

Disability Directorate e-newsletter

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From Adri Isbister Deputy Director-General Disability



Kia ora all

I've been reflecting on how much we've engaged with the disability community lately. COVID presented a challenge and the Ministry have risen to this in every way possible. I'm proud of how the team responded, and I thank you all for your honest feedback on how we have done.

We have now collated the feedback from lessons learned from the first outbreak of COVID and the report will soon be available on our website.

I want to acknowledge Life Unlimited who have written a book called *Life in a pandemic*. The book captures a snapshot of Level 4 lockdown for people living with a disability and/or autism and their family/whanau. It shows the resilience, strength and love of all those involved. Some people bonded, some were lonely and bored, some turned to technology while others found solace in their culture and ancestral lands. You will find this book at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djrxCbLLf0o>

After the first lockdown my grandson James had to have a trip to hospital and on the way home to Hawkes Bay they popped into the Ministry to say hello. Ashley kindly agreed to pose for a photo and took the time to engage with James.



Adri, James and Ashley

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← We are now in an environment where we have business as usual along with the additional actions required to support the COVID response. We are back in recruitment mode to continue to set up the Directorate as designed late last year. This programme was paused through Christmas and then along came COVID. You may notice some new people on board and we're pleased to be able to be in a place where we can share the load.

I want to finish by saying how grateful I am to our wonderful disability sector: the people, families/ whānau, providers and other agencies who all leaned in and pulled together during these uncertain times. COVID is not over yet. It's up to us as individuals to continue to be vigilant on personal hygiene and physical distancing to keep the virus in check. It is up to us to ensure we protect those of our community that need support in doing so.

Keep reading everyone. There's lots of interesting information in this newsletter particularly regarding the operations team and what their responsibilities are. Definitely Google what Martin competes in!

A shout out to Marese McGee, thank you for your years of service. And a big congratulations to Warren Herring who has taken up the reins as CEO of Community Living.

Those of us in Wellington may wish to attend Wellington On a Plate. Laura Ferguson Trust is hosting an event – the epitome of disabled people leading a good life and being part of the community. See more below.

Stay well everyone.

Enabling Good Lives

Christchurch

Hannah Perry, Enabling Good Lives Christchurch

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Bula vinaka, Greetings!

The connector/kaitūhono role is essential to the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) approach; assisting disabled people and whānau to have more choice and control over the lives they live and supports they receive. The kaitūhono is an ally, who builds a trusting relationship with a disabled person and their whānau, assists people to be aspirational about what the future might hold, and works to make connections enabling plans to turn into action. The way we work embodies the principles of EGL in word as well as action.

The kaitūhono role requires

- a high degree of interpersonal skill
- vast community connections
- the ability to develop relationships with a diverse group of people
- diplomacy
- and above all, an infectious optimism and an unwavering belief that all people are worthy of, and able to achieve, a good life; a life surrounded by others who choose to be there because they love them and value what they have to offer.





In these early conversations the team noticed two distinct responses. Firstly, those who basically said: 'Here we go again, we'll go back to what we did before and will be OK'. Secondly, those who felt stressed and anxious about coping with another period of uncertainty and possible shutdown, with a small number highly concerned about getting through Level 2. We remain in regular contact with these people.

As occurred in March our supply chain with the Waikato District Health Board for PPE remains strong and we accessed and distributed 2,000 masks to EGL participants and whānau by Friday 14 August. Most supplies were delivered door to door, with some posted to rural areas. Tokoroa and South Waikato became a priority for PPE when cases emerged there. We continue to make regular drops to people's homes as new supply arrives, contracting a driver from our networks to do the deliveries.

The following example illustrates how families do things that make sense for them when given full authority over their disability support budget. Previously this family had accessed carer support, but when they joined EGL they chose to move away from respite and purchase items that assisted their child's play and development. This proved to be a real asset during lockdown and the changing months since.

The family live in a small rural town and spent their entire small first year's budget on an outside wooden playground to assist their young son to have fun, grow his confidence and develop motor skills. This was fantastic for the family. They then moved to a new home where their son couldn't use the playground without an adult present, as the outside area is exposed to the road, a creek, gully and bush. The connector assisted Mum to apply to local community funders for fencing, with no success. The family chose to use their entire year two budget on fencing, as this eliminated their biggest stress and created a safe space for their son to play and experience life.

Updates from Disability Directorate

Transition from Funded Family Care

Christy Richards, Project Lead, Ministry of Health

The Disability Directorate has changed how family carers are paid in direct response to feedback from family carers and disabled people. We were delayed for a short while due to COVID-19 but got back on track to implement the following changes:

- Giving disabled people who want a family member to provide their support a choice of employment arrangements
- Making pay rates for family carers consistent with rates for other care and support workers
- Allowing partners and spouses to provide paid care to their disabled family member
- Allowing eligible people under 18 years of age to receive paid family care
- Repealing Part 4A of the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and revocation of the relevant Section 88 notice
- Lowering the minimum age of family carers from 18 to 16 years.





Payment for family carers continue for people that have high or very high support needs (as assessed by a NASC). Family members can be employed through a Home and Community Support Service provider or through an Individualised Funding arrangement.

The Ministry wants to express its thanks to the NASCs who have worked so hard to get everyone transferred in time on top of additional pressures, and to providers for introducing almost 500 people to their services.

Child Development Services

Martin Anderson, Manager, Operational Performance

Budget 2019 delivered \$35m over four years for improvements in Child Development Services. These services are largely offered through District Health Boards, with non-government organisations also involved in some parts of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The main aim from this initiative is to improve access to Child Development Services through increasing the capacity within services to accept referrals and see more children. This will reduce wait times and provide earlier intervention. The funding is expected to result in 1,150 more children being seen every year.

Year one of the programme ended on 30 June 2020 and was focused on increasing staff numbers working within Child Development Services. COVID-19 impacted on recruitment efforts but despite this there has been a significant increase in the number of professionals working in the services. This has resulted in more than 600 additional children being seen in 2019/20 than the previous year.

Year two of the programme is focused on developing an agreed nationwide operating model. We plan to cast a wide net to obtain input into the design of the operating model. This will include professionals working in the sector, family/whānau of children and previous users of services.

Several projects have been initiated, supported with targeted innovation funding. Professionals are meeting monthly to share the learning from these projects with the aim that projects that are shown to be successful being implemented more widely.

Funding has been made available for professionals to attend Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) training. This will support the knowledge base of professionals in the diagnosis of autism, improving access to early intervention.

Finally, in year two an overall governance structure that links the Child Development Services improvement programme is being incorporated. This will ensure there is good connection and alignment with other cross-Government initiatives.

Years three and four of the programme will focus on building on the learning from years one and two and embedding nationally consistent approaches including use of agreed definitions and coding. This will enable better comparative analysis that will help to identify where there might be service gaps.

Noreen McMahon led the programme and since her departure Martin Anderson has been leading the work. We acknowledge the invaluable support of Phoenix Productions in keeping the programme on track.

From our providers

Retirement of Marese McGee, Community Living

Marese McGee joined Waikato Community Living Trust, as it was known then, in 2002 as the new CE. One of her strong points throughout her time at Community Living and in the sector has been her ability to develop and maintain strong relationships. This is evident in the significant turn-out we had at a series of farewells. People who attended have spoken of Marese's ability to 'tell it like it is' while showing her passion for the rights of disabled people and their family/whanau, and how she always starts with 'what does the person want and need'. In 2019 Community Living was able to achieve a long-term dream Marese had and was successful in achieving CQL Accreditation, the first organisation to do so in New Zealand.



Wellington On a Plate (WOAP)

We are very excited to announce that Laura Fergusson Trust will be taking part in this year's WOAP: Visa Wellington On a Plate. Now in its 12th year, Visa Wellington On a Plate is New Zealand's biggest annual culinary festival, attracting more than 20,000 festival event goers in 2019, and dishing up hundreds of thousands of culinary moments for visitors from across the country. The residents of the Laura Fergusson Trust are excited to be hosting a very special evening, to celebrate the abilities and willingness of disabled people as normal community participants. Three talented head chefs have kindly volunteered to create a memorable dinner: Laurent Loudeac (Duke of Wellington), – Vaibhav Vishen (DoubleTree by Hilton Wellington), and – Rupert Palaroan (Master Kong).



The event will be hosted at our Naenae home on Saturday, 10 October, with welcome drinks, and a three-course meal matched with wine from Matahiwi Estate. The chefs will each prepare a





course, and will work with a group of Laura Fergusson residents in the Trust's kitchen to create a truly memorable experience. This event is about people coming together to share their backgrounds and experiences, celebrating cultures, cuisines and tastes, enabling unique expressions and stories to be shared. The residents will welcome guests and also share some of their own stories and experiences during the evening. The event will be themed by the residents to showcase their abilities.

The Laura Fergusson Trust is an independent charity providing residential, rehabilitation, respite and recreational services for adults with physical or neurological impairments. The organisation has been proudly serving the Wellington disability community for over 40 years. The Trust's mission is to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to pursue a supported and independent lifestyle. Our focus is on what clients can do, not what they can't do and this is achieved in a functional manner through engagement in real life activities.

For more information, and to find out about purchasing tickets, please visit:

www.visawoap.com/festival

Initial Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission

Have your say on what wellbeing means to you and your whānau

The Initial Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission wants your feedback on a draft outcomes framework, which sets out what wellbeing looks like for Māori as tangata whenua and everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand.

How can you have your say?

To give the Initial Commission feedback you can:

- Take an online survey – www.mhwc.govt.nz/our-work/outcomes-framework/have-your-say/#take-the-survey
- Fill out a submission form – www.mhwc.govt.nz/our-work/outcomes-framework/have-your-say/#submission-form
- Meet with the Initial Commission over Zoom or phone – www.mhwc.govt.nz/our-work/outcomes-framework/have-your-say/#meet-us

If there is another way that you want to give feedback, please email kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz

What is an outcomes framework?

The outcomes framework will provide a structure for measuring performance across the whole mental health and wellbeing system. A successful outcomes framework will determine if we are making a real difference to improve our mental health and wellbeing – if we are achieving the outcomes and equity of outcomes, set out in *He Ara Oranga, the inquiry into mental health and addiction*.

If you want to learn more about the outcomes framework, visit the Initial Commission's website www.mhwc.govt.nz/our-work/outcomes-framework/

What is the Initial Commission?

The Initial Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission was set up to maintain the momentum of He Ara Oranga, the inquiry into mental health and addictions, and the work to transform Aotearoa New Zealand's mental health and wellbeing system while a permanent Commission is established.

To learn more about the Initial Commission, visit their website – www.mhwc.govt.nz/ or email kiaora@mhwc.govt.nz to arrange a meeting.

From our community

Tātau Tātau Enabling Good Lives

If you wanted a glimpse of what a 'non disabling society' could look like, then this was it. Talented artists exhibiting well designed and executed art works in an esteemed place and with esteemed guests. It wasn't an exhibition or a show for 'people with disabilities', rather it showcased the talent and creativity of St Chads artists, just as it would for any other artists – it was the art, not the artists, on display.

Tātau Tātau Enabling Good Lives was the theme. Tātau Tātau can be loosely translated as 'we together' and is somewhat of a 'creed' for Rotorua as it is for St Chads. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to support persons with disabilities to live good lives.

Partnership with individuals, whanau, organisations, businesses and Council are vital to open the doors to the good things of life often found in relationships and 'who you know' not 'what you know'. Enabling Good Lives is the vision and principles the disability sector has taken as its foundation. One principle 'ordinary life outcomes' was keenly reflected in this exhibition – artists being recognised and honoured for their talent. Tātau Tātau Enabling Good Lives was open to the public in the Bowen House Exhibition Space, Wellington.



Pictured top: Artists John Harvey and Felicity Anderson (with Adri)
Pictured bottom: Nicky Mayne and NZ First MP Fletcher Tabuteau who hosted the Exhibition (with Adri)



Operational Performance

Amanda Bleckmann, Group Manager Operational Performance

Kia ora koutou

A very warm welcome to the Operational Performance team.

The COVID-19 response is a great example of how we can rise to a challenge and work together to find solutions to problems. Every single one of you has played a role in helping us respond to COVID-19, thank you again for your tremendous efforts. We thank you for the emails, texts and calls offering support and assistance in what has been a challenging time for us all as New Zealanders.



It is a privilege to introduce you to the members of the Operational Performance team. They are the people that will guide the commissioning of disability support services to better support disabled people and their families.

For those of you who don't know me, I've held a number of roles within disability support services since 2004. I've been in my current role as Group Manager, for ten months. It is my job to lead the Operational Performance team. Our team provides leadership and direction over the commissioning of disability supports and services to deliver an equitable, fair and consistent disability system, where everyone gets the supports and services they need, no matter who they are or where they live in New Zealand, and contributes to achieving the Directorate and Ministry goals.

Our team is a busy team – we have almost 1,000 providers and 1,400 contracts, providing support to almost 40,000 people. In the last six years, the percentage of new people accessing disability supports has been higher than the general population growth. The demand for disability services is therefore high.

There are challenges ahead. These are not just Ministry challenges, they're collectively ours. Now, more than ever, we need to work together to build a sustainable system and ensure disabled people and their whānau continue to receive the support they need to lead their best life.

The team manager introductions are below. Thank you for your patience as we have established our team. In our next newsletter we will provide bios on each of the portfolio managers. We look forward to seeing you in the regions.

Rob Gill, Manager North

rob.gill@health.govt.nz

I was born in Barbados and migrated to New Zealand in middle childhood. My interests involve outdoor pursuits, surfing, gardening and travel. I've lived with my wife Julie in Murrays Bay for the past nineteen years. I am the father to five adult children and adore my grandchildren.



I have twenty-five years of relevant leadership experience gained in non-government organisations, the Ministry of Health and in private practice as a management consultant. I have qualifications in physical education and health service management and governance experience in health and social services as well as education.

My disability career began in 1996 in vocational and supported employment services. From 2003, I spent close to seven years as a development manager in the Ministry of Health, responsible for intellectual disability and disability workforce development programmes. Before returning to the Ministry in late March 2020, I managed national business operations for Te Pou after a role as CE at Manawanui, New Zealand's largest provider of individualised funding.

I have a track record of supporting health and disability services to pursue and embed innovation. My proudest career achievements include the closing of Kimberley Centre in Levin in 2006 and confirming individualised funding as one means of enabling choice and control for disabled people and their families.

I look forward to supporting the Northern Operational Performance team to partner with disabled people, their families and the region's service providers to further improve outcomes for people. I will know I have succeeded when people receive timely, relevant, high quality support from capable providers who prioritise well-being and quality of life outcomes – especially for mana whenua.

I look forward to meeting you over the coming months.

North Portfolio Managers

(please note coverage may change in coming months)

Jude Woolston – Auckland

jude.woolston@health.govt.nz

Steph Slack – Auckland and Individualised Funding

steph.slack@health.govt.nz

Madeleine Sands – Auckland and Equipment Modifications Services

madeleine.sands@health.govt.nz

Katie Daniel – Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Lakes DHB

katie.daniel@health.govt.nz

Kimberley Sanerivi – Northland and DIAS

kimberley.sanerivi@health.govt.nz

Martin Anderson, Manager Central

martin.anderson@health.govt.nz

I joined the Disability Operational Performance group as Manager of the Central Operations team on 30 March 2020 and then, like many New Zealand workers, spent the next nine weeks working from home.

I have previously worked at the Ministry of Health as a Project Manager in 1999–2001 and again as a Project Manager/Group Manager in 2009–2010. On my third tour of duty!



I've worked most of my career in the disability and mental health sectors. While I have a nursing background most of my roles since the late 1980s have been in management. My career highlights include involvement in the deinstitutionalisation movement, with roles of various significance in the move of people from Cherry Farm, Wakari, Ngawhatu, Braemar and Kimberley hospitals to the community.

I'm originally from Otago, raised in a small fishing village called Karitane. A fair chunk of my life was spent living in Nelson where my wife Julie and I raised 2 daughters, Rosie and Georgia. They are now adults and Julie and I made a deliberate decision to explore other opportunities, moving to Wellington in mid-2018.

Outside of work I enjoy listening to music, mountain biking, football and competing in rogaines (Google it!). I'm an advocate for doing what I can to minimise my personal footprint on the world – cycling to work, driving a hybrid car, reusing or repurposing items, growing vegetables and composting.

Central Portfolio Managers

Bella Bartley – Tairāwhiti, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa and Hutt Valley DHB areas
Bella.bartley@health.govt.nz

Mark Thorburn – National high and complex needs contracts and services
Mark.thorburn@health.govt.nz

Ondine Claridge – Capital and Coast DHB area
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Prema Mani – Taranaki, Whāngānui and Midcentral DHB areas
Prema.mani@health.govt.nz

Sarah Hamlin – National environmental support services contracts and services.
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Terry Hibbert, South

terry.hibbert@health.govt.nz

I joined the Operational Performance Team in late 2019 and I am based in the Ministry of Health's Dunedin office. I bring significant Ministry experience to the role, and most recently was working in the Ministry's Contract and Information Support Team.



Some of you will know me from my background in project and development work over 17 years at the Ministry. I take pride in always demonstrating a collaborative and engaging approach. While working at the Ministry I have been involved in several key projects including the New Model for Supporting Disabled People demonstration, the Enabling Good Lives approach demonstration in Christchurch, the National NASC Information System: Socrates design, development and implementation, and Inter-sectoral Needs Assessment and Service Coordination Trials.

South Portfolio Managers

Doug Funnell – Otago and Southland
Doug.funnell@health.govt.nz

Nohopuku Williams – Waikato and Ngati Pukenga, Canterbury
Nohopuku.Williams@health.govt.nz

Viv Ruth – Canterbury and Nelson/Marlborough
Viv.ruth@health.govt.nz

I'm also really pleased to let you know **Trish Davis** (Ngāti Maniapoto) has agreed to join the Ministry and will be part of the Operational Performance team for 6 months on a secondment from CCDHB. Trish is passionate about working in positions that make a positive difference in peoples' lives. She will be leading some key areas of work and we will provide an update on this in the next newsletter.

Trish has held a number of senior roles in the health and disability sector, and has a strong background in operational management, workforce development, funding and planning in the mental health & addiction and disability areas.

Trish is currently the Senior System Development Leader within Mental Health and Addictions Commissioning with a focus on Māori and Pacific services and suicide prevention and postvention. Prior to this she was the national operations manager, intellectual disability forensic services at CCDHB. Trish was the Chief Executive at Te Rau Matatini (now Te Rau Ora) between 2011 and 2014. In 2014 Trish worked at Te Roopu Taurima as a Ministry appointed change manager, and some of you will remember her from her time in the Disability Directorate from 2002 until 2011. Trish has also been a member of Te Ao Mārama.

And lastly, I will take this opportunity to share with you, words from Dr Ashley Bloomfield's recent weekly update.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi – My strength is not the strength of one

Engari, he toa takitini – It is the strength of many

Contact Disability Services

Email: disability@health.govt.nz

Phone: 0800 DSD MOH (0800 373 664)

Web: health.govt.nz/disability

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please email disability@health.govt.nz