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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Summary—Health of Disabled People 2023

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Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland

TN: There are two logos at the top of the page. On the top is: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government. Below that is: Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health.

Summary—Health of Disabled People Strategy 2023

Purpose

The Provisional Health of Disabled People Strategy sets the direction and long-term priorities to move towards achieving equity in disabled people’s health and wellbeing outcomes over the next 10 years.

The Strategy was published in a provisional form on 12 July 2023. This is to allow for further targeted engagement with the disability community and further shaping of priority areas. Strategy development was led by Manatū Hauora (Ministry of Health).

Vision

Our vision is to achieve pae ora (healthy futures) for all disabled people and their whānau (families) in Aotearoa New Zealand. This means disabled people and their whānau are supported to maintain their health and wellbeing by an equitable and fully accessible health system that considers all factors influencing health and wellbeing.

Achieving our vision of pae ora (healthy futures) means that disabled people and their whānau have voice, choice and autonomy in their health care. Specifically:

- experiences and voices of disabled people and their whānau are heard, respected, and validated by health professionals and decision makers.
- disabled people have autonomy and agency over their health, wellbeing, and care.
- the health system is easy to access and navigate.
- the health system works with other government agencies to address all elements of disabled people's health and wellbeing needs.
- the health workforce is representative, culturally safe and supported to provide rights-based care for disabled people.
- disabled people see themselves represented in health system data, research and evaluation.

Background

There are over one million disabled people in Aotearoa New Zealand. We know disabled people experience poorer health and wellbeing, including both physical and mental health outcomes, compared with non-disabled people.

Some disabled groups, particularly tāngata whaikaha Māori, as well as Pacific disabled peoples, people with

intellectual disabilities and people from rainbow communities, are consistently under-served and experience greater health inequities.

The Strategy guides the health entities (organisations) responsible for improving health and wellbeing outcomes for disabled people and their whānau. The Strategy is underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi | the Treaty of Waitangi and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and builds on other work, such as the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026.

What people told us

The Provisional Health of Disabled People Strategy was developed after engaging with disabled people and their whānau, assessing people's health outcomes and health sector performance and considering population health trends.

Disabled people, their whānau and communities told us they want.

- to be heard and in control of their own health
- a health system that is more responsive to the needs and aspirations of tāngata whaikaha Māori and their whānau
- better access to supportive, community-based primary and preventative health care
- access to wider services and supports to address broader drivers of poor health and wellbeing

- a health workforce equipped to meet disabled people's health and wellbeing needs
- more disabled people employed in the health workforce
- better visibility through improved health data.

Priority areas

As a result of analysing disabled people's feedback, five priority areas have been identified where change is needed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for disabled people and their whānau.

Priority 1: Enable disabled people and their whānau to make their own choices within a person and whānau-centred health system.

Disabled people and their whānau will be recognised as experts in their own lives. Disabled people, including disabled children, and their whānau will be confident that their agency, autonomy, rights, will and preferences will be respected by the health system. The health system will enable disabled people, whānau, carers and supporters to exercise supported decision-making where appropriate.

Accessible health information will be provided and communicated clearly and appropriately throughout the entire health system. Health entities (organisations) will regularly and meaningfully engage with disabled people and their whānau across the country, including in rural

areas, to ensure disabled people and their whānau can influence health system decision-making.

The health system will prioritise prevention approaches and public health promotion throughout disabled people's lives, including early diagnosis and intervention.

Priority 2: Ensure the health system is designed by and accessible for disabled people and their whānau and provides models of care that suit their needs.

Health organisations will partner with disabled people and their whānau to design, deliver and monitor fully accessible, high-quality, flexible and community-based primary and preventative health care services. This includes high-quality sexual and reproductive health care services, and physically accessible buildings and equipment.

Health organisations will support disabled people, their whānau, iwi, hapū, communities, Māori organisations and disability organisations to deliver services in locations and settings that are accessible to disabled people and their whānau, including in local communities.

The health system will recognise the value of kaupapa Māori services and mātauranga Māori, including rongoā Māori, in meeting the health needs of tāngata whaikaha Māori, and will also ensure that tāngata whaikaha Māori can access mainstream services that are culturally safe.

Care pathways will be clear and easy to navigate by disabled people and their whānau, including during key transition periods such as from paediatric health services to adult health services.

Priority 3: Ensure the health system is part of a coherent cross-government system that addresses broader drivers of poor health and wellbeing.

The health system will recognise that disabled people have different experiences and health needs based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality, geographic location and other aspects of their identities.

The health system will work closely with other government agencies to help disabled people and their whānau access the supports they need for their broader wellbeing. This includes housing and education supports, so that disabled people and their whānau do not have to repeat their stories multiple times.

Priority 4: Build health workforce capacity and capability to meet the needs of disabled people and their whānau.

More disabled people, including tāngata whaikaha Māori, will be employed at every level of the health system, including in senior leadership roles. The health workforce will be a safe, rewarding and empowering environment to work in.

The health workforce will be a culturally safe environment for all disabled staff and patients, including tāngata whaikaha Māori, Pacific disabled peoples, disabled people from rainbow communities and disabled people from ethnic communities.

The health workforce will also better understand and apply Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Enabling Good Lives principles and will better understand disability rights and needs.

Priority 5: Increase the visibility of disabled people in health data, research and evidence as part of an active learning system.

There will be meaningful and up to date health data and research for disabled people and their whānau, including tāngata whaikaha Māori.

Disabled people and their whānau will have authority over how their data is used within the health system and how health services are designed. The health system will support research driven by disabled people, particularly tāngata whaikaha Māori, that evaluates their health and wellbeing needs and aspirations.

Health organisations will report back to disabled people and their whānau regularly on how their insights are being used to create change.

The full version of the strategy can be found here:
(www.health.govt.nz/publication/provisional-health-disabled-people-strategy)

**End of Summary—Health of Disabled People Strategy
2023**