

Disability Support Services e-newsletter

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From Mathew Parr Acting Deputy Director-General, Disability

Kia ora

I have been acting in Toni's role for a couple of months now, and in this short time I continue to be blown away by the amazing work done on a daily basis to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals and families across the disability sector.



Here at the Ministry we have been implementing the new structure, which includes raising the profile of disability to the Ministry of Health Executive Team. The new Disability Directorate provides an exciting opportunity to make a greater difference for disabled people across our Health and Disability System. The new Directorate comprises all disability-related services, including Disability Support Services, System Transformation, Disability Policy, contracting and procurement support.

We've been celebrating the success of the new system launched on 1 October in MidCentral District Health Board, with excellent uptake in people accessing connectors. We're also looking forward to implementing **I Choose**, the replacement for the Carer Support Subsidy in the new year.

On 27 September, the Government announced its intention to make changes to the Funded Family Care (FFC) policy and legislation, which has been in place since 2013, and is considering options and timing for these changes. The Disability policy team will be coordinating the development of these options and advice for the Government, including targeted stakeholder engagement. Issues being considered include eligibility, pay rates for carers, the employment relationship, and the type of care covered.

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Ministry of Health new structure

On 1 October 2018 Director-General of Health, Dr Ashley Bloomfield, outlined his changes to the Ministry's second-tier structure. This followed a three-week consultation period with Ministry staff.

The Ministry needs to deliver on its core functions, its sector leadership and stewardship roles, and on the Government's priorities for health care, disability support, health improvement and equity.

The new structure, along with the changes to the way the Ministry works, will provide a clearer focus on the key areas that require Ministry leadership and improve the oversight and leadership of Ministry corporate functions.

Both the structure and the operating model will ensure that the Ministry's work programme is well led and governed.

The new structure came into effect from 15 October 2018. For more details and a copy of the organisation chart please see: health.govt.nz/about-ministry/leadership-ministry/executive-leadership-team/changes-ministryst-second-tier-structure

Enabling Good Lives

Christchurch

Hannah Perry, Enabling Good Lives Lead, Ministry of Health

Kia ora koutou

It is already Term Four and students in Christchurch are preparing to leave school with plans in place to study, travel, work, move out of home, gain skills, maintain social lives, get fit and have fun!

Some of the key messages we hear about young people developing and living their good life have been around thinking differently about how they do things, how funding is used and how support is considered. Being creative about respite is one example of how the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) approach can result in person centred supports and better lives.

Young people and their families often don't use the word respite but they do talk about the importance of having a break from each other. For some families this means having someone to hang out at home with the young person while family members go away for the weekend, or perhaps the young person going on a camping trip with their mates and some supporters. A number of different providers have started to offer fun, youth-led, creative opportunities for young people, which means that families don't have to do all of the organising and coordinating for the young person to have a weekend (or a week!) away.





People continue to enjoy the flexibility of their EGL personal budgets, and purchasing technology has made it much easier for young people to live the lives they wish to. For some people, having access to the right device and equipment has reduced their need for a paid support worker; one young person is catching the bus by themselves (with the support of the bus driver and a GPS enabled phone), another school leaver is learning to go to the local gym alone, assisted by some sessions with a personal trainer, as well as photographs of themselves using the exercise equipment safely.

Being able to choose who supports the young person, and what they do together can mean a better life for the whole family. For example, having a swimming buddy, a fellow muso, sports fan, job coach or a mentor who is the same age and gender as the young person can be mana enhancing for all involved and helps the young person to build relationships with the wider community. One young person is working at the local early childhood centre that she attended as a child! She currently has a support worker to assist her, but their aim is to do themselves out of a job, to intentionally connect the young woman with her colleagues, and for her to develop the skills she needs to work with the children and the staff each day.

Two of our EGL independent facilitator contractors have secured full-time employment. While we are sorry to farewell them from our team, we are thrilled that they will take the EGL approach to supporting disabled persons to live great lives, into their new workplaces. Over the next few months we will be advertising for more EGL independent facilitator contractors, and look forward to starting 2019 with a full team that reflects the diversity of the young people and families that we are working with.

Ka kite anō.



Using his EGL personal budget to buy a tandem bike, means that Sam and his family can enjoy each other's company while doing something they all enjoy.

Waikato

Kate Cosgriff, Director, Enabling Good Lives Waikato

There are currently 393 disabled people, families and whānau participating in Enabling Good Lives (EGL) Waikato, 32 percent of whom are Māori and 35 percent aged under 15 years.

We continue to see people achieving great outcomes. Now in our third year, the work has become more in-depth with some participants, and the team are also enjoying getting to know the 70 disabled people and families who have recently joined.

Many families and young disabled people are choosing to employ mentors, rather than support workers, as part of their plan. In the current system this is rarely an option. By recruiting mentors there is a totally different focus to the relationship and the purpose of the time together. A critical feature is the match between the child or young person and their mentor. Over time, EGL is seeing remarkable outcomes from this small regular investment in mentoring.





The decision to close the Waikato waiting list has been difficult for some of the local community, especially those who continue to seek our assistance. The team is doing their best to manage this and, over the next 18 months, hope to engage with many of the 120 disabled people, families and whānau who have been waiting for 6–12 months.

The Māori Tūhono had several hui with Louise Were, who helped them describe their approach to working with whānau. The report, *Exploring the practice and support of Tūhono Māori*, covers tikanga or principles of practice as Tūhono Māori, outlines what things support success and describes some of the challenges that impact the success of Tūhono Māori.

EGL Waikato continues to contribute to system transformation work by sharing information, resources and experiences. It was good to recently spend a day with the new teams in Palmerston North, sharing experiences and learnings. It will be exciting to watch the development of the prototype in action.

Mana Whaikaha

Sacha O'Dea, Programme Lead, Ministry of Health

After 18 months of hard work by many people, the prototype of the new disability support system, Mana Whaikaha, is now underway in MidCentral.

It was launched on 1 October, with close to 200 disabled people, whānau, providers, officials and Mana Whaikaha staff marking its opening. It was humbling to be at the launch with so many people determined to make a difference. The director of the Kaitūhono/Connector team, Lorna Sullivan, says there was a ‘deep sense of investment and ownership by disabled people and whānau in the new system and this must be honoured in all aspects of our work’.

By the end of the first week, there were 175 disabled people and whānau who were wanting to work with connectors. Connectors will walk alongside disabled people and whānau to help them identify what they want in their lives, and the range of supports available to live that life.

One of the first people Mana Whaikaha had the opportunity of working with has, with the assistance of her connector, made big changes and moved out of a rest home into her own unit with the supports she needs. To successfully achieve a move of this type in such a short time tested the way the system would work. All those involved, such as the service provider, the government agencies and the wider community, came together to make this move happen. The rest home provided encouragement and support for the move, while individual staff gifted household items to ensure the house was homely and welcoming. A member of the Lions Club used his business to shift the furniture at no cost, while officials worked together with the Ministry of Social Development, enabling Mana Whaikaha to work flexibly to set up everything in a short time.

Lorna says, ‘when members of the community so generously step up to support in this way, we can be confident that good lives for people will be achieved. This is such a wonderful demonstration that a good life is not just about services but about belonging and being accepted by people in the community’.

Even small changes can make a real difference in people’s lives. For example, one family that has struggled to have a break for some time, has caring, extended family members who are happy to





help out but who need to cover their travel costs. They now have petrol vouchers to recompense those costs and can provide that break. Another man wants to join his local petanque club, which will cost \$6 a week, and for that he will have membership, exercise, companionship, and friendship with others of like interest, a socially-valued role in his community, and be able to pursue his interest.

In the first month of the teams' work, the focus has been on enabling disabled people and whānau to access the system and to begin supporting people to 'imagine better' for their lives, but we are also focused on system transformation. This means changing the way systems and services work cooperatively to advance the wellbeing of disabled people.

A relationship is being built with the local hospital's 'Star' ward, so that people who have strokes can begin to engage with a connector very early in their recovery period. This means the services and supports they need will be in place so they can regain their independence as quickly as possible. Work has also begun on building a provider alliance to ensure people will have a choice of provider, but also to have providers working cooperatively to address gaps in services for people living with the impact of strokes across the region.

There are now more than 300 people who have asked to work with a connector and this is beginning to stretch the capacity of the team. This is a prototype, with a 'try, learn and adjust' approach, and we are continuing to take in these requests while balancing them with ensuring connectors have time to do the work required to achieve the changes we are seeking.

DSS updates

Funded Family Care

Christine Petch, Contract Relationship Manager, Ministry of Health

On 27 September, the Government announced its intention to change the Funded Family Care (FFC) policy and legislation, which has been in place since 2013.

This includes the intent to repeal Part 4A of the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000.

We have undertaken targeted stakeholder engagement to inform and support change and Government decision-making, including an online survey that attracted over 900 responses.

The Government will be considering first phase options for change and the timing of changes later this year. Engagement will continue into December and further opportunities will be explored in 2019. Issues being considered include eligibility, pay rates for carers, the employment relationship, and the type of care covered, and how the policy can best work for Māori and Pacific peoples and wider communities.

Transforming respite

Deborah Mills, Development Manager, Ministry of Health

Flexible respite budgets have been branded as I Choose and will replace the Carer Support Subsidy.

During 2019, most of the 19,000 people who receive Carer Support will move to **I Choose** at the time of their annual review or reassessment.

I Choose will make it easier for carers to have a break from their caring responsibilities. Disabled people and their whānau will have access to funding that they can use to buy the respite supports and services that suit them best.

More information is available on the Ministry's website www.health.govt.nz/ichoose



News from our providers

Geneva Healthcare – Dancing with Our Stars Spring Ball

This year's Dancing With Our Stars themed Ball was the biggest yet, as hundreds of persons with disabilities from all over New Zealand became the dancing stars in a crowd of over 300 at Eden Park, Auckland.

It was a night of glitz and glamour as *Dancing With The Stars* celebrity contestant, Suzy Cato, and Miss International Oceania, Michelle Isemonger, officially opened the event after a karakia and opening ceremony by the members of the Ngāti Whātua Orākei and a welcome speech by Associate Minister for Social Development, Hon Peeni Henare.

'I really would have brought down the tone of the event with my inability to dance with any glamour or coordination', Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern joked in her surprise video message on the big screens, as wide-eyed guests listened in awe.

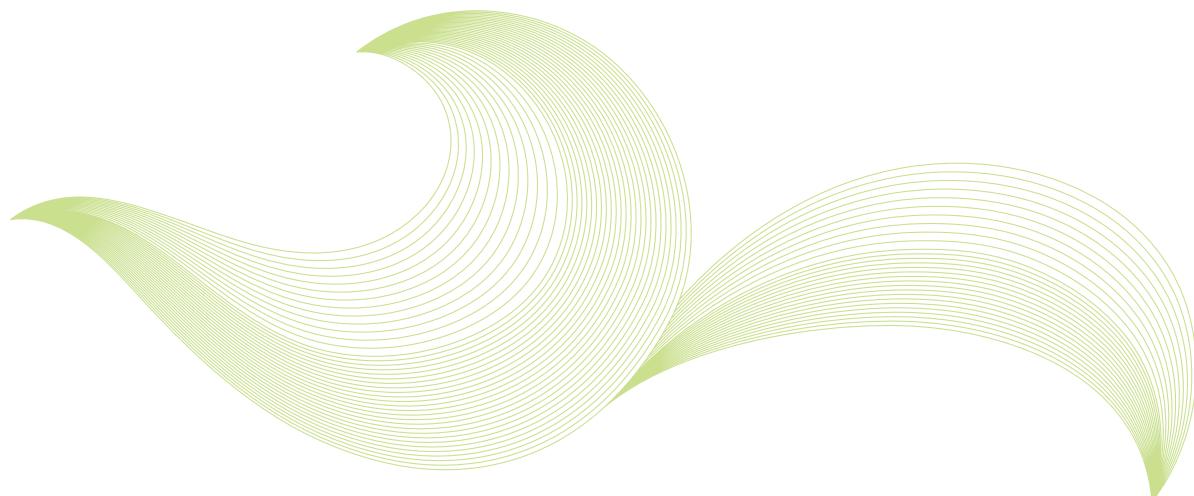
'The Geneva Spring Ball is a real opportunity to bring people together to create an inclusive environment', says Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social





Development and Disability Issues. And while Hon Winston Peters jokingly warned everyone about not stepping on anybody's toes as they dance, Suzy Cato got the crowd singing along to her classic song, 'It's Our Time'.

The event was a celebration of life and hope and great partnership between Geneva and the other organisations who worked together to make it possible – Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand, BNZ, SecureCom, Ray White, Cactus Lab, Trademe, Fashion Uniforms and PB Tech.



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