disabled. The survey noted that: 'disability is defined as long-term limitation (resulting from impairment) in a person's ability to carry out daily activities. The limitations identified were self-reported or reported on behalf of the disabled person by their parent or primary caregiver.'

See Statistics New Zealand. 2014. One in four New Zealanders identified as disabled.

URL: www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/health/disabilities/DisabilitySurvey_MR2013.aspx (accessed 16 November 2015).

² 'Learning/intellectual disability' refers to people previously labelled as 'intellectually disabled'. It does not include learning difficulties experienced in the school setting (eg, dyslexia).

This guide is a living document that will change over time. If you have feedback or content to add please contact Disability Support Services within the Ministry of Health:
disability@moh.govt.nz

Why equal participation is important

Equal participation of people with disabilities

People with disabilities have long faced considerable barriers to equal participation and involvement in society. The three main barriers that prevent people with disabilities from being active in their communities and having their voices heard are:

- access to information and services – for example, a person with a vision impairment may have difficulty accessing written information about changes in their community; or a person with a hearing loss, is hard of hearing or Deaf, may have difficulties accessing information available only through an 0800 telephone line, people with autism are likely to prefer online or printed materials
- social attitudes and behaviours – for example, there can be an assumption that people with disabilities do not work or have children and therefore do not need accessible transport or parenting support; or that because a disabled person has a physical or sensory loss they will also have a learning/intellectual disability; or the behaviour of some people with autism e.g. lack of eye contact, may be misinterpreted as being unfriendly. Discrimination can result in people being marginalised and devalued.
- the built environment – for example, a person who uses a wheelchair cannot access a building where the entrance is only accessible by steps.

Building an inclusive society with strong community relationships

This guide aims to improve the lives of people with disabilities by ensuring their voices are heard and that their views inform decision-making. This guide also focuses on strengthening government and community partnerships.

Kia Tūtahi, signed by the Prime Minister and community representatives in 2011, supports building strong relationships between communities and the government. In particular, it commits the government to listening and responding to those not usually included in policy development.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy, launched in 2001 and updated in 2016, aims to move from a disabling to an inclusive society. The strategy committed the government to developing meaningful partnerships with people with disabilities; it recognises that disabled people are expert in their own lives and their experience of disability. The strategy aims to ensure people with disabilities are informed about, and involved in, decision-making regarding matters that affect them. In the spirit of the strategy, disabled people's organisations and government agencies together led the design of the Disability Action Plan.

Organisations can promote the rights of people with disabilities through accessible and inclusive community engagement. An important step towards meaningful partnership is ensuring all

information and communication methods offered to the public are also available in formats appropriate to the differing requirements of people with disabilities.

Engagement planning

Before engaging with people with disabilities

First find out whether there has been any previous engagement. This shows respect for the time and effort of people who have already provided their expert advice.

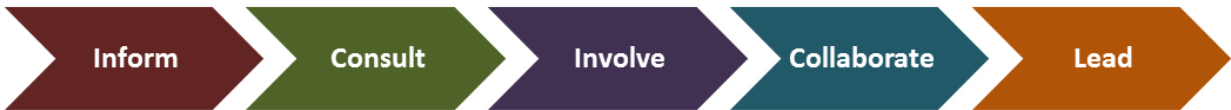
Then clearly define the:

- purpose and type of engagement you are planning
- timeframe
- feedback you will provide to participants
- expectations of your organisation and the expectations of the participants.

Consider consulting in a number of ways: some forms of communication may be essential for one group, but totally inaccessible to another. Communication aids such as computer technologies/software, picture-based communication boards, whiteboards/pens and speaking devices may help. Your engagement may involve public meetings with New Zealand Sign Language interpreters, accessible online surveys, postal surveys or one-on-one conversations.

Types of engagement

Identify what level of engagement is appropriate for your purpose. The following table describes different levels of engagement.



Inform	One-way communication of information – from your organisation to the community including people with disabilities. In this form of engagement, the community has no input into decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites • Letters
Consult	Two-way communication – between your organisation and the community including people with disabilities. Its purpose is to seek the opinion of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Focus groups • Social media
Involve	Working directly with the community during the engagement process, including by seeking feedback and discussing questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Working/planning groups
Collaborate	A community partnership, including shared decision-making and a co-design approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory committees • Reference groups
Lead	A method of engagement in which final decision-making sits with the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting

Who to engage with

Depending on the purpose of the engagement, in addition to people with disabilities, consider involving other groups, such as disabled people's organisations, carers/carer groups, advocacy groups and whānau support groups.

Disabled people's organisations represent different disability groups; it may be useful to approach organisations representing the particular groups you wish to engage with. See 'Disabled people's organisations and resources' (page 36).

Make an effort to reach people who are often excluded from community engagement. Disabled people's organisations can help with this. In smaller towns there may not be any active disabled people's organisations. In this situation, find out whether other networks or relationships could serve a similar purpose.

For a disabled person with very high disability needs and/or multiple disability and medical conditions e.g. who cannot respond for themselves, it is appropriate to engage with someone who knows them well e.g. their family, carer or advocate. The Complex Care Group Trust can provide advice.

Early planning

Begin the process of engagement with people with disabilities as early as possible, allowing enough time to make arrangements such as booking New Zealand Sign Language interpreters, organising travel, or creating accessible information. Keep in mind that when engaging with people with disabilities, some processes may take longer, or involve additional resources. Allow for the possibility that some people might experience difficulties taking part in your engagement process and allow extra time to address potential accessibility issues before they arise.

If the issue you wish to engage on is of widespread interest, allow several months for the engagement process. People with disabilities often find out about an opportunity for engagement or consultation by word of mouth; your time frame should allow for this.

Provide sufficient notice to allow time for people to make arrangements for things like childcare, absence from work and enlisting support people.

Creating Easy Read versions of documents also takes time. Easy Read documents, used by people with learning/intellectual disabilities, use everyday language and use images to assist meaning. See 'Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities' (page 30) for more information and 'Disabled people's organisations and resources' (page 36) for details on People First New Zealand Ngā Tangata Tuatahi's translation service.

Choose a suitable time or times for the engagement, keeping in mind that different people will have different needs. Some people with disabilities prefer to avoid starting a meeting too early in the morning, because they require assistance to start the day. Wheelchair-accessible taxis are often busiest around the time of school runs (9am and 3pm), and are more commonly available during school holidays and at the weekend. Some people with learning/intellectual disabilities may prefer mornings, because they are more rested and find it easier to concentrate at that time.

Personal assistants sometimes help disabled people with tasks such as mobility, communication or personal cares. Ask ahead about personal assistants, and factor them into your planning for engagement.

Allow adequate time for people with disabilities to have proper input. The methods you use (eg, online surveys, focus groups, etc) and people's interest in the topic or issue can influence the time you need to allocate.

Think about whether payment is appropriate to support people with disabilities and/or their support people to participate. Depending on the kind of engagement, an honorarium may be appropriate, or you may consider paying for transport and accommodation costs.

Communication considerations

In order to access information and engage on the same basis as other people, people with disabilities may require particular formats. For example, blind people or those with vision impairments may need you to provide information in a Microsoft Word document (so that it may be read aloud using screen reader software), in a large font, in Braille or in an audible format.

People experience communication difficulties for a range of reasons, including learning/intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), brain injuries, cerebral palsy and motor neurone disease. People experience these difficulties in a range of ways. Some may have difficulty in understanding information, or knowing how to respond. Others may have a physical impairment related to the muscles connected to voice or speech. Some people's disabilities may be such that they have increased communication problems and resulting support requirements. People with ASD experience social and communication difficulties including reading other people's body language. See 'Engaging with people with autism spectrum disorder' (page 32).

Each individual's communication needs will be different; take the time to understand these needs.

On the subject of communication, see also:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19)
- Engaging with people with complex communication needs (page 28)
- Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities (page 30) – this includes more information on meeting assistants.

Terminology and language

The Office for Disability Issues, the Ministry of Health and many other agencies use the 'social model of disability'^c and related terminology.³ The New Zealand Disability Strategy also uses such terminology.⁴ Be aware that not all people with disabilities use the same terminology; some may not even identify themselves as experiencing disability. Some people do not want to be labelled as a person with a disability; others may identify with a particular group – for example the Deaf community – rather than with the group of people with disabilities as a whole. In

³ The 'social model' is based on the notion that although a person may have an 'impairment' (meaning some difference in the body affecting sensory, physical, neurological, mental health or intellectual attributes), disability is created by society. Disability occurs when the world is designed for only one way of being. People are 'disabled' by attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

⁴ Refer to *The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016* for information and discussion on the use of the terms 'persons with a disability' and 'disabled people'.

preference to the term ‘people with disabilities’, some people prefer ‘disabled people’ or ‘people with impairments’.

It is best not to make assumptions about preferred terminology; always ask what words the person/group prefers. Respect the preference of an individual or a group in terms of self-identification.

Language has a significant influence on self-identity. Inappropriate language can result in people feeling excluded. The following guidelines may be helpful.

- The word ‘disabled’ is a description, not a group of people. The collective term ‘disabled people’ is preferable to ‘the disabled’.
- Many people, including People First New Zealand Ngā Tangata Tuatahi, prefer the term ‘learning disabilities’ instead of ‘intellectual disabilities’.
- Many people prefer the term ‘psycho-social disability’ or ‘mental health condition’ instead of ‘mental illness’.
- Medical labels, such as ‘paraplegic’, say little about people as individuals, and tend to reinforce stereotypes of people with disabilities as ‘patients’ or ‘sick’. Instead use ‘person with/who has/who experiences paraplegia’.
- The term ‘vision impaired’ is generally accepted by most people. The term ‘blind’ may not be acceptable, particularly among those who consider they are vision impaired, are partially sighted or have low vision. The term ‘legally blind’ has different meanings in New Zealand (eg, within the Social Security Act 1964 and within the Blind Foundation’s criteria). Therefore, although some people may use this term to describe themselves, avoid using it as a generic term.
- Wheelchairs provide their users with mobility. It is therefore inaccurate to describe people who use wheelchairs as ‘confined to’ their wheelchairs or ‘wheelchair-bound’, and can be offensive.
- Most people with disabilities are comfortable with words used to describe daily living that do not apply to them literally. People who use wheelchairs ‘go for walks’. People with vision impairments may be pleased to ‘see’ you.
- In talking about disabilities, avoid emotive language; in particular, phrases such as ‘suffers from’, ‘victim of’ or ‘afflicted with’. These are likely to evoke discomfort; they are inappropriate, incorrect and potentially offensive.
- People with disabilities prefer to be treated the same as everyone else. For this reason, terms such as ‘inspirational’ and ‘brave’ can be perceived as condescending. Just like everyone else, people with disabilities have a range of skills, expertise and life experiences.

Cultural considerations

People with disabilities are members of many groups and may identify more immediately with one of these groups. For example some people who have a hearing loss identify primarily as being Deaf. This identity is grounded within the Deaf culture with its own sign language, beliefs, values and history.

Engagement with Māori

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the foundation document of New Zealand. It places a significant responsibility on government agencies to address the needs of Māori as the indigenous people of Aotearoa (New Zealand). The Ministry of Health implements the Treaty by applying the

principles of partnership, protection and participation. This includes Māori participation in policy development and service delivery.

The New Zealand government has committed to improving outcomes for Māori with disabilities as set out in Whāia Te Ao Mārama, the Māori Disability Action Plan.^d
www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/maori-disability-support-services/whaia-te-ao-marama-maori-disability-action-plan

Whāia Te Ao Mārama is a ‘culturally anchored approach developed in collaboration with Māori disabled and whānau to support Māori disabled and their whānau through Ministry of Health-funded disability support services. The approach is from a Māori world view which also recognises that Māori disabled know what works for them’. The plan is based on the concept of tino rangatiratanga (personal sovereignty or self-determination) and taking control of one’s own life.

Whāia Te Ao Mārama makes a commitment to establishing and maintaining ‘Good partnerships with whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities’. Accordingly, it aims to improve the quality of community engagement with whānau, hapū and iwi; community leaders; and other groups. It is important to build effective relationships with Māori and to acknowledge and respect the mana and tikanga of Māori individuals and groups when participating in community engagement.

In 2010, Te Roopu Tiaki Hunga Hauā Māori Disability Network Group produced *Te Whakaahaitanga Marae – Kua wātea te huarahi, the Marae Accessibility Report*, a resource which aims to enable ‘Kaumātua and whānau with health and disability impairments to actively engage at marae and remain effective contributors to their marae’.^e
www.kapomaori.com/docs/accessable_marae_toolkit.pdf

For more information on Kāpō Māori Aotearoa, see ‘A Guide to Community Engagement with People with Disabilities’ (page 36). For more information about accessible marae and disability support services, see the Ministry of Health’s website.
www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/maori-disability-support-services

Engagement with Pacific peoples

The New Zealand government has committed to improving outcomes for Pacific peoples with disabilities, as set out in Faiva Ora, the Pasifika Disability Action Plan.^f

Pacific peoples in New Zealand usually identify with the Pacific Island nation(s) they or their aiga/families descend from (Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau or Tuvalu). Each of these nations has a distinct culture, language and set of values. Consider these aspects when engaging with members of the Pacific community. Some older Pacific peoples do not understand spoken or written English, and interpreters may be needed.

Open a meeting/fono with a prayer. Acknowledge individuals who have cultural status in a meeting, such as Tongan nobility, church ministers, Samoan matai (chief), respected elders and others. Pasifika people with disabilities may have aiga present to support them in a fono; in some cases, they may have their aiga speak on their behalf. Take the time to observe protocols and practices. See ‘Further resources and organisations’ (page 39).

Le Va’s *Organisational Guidelines for Disability Support Services*^g provides useful advice on engaging and working with Pasifika people with disabilities and their families, supported by case studies, best practice and reflective questions.

Engagement with Asian communities

Consider the cultural and linguistic diversity of Asian communities, and whether or not you will need a translator. Although it is unlikely that a qualified tri-lingual Asian language sign language interpreter will be available, a New Zealand Sign Language agency may have alternate suggestions to assist your engagement with a particular group.

Refugees and other culturally and linguistically diverse groups

Different cultures have different understandings of, and attitudes towards, disability. For example, some cultures see disability as a ‘curse’ and something to be kept hidden from society. This may influence the approach you need to engage with particular communities.

In planning engagement with these communities, consider the role, and attendance, of family members, including their attendance at meetings. A communication plan specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse communities may be helpful. The Ministry of Health’s *Refugee Health Care: A Handbook for Health Professionals*^h contains useful advice on engaging with refugees, supported by case studies, best practice and reflective questions. www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/refugee-health

Keep in mind certain times of year hold particular cultural and religious significance for groups (eg, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Ramadan). Try to avoid these dates when setting meetings and consultation timeframes.

On the subject of cultural considerations, see ‘Government agencies and resources’ (page 37) for information on:

- refugee health from the Ministry of Health
- working with ethnic communities from the Office of Ethnic Communities
- consulting diverse communities and groups (available on the Community Matters website) www.communitymatters.govt.nz/Good-Practice-Participate
- resources designed to strengthen communities (available on the CommunityNet Aotearoa website), including diversity toolkits and communication guides www.community.net.nz
- eCald, a website who are migrants and refugees from Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA) backgrounds. This website has resources on how to ensure services for culturally and linguistically diverse groups are accessible, culturally appropriate, effective and safe. www.ecald.com

Venue accessibility

Choose an accessible venue when you are planning for community engagement, particularly for events with an open invitation. Allow time to secure an accessible venue. Before you book a venue, visit it to ensure that it meets the needs of your intended participants. If you are unsure, consult intended participants themselves.

New Zealand Standard 4121 sets out the accessibility requirements for many public buildings. www.standards.co.nz/assets/Publication-files/NZS4121-2001.pdf

Often an accessible venue uses the International Symbol of Access (the symbol of a person in a wheelchair) to indicate that it meets this standard and can be used by people with disabilities (not just those people who use wheelchairs). In addition to letting people know if the venue is accessible, the symbol can also be used on directional signage to let people know where ramps, mobility parks or accessible toilets are located and on these facilities directly.ⁱ
www.building.govt.nz/international-symbol#aid2

See 'Venue accessibility' (page 21) for more information.

Web accessibility and online engagement

If some or all of your engagement process will be online (eg, surveys, publication of results, etc), consider accessibility. The New Zealand Web Accessibility Standard 1.1 and the Web Usability Standard 1.2 came into effect on 1 July 2013,^j to bring government websites up to the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.^k

All website information must be:

- perceivable – available in multiple formats, to suit users' requirements (eg, non-text content is also available in text form)
- operable – able to be navigated by all people without causing issues (including by people who navigate pages solely through the keyboard, or who can have seizures triggered by flashing content)
- understandable – easy to understand, and presented according to a website design that is simple to interact with and minimise user mistakes
- robust – compatible with other technologies (eg, assistive technology such as screen readers).

There are increasing opportunities to New Zealand Sign Language video clips on your website. For more information see the New Zealand Government Web Toolkit.
www.webtoolkit.govt.nz

Remember that many people may not have access to the internet.

Feedback

Prior to or during the engagement process, tell those participating that you will communicate your findings back to them, and follow through on this promise. If you have undertaken a survey, consider publishing the results in your next newsletter or on your website. If people are consulted with, they generally want to know that their views helped inform decision-making.

As with all community engagement, providing feedback helps build trust in your organisation. Poor communication, attitudes, or experiences can compromise future engagement.

When providing feedback to people with disabilities, ensure it is accessible.

Ensuring safety in the engagement process

While you are carrying out an engagement process, you may see or overhear something that indicates that a person with a disability may be a victim of violence, abuse, neglect or

exploitation. Such maltreatment can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, financial or organisational. People who are unable to communicate easily are at particular risk of abuse.

The Crimes Amendment Act (No 3) 2011 requires the reporting of harm to vulnerable adults. The Act defines a vulnerable adult as ‘a person unable, by reason of detention, age, sickness, mental impairment, or any other cause to withdraw himself or herself from the care or charge of another person’.

www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2011/0079/latest/DLM3650006.html

Protecting vulnerable children is everyone’s responsibility. The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 and the Vulnerable Children’s Action Plan support the safety and protection of all children. Whether you’re a family or whānau member, friend, neighbour, teacher, or workmate, there are things you can do to protect children from abuse and neglect.

www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/DLM5501618.html

If you suspect a disabled person is being abused, first raise the concerns with that person: he or she has the right to make a complaint and is the only one who understands the situation. If after this discussion you remain concerned, see ‘Making a complaint or raising concerns’ (page 35) for more details on agencies and organisations that can help.

Ensure that your own actions or inactions, and those of others in your organisation, do not cause injury or harm to those participating.

Undertaking an accessible community engagement process

In undertaking the engagement, the following guidelines may be useful.

- Ask disabled people about the support they require. If you feel the question may be sensitive, wait for an appropriate opportunity to discuss it privately.
- Some people with disabilities will need slightly more time for an activity, or will require alternative forms of communication.
- For disabled people who cannot respond for themselves, involvement of others such as their family, caregiver or advocate may be required to represent their interests.
- You may need to conduct conversations at a slightly slower pace than you are used to. Allow people time to finish what they are saying.
- At the beginning of a meeting, facilitate a round of introductions; one important purpose of this is to help people who are blind or those with low vision know who is in the room.
- Make sure that only one person speaks at a time; this will make it easier for everyone including New Zealand Sign Language interpreters. Ask people to raise their hands if they wish to speak, or otherwise visually indicate the intention; this will give Deaf people an equal opportunity to contribute.
- Provide breaks. These may need to be slightly longer than you are used to. Let people know that they are welcome to leave the room to meet their own needs and that they can return when they are ready. Also consider allowing time before and after the meeting for people to talk to each other. People may use this time as an informal opportunity to discuss the issues, to clarify their thoughts and to make community connections.
- Make sure everyone knows where the toilets and the accessible toilets are, keeping in mind that some people may need spoken directions, or may require sighted guide assistance.
- Provide food if necessary. Finger food may be easiest.
 - Make sure the food is accessible to everyone, and that assistance is available if necessary. Think about the placement of food in the room; for example, keep in mind people who use a wheelchair.
 - Supply plenty of napkins and a range of cups, including mugs with handles. Some people may require straws; although some who require straws will bring their own.
- Do not interact with guide or assistance dogs while they are working – even by making eye contact. Never attempt to feed an assistance dog.
- Speak louder only if someone requests it. Respectfully repeat what has been said if someone asks you to.
- When you are communicating directly with someone, make eye contact with that person, rather than with their interpreter or assistant. Some people may come to a meeting with an assistant whose role it is to translate complex information to aid the person's understanding. The assistant's role is to enhance the person's participation and understanding, and to foster opportunities for the person to contribute to discussion.

Engagement checklist

Purpose

- What is the purpose of the engagement?
- What will be gained from the engagement process?
- What questions/issues will the engagement process cover?
- Has engagement occurred previously on these issues? If so, consider feedback from that engagement so as to avoid an unnecessary and repetitive process. Similarly, have other organisations undertaken engagement that would be useful to you?

Who are you engaging?

- Which individuals and groups should contribute to the issues and decisions?
- Who is affected by the decisions?
- Have you considered all groups (including people with disabilities, disabled people's organisations, advocacy groups, carers, whānau and associated support groups)?
 - See 'Who to engage with' (page 4) for more information on stakeholder groups and the range of impairments within the disability community.
 - See 'Cultural considerations' (page 6) for information on protocols and other customs to consider when planning the engagement.

For information on working with people with particular impairments, see:

- Engaging with people who are blind or vision impaired (page 23)
- Engaging with people with hearing loss, who are hard of hearing or who are Deaf (page 26)
- Engaging with people with complex communication needs (page 28)
- Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities (page 30)
- Engaging with people with autism spectrum disorder (page 32).

How will the engagement process work?

What type of engagement will you undertake? See 'Types of engagement' (page 3).

Communication

- Is it clear who is being consulted, about what, when and for what purpose?
- Is the information as clear, simple and concise as possible?
- Will the engagement process generate interest from the media? Consider developing a communications plan, key messages and/or media statements.
- See the accessibility section below to ensure your communications are suitable.

Accessibility

- Have you considered the needs of all participants?
- Will you use images, diagrams, graphs or tables in the engagement materials?
See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Will you use a website or other online tools in the engagement process?
See 'Web accessibility and online engagement' (page 9).
- Will you produce written material in the engagement process?
See 'Using written information and printed materials accessibly' (page 17).
- Will you give presentations in the engagement process?
See 'Accessible presentations and other verbal communication' (page 19).
- If you are using a venue, is it accessible?
See 'Venue accessibility' (page 21).

Timelines

- When will things happen or need to happen?
- What are the timeframes for decisions?
- Has sufficient preparation time been allowed?
- Consider the time it will take to book New Zealand Sign Language interpreters and accessible venues, and to make travel arrangements. See 'Early planning' (page 4) for more information.

Resources and budget

- What is your available budget?
- Will you incur costs for the following?
 - Venue hire
 - Catering (food, coffee, tea, etc)
 - Koha
 - Engagement materials (including publication, printing and distribution)
 - Stationery or equipment (rental of projectors, laptops, large paper and pens for workshops, etc)
 - Advertisement or promotion costs (including promoting your event and recruit of participants)
 - External facilitators
 - Interpreters/translators (See 'Further resources and organisations' on page 39 for information on booking New Zealand Sign Language interpreters)
 - Data analysts or data entry
 - Compensation for participants for their time (honorarium or payment) and/or travel (taxi, mileage, petrol and/or parking) or any other associated expenses.

Analysis and reporting

- What information will be collected from participants?
- What reporting is needed? (eg, to decision makers, community, stakeholders)
- Will you use images, diagrams, graphs or tables in your reports?
See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Will you use testimonials to support the reports?
See 'Using testimonials' (page 18).
- How will the success of the engagement be determined?
- After the process is complete, it is helpful to reflect on the engagement. Can any improvements be made next time?
- Is any support required for data analysis or data entry?

Feedback

- Will you provide feedback to participants? If so, what level and type? When will you provide feedback?
See 'Feedback' (page 9).
- How will you provide feedback? Consider the format – including the accessibility of your communication, follow-up meetings, websites, etc. For information on ensuring feedback is accessible, see:
 - Web accessibility and online engagement (page 9)
 - Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
 - Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19).
- Will participants continue to be contacted? Is ongoing discussion or communication needed?
- Ensure that participants are acknowledged and thanked for their time and expertise in the consultation process.

Review and reflection

- Will you seek feedback on the engagement process?
- If so, you could ask some of the following questions.
 - Was anyone left out who should have been included?
 - Did participants feel satisfied with the process?
 - Did people feel listened to, heard and respected?
 - Were participants satisfied with the feedback you provided on how their input was used?
 - Was the process useful for achieving the desired outcomes?
 - Were time and money used efficiently?
 - Were there any unintended consequences?
 - What could have been done differently and why?

Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly

Using images, diagrams and graphs

When using images, diagrams and graphs, include a brief written description of the image, to help those who are blind or vision impaired engage with the material.

Consider these tips.

- Some software programmes offer accessibility features for images. For example, Microsoft uses Alt Text, which allows the writer to include a title and description of the image. The screen reader reads the title of the image and allows the person to choose whether or not to hear the content of the description. Alt Text is accessed by right clicking on the picture, selecting Format Picture, then selecting Alt Text.
- When you are presenting in person, describe images verbally. Do not tell the whole room that this is for the benefit of a particular person or people who are blind or who have a vision impairment.
- Microsoft Office 2010 and Acrobat Pro (and some other programmes) have an ‘Accessibility Checker’ feature that will check a document for accessibility issues. Note that it may not check for all potential issues (eg, it cannot check for colour contrast).

An example of an image and description



This is a photograph of a young man in his wheelchair on the Wellington waterfront with distant people walking in the background. The man’s attention is focused past the camera at whatever he is moving towards.

Using tables

Information provided in table formats is sometimes incompatible with screen reader software. Tables are also difficult when you are producing large print documents – in this case, think about other ways to present the same information without a table.

Consider these tips.

- Use a table only for presenting data, rather than for design/layout purposes.
- Do not merge cells or split cells, as screen readers are unable to interpret this information accurately.
- Keep tables simple to understand by including one piece of information per cell.
- Avoid using blank cells for formatting purposes, as this can be misleading.
- When using Microsoft Word, use the bookmark feature for tables; this enables people using screen readers to effectively navigate the document. To do this, put the cursor in the top right-hand box of the table, click 'insert', then type a bookmark name (eg, 'title1') and click 'add'. Different bookmark names are needed for each table.
- Where available use programmes' 'Accessibility Checker' features, as described in 'Using images, diagrams and graphs' above.

Using written information and printed materials accessibly

When preparing written information for use within your engagement process, consider the following guidelines.

- To meet most people's needs, use a larger-than-usual font size, and ensure the font size is never less than 12 points.
- Produce a large print version (a minimum of 16-point font, but preferably 18) for people with vision impairments or those with learning/intellectual disabilities.
- Use plain sans-serif fonts (a font without the 'serifs' or small lines attached to the bottom of letters or symbols), such as Arial, Tahoma or Calibri
- Information provided in table formats is sometimes incompatible with screen reader software packages used by blind people or those with vision impairments. Tables are also difficult when producing large print – think about ways you could present the same information without a table. See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Use paper thick enough so that text from the other side of the page will not show through.
- Use standard capital and lower case sentences, even in headings: text in all-capitals is harder to read. Use bold text for emphasis, rather than italics, which are harder to read. Reserve underscored text for hyperlinks.
- Have an identical margin width on either side of the text.
- Set margins justified to the left, with the right margin unjustified.
- Use non-reflective paper in white or pale colours, and print in a dark colour, preferably black: high-contrast text is easier to read. Avoid colour combinations with low contrast (eg, blue print on a green background).
- Include a brief description under images and diagrams. See further 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Do not place text over graphics, background patterns, blocks of colour or dark shading.
- Many PDF files (eg, scanned documents) are incompatible with screen reader software packages (which turn text into speech), and therefore people with vision impairments might find it difficult to use them. In this case, publish a Word document or HTML version (if you are publishing on the web) alongside PDFs.
- Electronic Word documents are generally accessible to people with low or no vision if they are using electronic screen readers. You may also consider providing an audible version of a document (eg, in a DVD/CD or MP3 file) or a Braille translation. Discuss participants' preferences in this regard ahead of time.
- Use everyday language and avoid jargon. People with autism commonly have trouble understanding figures of speech eg, 'raining cats and dogs', and may not understand irony or jokes.
- You may need to provide an Easy Read translation of a document for people with learning/intellectual disabilities. A support person or meeting assistant may be able to assist the person to understand the documents prior to the meeting. Regardless, providing the information in advance to meeting assistants can help them be prepared to support the person during the event. See 'Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities' (page 30).

Using testimonials

Testimonials are a great way of capturing the voice of your participants at the feedback stage. They enable your audience to better understand the material you have provided. They can add credibility and substantiate the results you are presenting.

Seek permission from participants before using a testimonial.

Here is an example testimonial.

Testimonial: government disability strategy development

During the planning stage of their new disability strategy, one of the government departments got in touch with DPOs [disabled people's organisations] and asked them the best ways to plan a consultation meeting with disabled people. They wanted advice from a diverse range of disabled people on the development and implementation of the strategy, so we worked with them on planning the content and form of the meeting, and they got a disabled person to facilitate it too. It was really great – I thought the meeting was inclusive, and engaged with the right people. And the department were happy too – they said they received helpful feedback on their new strategy and had ideas about how to move forward.

– Feedback from a person after attending a joint planning meeting

Accessible presentations and other verbal communication

When preparing for discussions, presentations and any other verbal communication, consider the following guidelines.

- Speak clearly, at a measured pace, with even intonation.
- Consider how many New Zealand Sign Language interpreters you require. You will need two interpreters, who can take turns, if a meeting goes longer than 1.5 hours or requires technically complicated signing. It is best to discuss this with the interpreting agency.
- It can be difficult to book New Zealand Sign Language interpreters, as there is a shortage, so do so in advance – this is particularly true of tri-lingual interpreters (eg, Te Reo–English–New Zealand Sign Language). See ‘Further resources and organisations’ (page 39) for information on booking New Zealand Sign Language interpreters.
- Send any written material to be used at the event to the interpreters ahead of time.
- If a sign language interpreter is not available, or you wish to engage with Deaf participants who do not use New Zealand Sign Language, consider using an electronic note-taker/live captioning to transcribe the discussion in real time; this will transfer your material on to a data show or computer screen which the participant can read.
- Ensure there is enough light on the Sign Language interpreter, so that participants can clearly see both the interpreter’s hand movements as well as their lips.
- Consider using a hearing loop. Set it up in advance, and test it before the event to ensure it is functioning. Always use a microphone when a hearing loop⁵ is in use, and say your name before speaking. People using hearing loops often cannot differentiate between different voices over the loop, as all voices tend to sound mechanical.
- Deafblind people use a variety of communication strategies, depending on the nature and extent of their vision and hearing impairment/loss, including modified sign language and tactile signing. Appropriate lighting is particularly important. Discuss communication options with participants, and contact Deafblind New Zealand for advice.
- If you are conducting a meeting, provide an agenda, and then try to keep to the agenda topics in the order they are listed. This will be helpful for people with learning/intellectual disabilities or autism.
- At times, you may need to conduct conversation and presentations at a slightly slower pace, to enable all participants to understand what is being communicated, and to have the time to think of their response and have their say.
- When you are asking for comments from the audience, have at least one person (depending on the size and configuration of the group) ready to take a microphone to participants, and ensure that Sign Language interpreters have a microphone available. Be aware that you may need more than one microphone.
- Be prepared to offer to have a minute taker. Also consider the use of a reader/writer for people who have short-term memory loss and for those with learning/intellectual disabilities, when conducting surveys or asking for feedback.
- Avoid using acronyms, and say all names in full.

⁵ A hearing loop is a system that enhances sound sources such as a microphone or PA system, and is transmitted directly to hearing aids that have a telecoil attachment. With a telecoil, hearing aids do not have to use their microphone, and ambient noise is decreased. Hearing loops can be permanently set up in a venue, or portable varieties can be used.

Presentations

- When planning for a presentation, find out the specific needs of the audience in advance, so that you can prepare accessible materials.
- When using a PowerPoint or overhead presentation, keep sentences short and easy to read. Limit key ideas to four per slide.
- Read presentations in full, and describe images, diagrams, graphs and tables. Do not tell the whole room that this is for the benefit of people who are blind or have a vision impairment. See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- If possible, prior to the meeting, provide a copy of PowerPoint presentations or Word documents electronically and/or in large font to anyone with a vision impairment, and to meeting assistants. For more information on meeting assistants, see 'Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities' (page 30).
- Provide a copy of your presentation to New Zealand Sign Language interpreters in advance, so that they can familiarise themselves with the content.
- Consider providing information in advance to people with learning/intellectual disabilities, to allow them time to read and understand your material.
- If you are engaging New Zealand Sign Language interpreters, discuss with them the speed at which presenters should speak, and whether they will need to pause to allow interpreters to swap over.
- If you are going to use videos in presentations, consider inserting captions or video clips of New Zealand Sign Language interpreters.
- Where possible, do not have presenters stand in front of windows or with a lot of light behind them. Lighting may obstruct some people's ability to pick up on visual cues and other non-verbal messages, such as gestures. It also restricts communication with people who depend on lip-reading.

Venue accessibility

New Zealand Standard 4121 sets out the accessibility requirements for many public buildings. It is a useful resource to help understand accessibility requirements for a venue and when looking to confirm if a venue meets these requirements.

www.standards.co.nz/assets/Publication-files/NZS4121-2001.pdf

Some key points to consider when choosing a venue are as follows.

- When planning events with an open invitation, ensure the venue is accessible for all people with disabilities.
- Often an accessible venue uses the International Symbol of Access (the symbol of a person in a wheelchair) to indicate that it meets this standard and can be used by people with disabilities (not just by people who use wheelchairs).
www.building.govt.nz/international-symbol#aid2
- Allow time to secure an accessible venue for your engagement. Before you book a venue, visit it to ensure that it meets the needs of your intended participants. If you are unsure, consult intended participants themselves.
- Consider availability and cost of transport to and from the venue. Venues should be accessible by public transport. Provide directions and transport information. This is likely to include public transport options, the availability of mobility/accessible parking and kerb ramps, and whether there is a telephone in the venue for ringing taxis. It may be appropriate to organise accessible transport if several people require it.
- Check whether venue, the toilets and the dining areas, are wheelchair accessible.
- Ideally, door widths should be 850mm, to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility scooters, and should be easy to open. Doors should be light, preferably sliding, and with low door handles. If doors are difficult to open, consider having someone to assist people to open them.
- Plan and communicate emergency evacuation procedures. Ask people if they require assistance in an emergency, and be prepared to provide the necessary support. Note how many people indicated that they would require such assistance, and make sure you have a plan to provide it to everybody.
- Ideally, if there are stairs at the venue they should have handrails.
- Check the venue has toilets that are able to be accessed by people using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Note toilets are not accessible if they are up or down a flight of stairs.
- Preferably, the venue should include a lawn area for guide or assistance dogs, or one should be available close enough that the handler can safely toilet their dogs.
- Ideally, the venue should have high-contrast signage on entries, exits, and toilet facilities for people with vision impairments. The signs should include pictures, as well as text, for people who find reading difficult.
- Make sure the venue has appropriate lighting for people with vision impairments and for users of New Zealand Sign Language. Sign language interpreters need to be well positioned, so that their face, hands and body can be easily seen. Reserve seats opposite the sign language interpreter(s) for Deaf people. Ensure there are no barriers, such as poles, that may obstruct the Deaf person's view of the interpreters.
- Many people who use wheelchairs prefer to sit at tables in meetings.

- Check the venue has sufficient space for people using wheelchairs and mobility scooters to enter, exit and circulate easily. Ideally, hallways should be able to accommodate two people using wheelchairs side by side.
- Check whether the venue has a hearing loop; if not, consider hiring one. Set it up in advance, and test it before the event to ensure it is functioning.
- Some people with disabilities use electronic equipment such as laptops and tablets for communication, and will need access to a multi-plug power outlet.
- Provide participants with the name of a contact person (and their phone number and email address) who will be available to answer questions or address issues on the day.
- There may be people unable to attend a venue regardless of its level of accessibility. In this case, consider using teleconferencing facilities. Bear in mind that teleconferences do not work well for people with learning/intellectual disabilities and Deaf people, and do not work at all for people who use hearing loops.
- If you are planning a standing-only event, provide some seating for those who may require it.
- Consider how to accommodate people who benefit from a quiet space free from a lot of people and noise.

Engaging with people who are blind or vision impaired

This section provides a summary of the information in this guide, and additional tips to support an effective engagement process with people who are blind or who have a vision impairment.

General

The term 'vision impaired' is generally accepted by most people. The term 'blind' may not be acceptable, particularly among those who consider they are vision impaired, are partially sighted or have low vision. The term 'legally blind' has different meanings in New Zealand (eg, within the Social Security Act 1964 and within the Blind Foundation's criteria). Therefore, although some people may use this term to describe themselves, you should avoid using it as a generic term.

As a general principle, when you are undertaking engagement with people who are blind or vision impaired, let people know what is happening. For example, let people know where their chair is, and where you have placed their tea or coffee, or what food is available.

Where possible, keep pathways clear to allow people to easily navigate throughout the room.

Accessible materials

In creating accessible materials for people who are blind or vision impaired, follow these guidelines.

- Consider providing written information in advance in large print format, as a Word document (so that it may be read aloud using screen reader software), in Braille or in audible format.
- In electronic publications, provide descriptions below images, or, alternatively, use Microsoft's feature for screen readers called Alt Text. Alt Text allows the writer to include a title and description of the image. The screen reader will read the title of the image and allow the person to choose whether or not to hear the description of its content. Alt Text is accessed by right clicking on the picture, selecting Format Picture, then selecting Alt Text. Other software programmes may offer similar features. See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Information provided in table formats is sometimes incompatible with screen reader software packages used by blind people or those with vision impairments. Again the Alt Text function can be used to give the table a title and description which can be read by the electronic screen reader.
- Tables are also difficult when producing large print – think about ways you could present the same information without a table. See 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).
- Expense claim and feedback forms need to be accessible. If possible provide these to people in advance or accept feedback in alternative forms, such as electronically after the meeting.
- Microsoft Office 2010 and Acrobat Pro (and some other programmes) have an 'Accessibility Checker' feature that will check a document for accessibility issues. Note that it cannot check for all potential issues (eg, it cannot check for colour contrast).

Presentations

In planning presentations for people who are blind or vision impaired, follow these guidelines.

- At the beginning of a meeting, facilitate a round of introductions. If it is not possible to introduce everyone, ensure you note key people and presenters. One important purpose of this is to help people who are blind or those with low vision know who is in the room.
- Read presentations in full, and describe images, diagrams, graphs and tables. Do not tell the whole room that this is for the benefit of people who are blind or have a vision impairment. See further 'Using images, diagrams, graphs and tables accessibly' (page 15).

Inclusive meeting practices for blind participants

Blind Citizens NZ is a disabled people's organisation that provides advocacy for blind and vision impaired people. The material that appears here was originally produced by the Association of Blind Citizens NZ, and is reproduced with their kind permission.

www.abcnz.org.nz



The following guidelines are designed to assist organisations to make their meeting practices and/or committee processes inclusive of the needs of blind and vision impaired people.

1. **Meeting agendas and minutes:** Blind representatives must be able to specify the format in which they choose to receive these documents (ie, large print, Braille, audio cassette or an electronic format). Their first choice should be honoured regardless of their ability to access the material by other means. Some forward planning may be needed to ensure that blind participants receive their material at approximately the same time as sighted participants receive theirs.
2. **Venue:** As a common courtesy, it is often helpful for a blind person to receive information about and/or a 'conducted tour' of the facilities being used. If the blind participant uses a guide dog as a mobility aid, the dog's toileting requirements must also be considered when choosing a venue. If the venue has no grass or garden area, or such areas are not in easy reach of the venue, then some other party may need to be on hand to accompany the blind dog-handler to find a suitable area.
3. **Roll call:** Every meeting should begin with a 'roll call' in which participants are asked to clearly identify themselves. This also indicates to the blind person where everyone is seated. If someone arrives late or departs during the meeting, this information should also be conveyed at the earliest possible opportunity. These steps are critical, since even if all meeting participants are known to one another, a blind person can often be unaware of who is in the room. The roll call should be repeated in future sessions if a change has occurred in those present or seating arrangements have altered.
4. **Establishing the process for seeking the floor:** The process for gaining the right to speak at a meeting should be made clear by the chairperson at the beginning of discussion. Unless clearly indicated, a blind person may be unclear as to whether hands are being raised to catch the attention of the chairperson, whether people simply speak up, or some other method is being used. Whatever the method, visual techniques such as catching the chairperson's eye to get their attention should be avoided.
5. **Use of printed or visual material in meetings:** Any material distributed in print during a meeting must also be available in the blind participant's preferred format. As the reading speed of some participants may not permit them to read the information as quickly as a standard print user, and certain computer technologies may not be portable, such material should be circulated in advance if at all possible. The use of overheads and

black/whiteboards should be accompanied with copies of the material in the blind person's preferred format in advance of the meeting. At the very least, a verbal description of the content of each overhead or white/blackboard currently displayed should be standard practice.

6. **Taking notes:** When a blind participant wishes to take notes of a meeting, and an audio recording is the only option available to them, they should be allowed to do so but must inform the meeting that a recording is being made. It must be clear that the audio recording is for the blind participant's exclusive use unless otherwise agreed, that recording will take place only in those parts of the meeting when taking notes is permitted and that any misuse of the recording may constitute a breach of confidentiality.

Guidelines for interacting with guide dogs

The Blind Foundation is an organisation that provides support to people who are blind or have low vision. The material that appears here was originally produced by the Blind Foundation, and is reproduced with their kind permission.
www.blindfoundation.org.nz



Guide dogs are friendly by nature; your help is required to maintain their good manners.

Please DO NOT interact with a guide dog unless the dog's handler gives permission.

When settling a guide dog into a new environment, no interaction is advisable for the first couple of weeks. Once the dog has settled in, the handler may start to allow limited interaction, dependent on the dog's behaviour.

No interaction includes:

- avoid eye contact with the dog
- don't talk to the dog
- don't feed the dog.

If the dog attempts to interact with you, please ignore it, move away if necessary, or turn your back on the dog.

These guidelines are for the safety of the guide dog handler. If a guide dog gets distracted or excited by people then it can be a safety risk and may have to be withdrawn from guiding work.

If the handler does give permission for you to interact with the guide dog, please ensure you maintain a calm voice and gentle handling. The aim is not to excite the dog too much in a workplace or public place. Guide dogs get plenty of time to play and have fun when off duty. But when in a workplace we must ensure appropriate behaviour is maintained.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Blind Foundation Guide Dogs (09 269 0400) or talk to the guide dog handler directly.

For more information also see:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19).

Engaging with people with hearing loss, who are hard of hearing or who are Deaf

This section provides a summary of the information in this guide, and gives additional tips to support an effective engagement process with people with a hearing loss, who are hard of hearing or who are Deaf.

General

In general, follow these guidelines.

- Make sure that only one person speaks at a time; this will make it easier for everyone, including New Zealand Sign Language interpreters. Ask people to raise their hands if they wish to speak, or otherwise visually indicate the intention; this will give Deaf people an equal opportunity to contribute.
- Some people who have a hearing loss identify as being Deaf. This identity is grounded within the Deaf culture with its own language, values and history.
- Many people with a hearing loss do not use sign language interpreters. They may however use a personal assistive listening system. This can either be in the form of a personal microphone which amplifies sound, or it may use FM radio frequencies to send sound from the source e.g. a presenter using a microphone, directly to the listener. The system can be connected to a hearing aid, a cochlear implant, or received through a headset.
- Make sure that people with hearing impairments have the option of sitting near the front of the room as many people with hearing loss need to be able to see body language and lip movements in order to understand what is being said.
- If you are using breakout groups, be prepared to offer a separate room for people with hearing impairments, as the background noise of multiple groups working in the same room can make it very difficult for people using hearing aids or other assistive listening devices to hear what is being said in their own group.
- Always use a microphone when a hearing loop is in use, and request speakers to say their names before speaking. People using hearing loops often cannot differentiate between different voices, as all tend to sound mechanical.

New Zealand Sign Language interpreters

If you are considering hiring a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter, follow these guidelines.

- Preferably, book New Zealand Sign Language interpreters at least four weeks in advance, as there is a shortage of trained interpreters. This is particularly true of tri-lingual interpreters (eg, Te Reo–English–New Zealand Sign Language).
- Although it is unlikely that a qualified tri-lingual sign language interpreter will be available, a New Zealand Sign Language agency may have alternate suggestions that could assist the engagement with a particular non-English speaking group; discuss your needs with them.
- Consider how many interpreters you require. You will need at least two interpreters, who can take turns, if a meeting goes longer than 1.5 hours or requires technically complicated signing. It is best to discuss this with the interpreting agency.
- If you are engaging interpreters, discuss with them the speed at which presenters should speak, and whether they will need a pause to allow interpreters to swap over.
- Send any written material you will use at the event to the interpreters ahead of time, to allow them to familiarise themselves with the content.

- Make sure the venue has appropriate lighting for hard of hearing people who rely on lip-reading and for users of sign language. Sign language interpreters need to be well lit, so that their face, hands and body can be easily seen. Reserve seats opposite interpreters for Deaf people. Ensure there are no barriers, such as poles, that may obstruct people's view of the interpreters.
- When you are asking for comments from the audience, have at least one person (depending on the size and configuration of the group) ready to take a microphone to participants, and ensure that sign language interpreters have a microphone available. Be aware that you may need more than one microphone.
- If a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter is not available, or you wish to engage with Deaf participants who do not use New Zealand Sign Language, consider using an electronic note-taker/live captioning to transcribe the discussion in real time; this will transfer your material on to a data show or computer screen which the participant can read.
- If you are going to use videos in presentations, consider inserting captions or video clips of New Zealand Sign Language interpreters.
- See 'Further resources and organisations' (page 39) for information on booking New Zealand Sign Language interpreters.
- For more information about working with interpreters, see *Effective communication with deaf people: A guide to working with New Zealand Sign Language interpreters*, produced by the Office for Disability Issues.
www.odi.govt.nz/resources/guides-and-toolkits/working-with-nzsl-interpreters/index.html

Working with hearing dogs

This information is adapted from the information produced by the Blind Foundation's guidelines for interacting with guide dogs.

- Hearing dogs need to concentrate on doing their job. Do not interact with them unless the dog's handler gives permission – avoid eye contact with the dog, do not talk to or pat the dog and do not feed him/her.
- Ideally, the venue should include a lawn area for hearing or assistance dogs, or one should be available close enough that the handler can safely toilet their dogs.
- For more information contact Hearing Dogs New Zealand.
www.hearingdogs.org.nz

For more information, see also:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19).

Engaging with people with complex communication needs

This section provides a summary of the information in this guide, and gives additional tips to support an effective engagement process with people with complex communication needs.

General

In general, follow these guidelines.

- People experience communication difficulties for a range of reasons, including learning/intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), brain injuries, cerebral palsy and motor neurone disease.
- People experience communication difficulties differently. Some may have difficulty in understanding information, or knowing how to respond. Others may have a physical impairment related to the muscles connected to voice or speech. People with ASD experience social and communication impairments. See ‘Engaging with people with autism spectrum disorder’ (page 32).
- Take the time to understand these needs – start by asking them how they prefer to communicate.
- Speak to the person, not their support person.^l
- Start by assuming a person can understand you, and then adjust your approach according to their response. For example, some people find it difficult to respond to open-ended questions. Try these first, and if you need to, move to yes or no or closed option questions. If using closed questions, consider including a ‘something else’ option, so the person is not limited to the options you have provided. For example, ask, ‘would you like a coffee, tea or something else?’
- Some people may prefer whānau members or carers to express their preferences on their behalf, as they trust them to understand and communicate their individual needs and communication methods. Ask permission from the person to gather this information
- Some people with high and complex disability needs are unable to communicate or to understand the concept of giving permission for someone to communicate on their behalf, and are best represented by someone who knows them well e.g. their family, carer or advocate.
- People with complex communication needs may make use of various methods of communication, including communication aids or devices (eg, computer technologies/software, picture-based communication boards, whiteboards or speaking devices), gestures (eg, eye gaze or head/hand movements), facial expressions or visual aids (eg, pictures, diagrams, signs or objects).

Communication aids/technologies

In terms of communication aids/technologies used by people with complex needs, consider the following.

- The tips in the above section also apply when you are having a conversation with someone who uses a communication aid. It is important to respect a person’s individual methods of communication.
- Allow the conversation to take place at a slightly slower pace. Allow the person time to respond to questions, and take the time to listen and understand their response.^m

- Be patient, and allow the person sufficient time to use an aid to finish what they are saying. Never attempt to finish a sentence for the person. If it is not clear what the person has said, politely ask them to repeat themselves.

For more information, see also:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19)
- Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities (page 30).

Engaging with people with learning/intellectual disabilities

This section provides a summary of the information in this guide, and additional tips to support an effective engagement process with people with learning/intellectual disabilities.

Meeting protocols

In planning a meeting involving participants who have learning/intellectual disabilities, follow these guidelines.

- When considering a suitable time, keep in mind that some people with learning/intellectual disabilities prefer mornings, as they are more rested at this time of the day, and find it easier to concentrate.
- Provide an agenda and then keep to the agenda topics in the order they are listed.
- Be prepared to offer to have a minute taker. Also consider the use of a reader/writer when conducting surveys or asking for feedback.
- Avoid teleconferences. This will make it easier to ensure information is provided at the right pace and is understood.
- Make sure that only one person speaks at a time.

Verbal information

In providing verbal information, follow these guidelines.

- Keep information simple, and avoid jargon. Also avoid using acronyms, and say all names in full.
- Where possible, accompany information with relevant pictures or visual aids.
- Speak at a pace that allows people time to consider your questions and how they might respond. Pause where you need to. Ask one question at a time.
- Provide a copy of your presentation to participants in advance, to allow them time to familiarise themselves with it.
- Let people know they are entitled to their opinion.
- Allow time for people to have their say, and listen to them carefully.
- Check your understanding of what people have said. Ask questions to clarify your understanding, or get people to repeat what they have said so that you are sure you understand. Do not pretend to understand.
- Check that people have understood what has been said. If someone does not understand, consider using an alternative approach; for example, by moving from open-ended to closed questions (yes or no, etc), repeating or rephrasing information, or using pictures or visual aids.
- To check that someone has understood, consider asking them to put the information into their own words. This will eliminate the risk of people saying 'yes' because that is what they believe they should say, and allow them to avoid having to answer 'no' to the question 'Do you understand?'
- Some people may prefer that whānau members or carers express their preferences on their behalf, as they trust them to understand and communicate their individual needs. Ask permission from the person to gather this information.

Meeting assistants

In relation to meeting assistants for people with a learning/intellectual disability, follow these guidelines.

- The role of meeting assistant can be helpful for a person with a learning/intellectual disability when meetings run at a fast pace or use complex or conceptual information that can be a barrier to that person's equal participation. Meeting assistants guide people to build trusting relationships within the group/meeting.
- An assistant's role depends on the individual's support needs. The person and their assistant agree on a plan prior to the meeting. The focus is always on enhancing the person's participation and understanding and providing support for equal opportunities for the person to contribute to discussions and decisions.
- A meeting assistant often:
 - helps to translate complex information so as to aid the person's understanding
 - helps with the complex social skills required to engage within a large group at a meeting, or during break times
 - discusses items or completes tasks with the person after the meeting.
- Assistants often quietly talk to the person they are assisting during the meeting. Often at this time the assistants are helping to foster the person's better understanding of conceptual or complex information.
- Allow time for people to have their say in whatever way suits them.
- People First New Zealand Ngā Tangata Tuatahi, a disabled people's organisation directed by people with learning/intellectual disabilities, provides trained meeting assistants. See 'Disabled people's organisations and resources' (page 36) for more information on People First.
www.peoplefirst.org.nz

Written information and Easy Read documents

Easy Read is a way of producing information in everyday language that is consistent, acronym- and jargon-free and includes images to assist meaning. Easy Read documents have a large amount of clear/white space. Easy Read can also be used to support people with low literacy levels, or who have English as a second language. When putting together written information including Easy Read documents for people with a learning/intellectual disability, follow these guidelines.

- Contact People First about their Easy Read translation service, 'Make it easy'. Make contact early, as translations take a minimum of three weeks.
- Consider producing a large print version (at minimum a 16-point font, but preferably 18) of written information. If you are not producing an Easy Read document, consider the clarity of your documents anyway, to ensure the information will be understood.

For more information, see also:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19)
- Engaging with people with complex communication needs (page 28).

Engaging with people with autism spectrum disorder

This section provides a summary of the information found within this guide, and gives additional tips to support an effective engagement process with people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

What is autism spectrum disorder?

Autism spectrum disorder refers to a range of conditions that affect communication, social interaction and behaviour. Each person with ASD tends to experience some difficulties with the following areas:

- understanding and using verbal (language) and non-verbal (facial expression, gesture and body language) communication
- understanding social behaviour, which affects their ability to interact with other people
- thinking and behaving flexibly, which may show in restricted, narrowly focussed or repetitive activities.¹¹

Some people may experience sensory issues, such as a hypersensitivity to sound.¹⁰

Verbal information and communication

When you are planning to engage with people with ASD, follow these guidelines.

- Some people may prefer whānau members or carers to express their preferences on their behalf, as they trust them to understand and communicate their individual needs. Ask permission from the person to gather this information.
- Be aware that some people with ASD may:
 - operate according to a particular set of routines or rules. Being aware of these will help you to avoid inadvertently doing or saying something that triggers difficulties¹²
 - have difficulty speaking. Some people with ASD are non-verbal
 - have difficulty engaging in a face-to-face interview. Some people may prefer to sit side by side, to minimise eye contact¹³
 - have difficulty in understanding and following verbal information. It might be helpful to send questions in advance or have a printed copy for the person to refer to
 - have difficulty understanding body language or social norms
 - have difficulty with registering, showing or managing emotions. This may result in stress for the person
 - experience auditory processing disorder i.e. difficulty deciphering sounds which are experienced as ‘garbled’ eg, when multiple conversations are occurring at once
 - have difficulty organising and planning, and recognising what information is important
 - have difficulty thinking flexibly and problem solving. For example, the person may return to one or a few specific topics, or may not know how to resolve a particular problem
 - be anxious about making mistakes, which may mean they say nothing or too much. They may overanalyse information, or second guess it.
- Be aware that a person with ASD may be too shy to introduce themselves in a group setting.
- Presume intelligence.
- Give as much advance notice as possible, and printed material ahead of time if possible.

- If food is being served, check dietary needs beforehand.
- Use simple, clear and concise words. Be mindful of using words that have multiple meanings, sarcasm, irony and figures of speech, as some people with ASD may take words quite literally.^{r, s}
- Allow the conversation to take place at a slightly slower pace. Allow the person time to respond to questions, and take time to listen and understand their response.^t
- Do not insist on making eye contact.
- Include breaks in the meeting, and if possible a quiet room to take ‘time out’.
- Be prepared to communicate in ways other than verbally, for example through writing or using pictures or visual aids (eg, visual timetables, photographs/pictures, social stories, objects and symbols).^u
- Check that you have understood what the person has communicated. Ask questions to clarify your understanding, or get people to repeat what they have said so that you are sure you understand. Do not pretend to understand.
- Try to choose a venue that has minimal distractions. Avoid rooms with high background noise, such as traffic, and rooms with harsh lighting/bright sunlight. Keep distractions to a minimum.^{v, w}

For more information, see also:

- Using written information and printed materials accessibly (page 17)
- Accessible presentations and other verbal communication (page 19).

Legal rights and obligations

Disability is one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Act 1993. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission has stated that '[the] right to participate in political and public life [is] integral to a functioning democracy ... through involvement in political activity, law and policy reform'.^x The Commission has emphasised that disabled people's participation in political process is an integral part of the full realisation of their human rights.^y It has also noted the need to provide 'information intended for the general public to disabled people in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities'.^z

New Zealand was one of the first signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008. The Convention aims to 'promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity'.

The Convention does not set out any new human rights; it clarifies the government's role to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy human rights on an equal basis with others. The Convention's 50 articles clarify the rights of people with disabilities covering all aspects of economic, social, political, legal and cultural life.^{aa} One of the core tenets of the Convention is that people with disabilities 'should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programmes, including those directly concerning them'.^{bb}

The Convention addresses the protection and promotion of the human rights of people with disabilities in all policies and programmes (Article 4.1c). It specifies the need for government agencies to closely consult with and actively involve people, including children, with disabilities in the development and implementation of legislation and policies, through their representative organisations (Article 4.3).

The Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) is both the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and includes the concept of partnership. The principles of the Treaty have been translated as 'active protection, the [...] right to self-regulation, the right of redress for past breaches, and the duty to consult'. The duty to consult and the right to self-regulation underpin this guide.

Making a complaint or raising concerns

This section contains information on how to make a complaint or raise concerns about potential violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. For further information see the section on ‘Ensuring safety in the engagement process’ (page 9) in this guide.

If you suspect a person is being abused, it is respectful to first raise the concerns with the person first and involve them in the decision-making process.

If your concerns relate to disability support services funded by the Ministry of Health, contact the manager of the service. The service will have a complaints process which they are required to make known.

Alternatively, you can contact one of the following organisations if:

- you or the person feel unable to make a complaint to the organisation that provides the services
- the complaint is not about a service provider
- you want to take your complaint further.

Disability Support Services within the Ministry of Health: responsible for funding supports and services for people with disabilities. You have the right to make a complaint about the disability support services you, your whānau, people you are working with, or others are receiving.

The Health and Disability Commissioner: responsible for ensuring the rights of people receiving health and disability services are upheld. This includes making sure complaints about health or disability service providers are taken care of fairly and efficiently.

If you need support and information to raise your concerns or make a complaint, you can contact the Health and Disability Advocacy Service.

The Human Rights Commission: promotes and protects the human rights of all people in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Commission can help if you are not sure of your rights or want to make a complaint about discrimination.

The Commission’s website publishes a plain language resource about making complaints: *Your human rights and making complaints: A guide for disabled people and their families*.
www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints/what-you-can-complain-about/disability

The Police: responsible for protecting public safety and maintaining law and order. If you feel that your complaint involves a criminal act, you should contact the police.

Ministry for Vulnerable Children – Oranga Tamariki: Contact the Ministry for Vulnerable Children if you have concerns about the safety of any child or young person (including those with a disability) and need some advice.

The Office of the Ombudsman: an independent resource to help the community deal with government agencies, with a focus on fairness and impartiality. It will undertake investigations where necessary.

See ‘Government agencies and resources’ (page 37) for contact details for all of these agencies and organisations.

Disabled people's organisations and resources

Disabled people's organisations are organisations run by and for people with disabilities. The table below lists New Zealand disabled people's organisations and some of the resources they produce.

Organisation	Resources
<p>Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand An advocacy organisation for blind and vision impaired people. www.abcnz.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive meeting practices for blind or vision impaired participants www.hdc.org.nz/publications/other-publications-from-hdc/disability-resources/inclusive-meeting-practices-for-blind-or-vision-impaired-participants-(association-of-blind-citizens-of-nz)
<p>Balance NZ An organisation of people with mental health issues and mood disorders that provides support and advocacy. www.balance.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Living Well Booklet</i> (compiled for the information of those who suffer from bipolar disorder (manic depression) and their families and friends www.balance.org.nz/index.php/information/bipolar-disorder/living-well-booklet Information on bipolar disorder for families www.balance.org.nz/index.php/information/bipolar-disorder/family-booklet Information on Seasonal Affective Disorder www.balance.org.nz/index.php/information/sad
<p>Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand An organisation that provides information and resources on life for Deaf New Zealanders, Deaf culture and New Zealand Sign Language. Deaf Aotearoa also provides New Zealand Sign Language classes and Deaf awareness training. www.deaf.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Tips for Communicating with Deaf People</i> www.deaf.org.nz/resources/communication-tips Deaf awareness training www.deaf.org.nz/services/awareness New Zealand Sign Language classes www.deaf.org.nz/services/sign-language
<p>Deafblind (NZ) Inc An organisation that provides advocacy and support for Deafblind people in New Zealand. www.deafblind.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about deafblindness www.deafblind.org.nz/learn
<p>Disabled Persons Assembly NZ A national pan-disability organisation. Its website publishes various resources, including on the rights of disabled people. www.dpa.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled Persons Assembly Resources and links to sector resources www.dpa.org.nz/resources
<p>Kāpō Māori Aotearoa New Zealand (Ngāti Kāpō) An organisation that offers kaupapa Māori-based disability support services with a focus on kāpō Māori and their whānau. www.kapomaori.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Te Whakaaheitanga Marae – Kua wātea te haurahi</i>: a resource which aims to enable 'Kaumātua and whānau with health and disability impairments to actively engage at marae and remain effective contributors to their marae' www.kapomaori.com/docs/accessable_marae_toolkit.pdf

People First New Zealand Ngā Tangata Tuatahi

A national self-advocacy organisation that is led and directed by people with learning disabilities.

The organisation provides an Easy Read translation service, which involves translating a document into an accessible format. It also provides trained meeting assistants.

www.peoplefirst.org.nz

- 'Guide to writing Easy Read Information'
 - Easy Read Version
www.peoplefirst.org.nz/news-and-resources/easy-read-resources
 - Online version at Office for Disability Issues website
www.odi.govt.nz/resources/guides-and-toolkits/disability-perspective/resources/plain-language.html#Aboutthisguide1

Government agencies and resources

The table below lists some government agencies relevant to people with disabilities and some of the resources they produce.

Organisation	Resources
<p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Disability Support Services (DSS) within the Ministry of Health is responsible for funding support and services for people with disabilities.</p> <p>It also leads the development and implementation of strategic plans that aim to ensure people with disabilities and their families are supported to live the lives they choose.</p> <p>www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Support Services Strategic Plan 2014 to 2018 www.health.govt.nz/publication/disability-support-services-strategic-plan-2014-2018 Whāia Te Ao Mārama: The Māori Disability Action Plan for Disability Support Services 2012 to 2017 www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-maori-disability-action-plan-disability-support-services-2012-2017 Māori disability support services (including information on accessible marae) www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/maori-disability-support-services Faiva Ora – National Pasifika Disability Plan www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/disability-projects-and-programmes/faiva-ora-national-pasifika-disability-plan Refugee health www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/refugee-health Information on making a complaint www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/disability-services/more-information-disability-support/contact-disability-support-services
<p>Accident Compensation Corporation</p> <p>The Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides funding and support for individuals who have an impairment as a result of an accident.</p> <p>www.acc.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious injury and disability – help for people affected by injury-related disabilities https://disability.acc.co.nz A range of resources are available on the ACC website on specific injuries, disabilities, rights and advocacy as well as information for parents, carers https://disability.acc.co.nz/useful-resources
<p>Department of Internal Affairs</p> <p>The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) website hosts the Kia Tūtahi Relationship Accord.</p> <p>The DIA's Community Matters website provides advice for involving the community in decision-making, targeted at government officials but generally applicable.</p> <p>The DIA is also responsible for the New Zealand Government Web Toolkit.</p> <p>www.dia.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kia Tūtahi Relationship Accord www.dia.govt.nz/kiatutahi Good Practice Participate on Community Matters www.communitymatters.govt.nz/good-practice-participate CommunityNet Aotearoa is 'an online hub of resources designed to strengthen communities'. It enables organisations to post and share resources on a variety of topics, including leadership, communication and evaluation. Materials include Diversity Toolkits, a how-to guide on communications and project management templates www.community.net.nz The New Zealand Government Web Toolkit, 'provides standards, guidance, tips and strategic advice on effectively using the online channel'. It outlines the Web Accessibility Standard www.webtoolkit.govt.nz

Organisation	Resources
<p>Health and Disability Commissioner</p> <p>The Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC) aims to 'ensure that the rights of consumers are upheld. This includes making sure complaints about health or disability services providers are taken care of fairly and efficiently'. The HDC also provides the support of free independent advocates to assist with concerns or complaints about a health or disability service.</p> <p>www.hdc.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Resources www.hdc.org.nz/about-us/disability Health and Disability Advocacy advocacy.hdc.org.nz <i>Making communication easy – Useful tips to make it easy to communicate effectively with people with impairments</i> www.hdc.org.nz/publications/other-publications-from-hdc/disability-resources/making-communication-easy---useful-tips-to-make-it-easy-to-communicate-effectively-with-people-with-impairments
<p>Human Rights Commission</p> <p>The Human Rights Commission (HRC) promotes and protects the human rights of all people in Aotearoa New Zealand.</p> <p>It provides information about discrimination and offers a free and confidential service for people with human rights enquiries or complaints of unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>www.hrc.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Your human rights and making complaints: A guide for disabled people and their families</i> www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints/what-you-can-complain-about/disability How to make a complaint www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints/how-make-complaint
<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Special education supports children and students to access the curriculum by providing extra help, adapted programmes or learning environments, and specialised equipment or materials.</p> <p>www.education.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with special education needs www.education.govt.nz/school/student-support/special-education
<p>Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs</p> <p>The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs liaises and communicates with Pasifika communities about government policies, processes and services. It aims to foster greater engagement with, and participation by, Pasifika peoples in government decision-making.</p> <p>www.mpia.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pacific Analysis Framework, with Pacific Consultation Guidelines (written 'to provide assistance to government agencies in the development of policies and programmes aimed at Pacific people') www.mpia.govt.nz/engaging-with-pacific-communities
<p>Ministry of Social Development</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) runs a range of services to support people with disabilities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Investment www.familyservices.govt.nz Community Link www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/community-link Work and Income www.workandincome.govt.nz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think Differently is a social change campaign to encourage and support a fundamental shift in attitudes and behaviour towards disabled people. It's about maximising opportunities and focusing on what people can do rather than what they can't. The campaign is led in partnership with the Office for Disability Issues. www.thinkdifferently.org.nz Think Differently produces a Social Change Toolkit with a range of useful resources, templates and tips. socialchangetoolkit.org.nz
<p>Ministry of Vulnerable Children</p> <p>This new Ministry came into existence on 1 April 2017. It brings a whole of sector child-centred approach to working with vulnerable children and young people. It establishes the new Ministry as a single point of accountability which will ensure that government agencies work together to provide coherent and complete services to these children, young people and their families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'If you are worried'</i> www.cyf.govt.nz/keeping-kids-safe/if-you-are-worried

Organisation	Resources
<p>New Zealand Police</p> <p>The Police are responsible for protecting public safety and maintaining law and order.</p> <p>www.police.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to report a crime www.police.govt.nz/contact-us/how-report-crime • 'I suspect a child is being abused. What should I do?' www.police.govt.nz/faq/i-suspect-a-child-is-being-abused-what-should-i-do
<p>Office for Disability Issues</p> <p>The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is a strategic and whole-of-government focused policy group, located within the MSD.</p> <p>It promotes and monitors the implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also works in partnership with the MSD to lead the Think Differently campaign (see the MSD resource list above).</p> <p>The ODI's website publishes helpful access guides and toolkits to inclusive practice.</p> <p>www.odi.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Zealand Disability Strategy www.odi.govt.nz/nzds • Key points on running an accessible meeting www.odi.govt.nz/resources/guides-and-toolkits/disability-perspective/resources/running-accessible-meeting.html • Effective communication with deaf people: A guide to working with New Zealand Sign Language interpreters www.odi.govt.nz/resources/guides-and-toolkits/working-with-nzsl-interpreters/index.html • The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml
<p>Office of Ethnic Communities (previously the Office of Ethnic Affairs)</p> <p>The Office of Ethnic Communities provides advice and information to support people working with ethnic communities.</p> <p>ethniccommunities.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Line (a telephone interpreting service available in 44 languages) www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/story/how-language-line-works
<p>Office of the Ombudsman</p> <p>The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent resource to help the community deal with government agencies, with a focus on fairness and impartiality. It undertakes investigations where necessary.</p> <p>www.ombudsman.parliament.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a complaint www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/make-a-complaint • Information about the Ombudsman's role under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/what-we-do/protecting-your-rights/disabilities-convention

Further resources and organisations

The table below lists further disability sector organisations and service providers and some of the resources they produce.

Organisation	Resources
<p>Altogether Autism</p> <p>Altogether Autism is a nationwide information and advisory service for people living on the autism spectrum, their families/whānau and the professionals who work with them. www.altogetherautism.org.nz</p> <p>Altogether Autism is a service funded by the Ministry of Health. It is provided in partnership by Parent to Parent (see below) and Life Unlimited (a charitable trust whose mission is ‘to enhance individual wellbeing by enabling people to live the life they choose’). lifeunlimited.net.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Altogether Autism Journal (a publication for professionals, families and people on the Autism spectrum) www.altogetherautism.org.nz/subscribe-journal Questions People Ask (answers to commonly asked questions) www.altogetherautism.org.nz/question-people-ask Resources www.altogetherautism.org.nz/information/resources
<p>Autism NZ</p> <p>Autism NZ provides support, training, advocacy, resources and information on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) to those with these conditions, their family/whānau, caregivers and professionals. www.autismnz.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About Autism www.autismnz.org.nz/about_autism Resources www.autismnz.org.nz/links
<p>Blind Foundation</p> <p>The Blind Foundation provides its members with adaptive skills, technology, resources and support with moving around (including through the use of guide dogs) and accessing information. It also provides services to the wider community, including: web accessibility consultation, accessible format production, built environment advice and awareness training. www.blindfoundation.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information for businesses www.blindfoundation.org.nz/learn/information-for-businesses Information on guide dogs – contact Blind Foundation Guide Dogs (09 269 0400)
<p>Brain Injury Association</p> <p>The Brain Injury Association provides support, education and information services throughout New Zealand to people living with brain injuries. www.brain-injury.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on brain injuries www.brain-injury.org.nz/html/brain_injury.html Brain injury resources www.brain-injury.org.nz/html/resources.html
<p>Carers New Zealand</p> <p>Carers New Zealand is the national body supporting family, whānau and aiga carers. It provides information, advice, learning and support for families with health and disability needs. www.carers.net.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources for Carers www.carers.net.nz/information
<p>CCS Disability Action</p> <p>CCS Action’s purpose is to strengthen communities and provide information, advocacy and support so people with disabilities are included in the life of their family and in their community. It also has 16 branches nationally that provide frontline support and services, create local awareness and education around disability issues. www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about mobility parking spaces across New Zealand mobilityparking.org.nz/index.php/mobility-parking-near-you Disability awareness and education www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/regions/northern-region/working-with-the-community/disability-awareness-and-education

Organisation	Resources
<p>Cerebral Palsy Society</p> <p>The Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand's purpose is to enhance the lives and wellbeing of people with cerebral palsy (CP). It provides programmes designed to enhance the independence and quality of life of people living with CP and their families, and grants to its members for this purpose.</p> <p>www.cerebralpalsy.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About Cerebral Palsy www.cerebralpalsy.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=88
<p>Complex Care Group Trust</p> <p>The Complex Care Group Trust is a support and information network run by and for carers who look after people with complex needs.</p> <p>It provides up-to-date information and support to carers to help them navigate the many challenges they face and is also responsible for communicating to Ministry of Health, funders and other providers, the needs of this group.</p> <p>www.complexcaregroup.org.nz/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of local and national services, as well as targeted information and contacts for some of the most commonly faced issues within the community. • Access to social media and shared experiences, images and videos of the families that make up the CCG network. • Information about rights and how to have a voice.
<p>eCALD</p> <p>eCALD® is a website that hosts a range of resources to support the NZ health and disability workforce to develop competencies to work and engage with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) migrants and refugees from Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African (MELAA) backgrounds.</p> <p>www.ecald.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of cross cultural resources and publications providing responsive approaches to ensure equitable, culturally appropriate, effective and safe services and engagement with CALD groups. • Other resources on the website include translated resources, migrant and refugee services and news. www.ecald.com
<p>Hearing Association</p> <p>The Hearing Association is a volunteer-based organisation that helps people with any type of hearing problem.</p> <p>Local branches offer one-to-one support for members and non-members alike, socially and in the workplace.</p> <p>www.hearing.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing information cards www.hearing.org.nz/info_cards.php
<p>Hearing Dogs</p> <p>Hearing Dogs supports and trains hearing dogs for people with hearing problems.</p> <p>www.hearingdogs.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on 'What is a hearing dog?' hearingdogs.org.nz/What-is-a-Hearing-Dog/0,2710,11032,00.html
<p>IHC New Zealand</p> <p>IHC New Zealand is a membership-based organisation that supports people with intellectual disabilities to live satisfying lives in the community. IHC provides a range of services, including advocacy and a library related to intellectual disability.</p> <p>www.ihc.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and resources on intellectual disability www.ihc.org.nz/resources
<p>iSign</p> <p>iSign is a nationwide booking organisation providing New Zealand Sign Language interpreters.</p> <p>www.isign.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on 'What is an interpreter?' www.isign.co.nz/interpreters/what-is-an-interpreter • Interpreter booking process www.isign.co.nz/services/interpreter-booking-process
<p>Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui</p> <p>Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui is a national centre of evidence-based workforce development for the mental health, addiction and disability sectors.</p> <p>www.tepou.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's get real: Disability (a workforce quality initiative created to help the disability workforce meet the needs of disabled people, whānau and communities) www.tepou.co.nz/disability-workforce/lets-get-real-disability/101

Organisation	Resources
<p>Mental Health Foundation</p> <p>The Mental Health Foundation provides a range of services and campaigns addressing all aspects of mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>It provides free information and training, and advocates for policies and services that support people with experience of mental illness and their families/whānau and friends.</p> <p>www.mentalhealth.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Awareness Week www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/16/mental-health-awareness-week • Like Minds Like Mine www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/15/like-minds-like-mine
<p>Multiple Sclerosis Society of New Zealand Inc</p> <p>The Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society of New Zealand is a non-profit organisation that provides on-going support, education and advocacy for people with MS and their support networks. It also aims to educate the general public, employers and health professionals about MS and actively funds key research into the condition.</p> <p>https://www.msnz.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on MS www.msnz.org.nz/Page.aspx?pid=276 • MS publications www.msnz.org.nz/Page.aspx?pid=329
<p>Muscular Dystrophy Association</p> <p>The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a New Zealand not-for-profit organisation which provides information and support to people affected by neuromuscular conditions. Its services include a national fieldwork service, as well as specialist information and advice.</p> <p>www.mda.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and resources on specific neuromuscular conditions www.mda.org.nz/information
<p>National Foundation for the Deaf</p> <p>The National Foundation for the Deaf works to promote the rights, interests and welfare of people with hearing loss. It offers support, prevention and advocacy programmes. The Foundation's website publishes various resources.</p> <p>www.nfd.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication tips www.nfd.org.nz/help-and-advice/your-hearing/communication-tips
<p>Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination Association</p> <p>The Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination Association (NASCA) is the national association for managers of NASC organisations. The Ministry of Health contracts these organisations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with people with disabilities to identify their strengths and support needs • tell people about available support services • determine people's eligibility for Ministry of Health-funded support services • allocate Ministry-funded support services • help people access other supports. <p>Support services are then delivered by their respective service providers.</p> <p>www.nznasca.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional contacts/locations www.nznasca.co.nz/services/younger-peoples-nasc-services
<p>New Zealand Disability Support Network</p> <p>The New Zealand Disability Support Network is a national association of disability support providers.</p> <p>www.nzdsn.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directory of member service providers www.nzdsn.org.nz/directory

Organisation	Resources
<p>New Zealand Down Syndrome Association</p> <p>The New Zealand Down Syndrome Association promotes the participation of people with Down syndrome in their community. It provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information, support, education and advocacy services for the Down syndrome community • support for parents and families/whānau • information resources and a quarterly journal • support for regional groups so that they can offer support and services to the Down syndrome community in their area through family events, social groups, guest speakers, individual support and advocacy. <p>www.nzdsa.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on Down Syndrome www.nzdsa.org.nz/whatis.htm
<p>NZ Federation of Disability Information Centres</p> <p>The Federation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides generic, impartial and accurate disability information through 23 community-based hubs across NZ. • employs Information Consultants (20% with lived experience of disability) to assist people to navigate the disability support services sector. • has expertise in community engagement and facilitating responsiveness in communities. • is a respectful ally of disabled people, working together to ensure that New Zealand is a fully inclusive and accessible society where everyone has a good life. <p>www.nzfdic.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 Member Centres throughout New Zealand. • Locate a centre close to you www.nzfdic.org.nz/centres • National free phone 0800 693 342
<p>Le Va</p> <p>Le Va is the national hub for Pasifika mental health and addiction workforce development and coordination for the disability support services sector.</p> <p>www.leva.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organisational Guidelines for Disability Support Services: Working with Pasifika People with Disabilities and their Families</i> www.leva.co.nz/library/leva/organisational-guidelines-for-disability-support-services-working-with-pasifika-people-with-disabilities-and-their-families
<p>Parent to Parent</p> <p>Parent to Parent supports parents of children with a disability, health impairment or health issue by connecting them with trained volunteer support parents who have a child or family member in a similar situation. It also provides training programmes for families and siblings.</p> <p>www.parent2parent.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent to Parent Magazine www.parent2parent.org.nz/parent-parent-magazine • Parent to Parent Library www.parent2parent.org.nz/library/nationallibrary
<p>Vaka Tautua</p> <p>Vaka Tautua is a charitable organisation that aims to help improve the health and wellbeing of Pasifika people in New Zealand. It provides community support for older people, people with a disability and those needing support for mental health.</p> <p>www.vakatautua.co.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and publications www.vakatautua.co.nz/#!/resources/ckoy
<p>Rescare NZ</p> <p>Rescare NZ is an umbrella organisation for support groups and individuals who support people with an intellectual disability.</p> <p>www.rescarenz.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RescareNZ publications and resources www.rescarenz.org.nz/publications.html
<p>Sign Language Interpreters Association of New Zealand</p> <p>Sign Language Interpreters Association of New Zealand is a national professional association of sign language interpreters.</p> <p>www.slianz.org.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIANZ Member Directory (includes qualifications and areas of specialty) www.slianz.org.nz/directory/member-directory

Organisation**Weka**

Weka is a website providing information on a range of disabilities, resources, support and services.

www.weka.net.nz

Resources

- Regional information centres
www.weka.net.nz/information-centres
 - General information sheets on a range of disabilities
www.weka.net.nz/Information-by-Category/fact-sheet-test
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Endnotes

- ^a Office for Disability Issues. 2016. *New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026*. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development November 2016.
- ^b The full text of the UN Convention can be found at www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml (accessed 16 November 2015).
- ^c Oliver M. 1990. *The Politics of Disablement*. MacMillan.
- ^d Ministry of Health. 2012. *Whāia Te Ao Mārama: The Maori Disability Action Plan for Disability Support Services 2012 to 2017*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- ^e Available on Kāpō Māori Aotearoa (Ngāti Kāpō)'s website: www.kapomaori.com/resources/index.htm (accessed 17 November 2015).
- ^f Ministry of Health. 2010. *Faiva Ora: Pasifika Disability Action Plan*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- ^g Le Va. 2014. *Organisational Guidelines for Disability Support Services: Working with Pasifika People with Disabilities and their Families*. Auckland: Le Va.
- ^h Ministry of Health. 2012. *Refugee Health Care: A Handbook for Health Professionals*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- ⁱ See www.building.govt.nz/international-symbol#aid6 (accessed 14 December 2015)
- ^j See www.webtoolkit.govt.nz (accessed 18 November 2015).
- ^k See www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20 (accessed 18 November 2015).
- ^l Communication Matters. 2015. Having a conversation with someone who uses AAC. URL: www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/having-conversation (accessed 21 November 2015).
- ^m Communication Matters. 2015. Having a conversation with someone who uses AAC. URL: www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/having-conversation (accessed 21 November 2015).
- ⁿ Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, p 2.
- ^o Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, p 2.
- ^p Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, pp 14–15.
- ^q Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, pp 12, 14.
- ^r Ministries of Health and Education. 2008. *New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline*. Wellington: Ministries of Health and Education, p 96.
- ^s Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, p 5.
- ^t Communication Matters. 2015. Having a conversation with someone who uses AAC. URL: www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/having-conversation (accessed 21 November 2015).
- ^u Ministries of Health and Education. 2008. *New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline*. Wellington: Ministries of Health and Education, p 99.
- ^v Ministries of Health and Education. 2008. *New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline*. Wellington: Ministries of Health and Education, pp 111–112.
- ^w Ministry of Health. 2014. *Working with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A guideline for Ministry of Health needs assessment and service coordination organisations*. Wellington: Ministry of Health, p 15.

- ^x Human Rights Commission. 2012. *Political Participation for Everyone: Disabled People's Rights and the Political Process*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission, p 4.
- ^y Human Rights Commission. 2012. *Political Participation for Everyone: Disabled People's Rights and the Political Process*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission, p 6.
- ^z Human Rights Commission. 2012. *Better Information for Everybody: Disabled People's Rights in the Information Age*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission, p 6.
- ^{aa} See www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=223 (accessed 18 November 2015).
- ^{bb} Preamble (o).