

Helen Keller Day at the Ministry

! Saturday 26 June was Helen Keller's birthday - this is now celebrated as Helen Keller Day. To help mark this, the Disability Support Services Group invited members of the Deaf/Blind Association to come along on Monday 28 June and share their experiences. Merv Cox, President of Deafblind New Zealand Inc. organised the meeting. Merv and his wife Cheryl support people who are both deaf and blind and Merv is a member of the Ministry's Disability Consumer Consortium.

Phil Thorne and his wife Julie spoke of how bacterial meningitis left Phil deaf and blind almost two years ago. However, Phil is determined to get the most out of life, and has learnt Braille and tactile sign language and hopes to be able to work again. With tactile sign, letters and words are "spelled" out on a person's hand using a NZSL-type dictionary. Phil uses a Braille computerised type board, known as a Braille Note, to access emails and the internet and Julie described how for a family outing with their two young children they tried to follow the Braille path round the botanic gardens.

Karen Pointon from Deaf Aotearoa, who is also deaf, is supporting Lyn who is deaf, has very poor vision and communicates using NZ sign language (NZSL). Karen described the smiles, animation and enjoyment on Lyn's face when she took her into the Deaf Aotearoa offices and Lyn had the chance to speak to other deaf people using NZSL for the first time.

The amazing part of this meeting was the use of multiple ways of communicating. At times Karen was reading sign from one interpreter and then re-signing this to Lyn, at other times she was lip reading. Meanwhile Thornton Peck, the tactile interpreter, was doing tactile sign for Phil and in breaks signing to Karen. Merv was using hearing loop technology that connects to his hearing aid frequency - and his guide dog sat peacefully under the table. We used microphones, and spoke directly to the person. For most of us, our signing is limited to "Hello", "my name is" and "bye". It is fantastic to be able to see first hand how the services we fund affect people's lives but also to see the challenges people who are deaf and blind face.

Inside this issue:

* Helen Keller Day	1
* Anne's Update	2
* New org structure	3
* Individualised Funding	3
* New disability model	4
* Staff movements	6
* Influenza 2010	7





On July 1 the new Ministry of Health organisational structure became operational. For us in Disability Support Services (DSS) there has been minimal change although we are now part of the National Services Purchasing Group, and Health & Disability National Services no longer exists. A chart highlighting the new structure and where we fit is over the page.

We welcome back Roger Jolley to DSS. Roger was the Maori Development Manager in the original Disability Services Directorate, before becoming part of the wider HDNS group. He is now back in disability and will be focusing on growing the capability and capacity for Ministry funded services to realise whanau ora and improving outcomes for Maori disabled.

The Senior Communications Advisor for HDNS is now part of a National Health Board-wide group but will still be providing communications advice and support to DSS. The Senior Advisor Planning & Reporting is also part of a NHB-wide group but again will continue to cover these services for disability.

As most of you will be aware, Geraldine Woods has left the Ministry to take up a new position in the Department of Labour. Kelvin Moffatt will be acting in her position until a replacement is found.

We are moving ahead steadily with our new model for disability support services. Cabinet has approved the new model and we are looking at doing a demonstration project by the end of the year. An update on this, is later in the newsletter.

As well as moving to the new structure, 1 July spells the start of the new financial year. We are again operating in a constrained financial environment but I am confident we will be able to maintain current services while continuing to look at improving the system. Implementing the changes to the GST rate in Oct is a major piece of work that Corporate Finance is leading. Further updates about specific areas will be available soon. We also have the challenges of managing the ESS waitlist (which Government gave us extra funding for) and expanding the number of HCSS providers who offer Individualised Funding options, an update on this is later in the newsletter.

As we move through winter and Influenza starts to become more widespread, I hope you manage to keep healthy.

To contact Disability Support Services

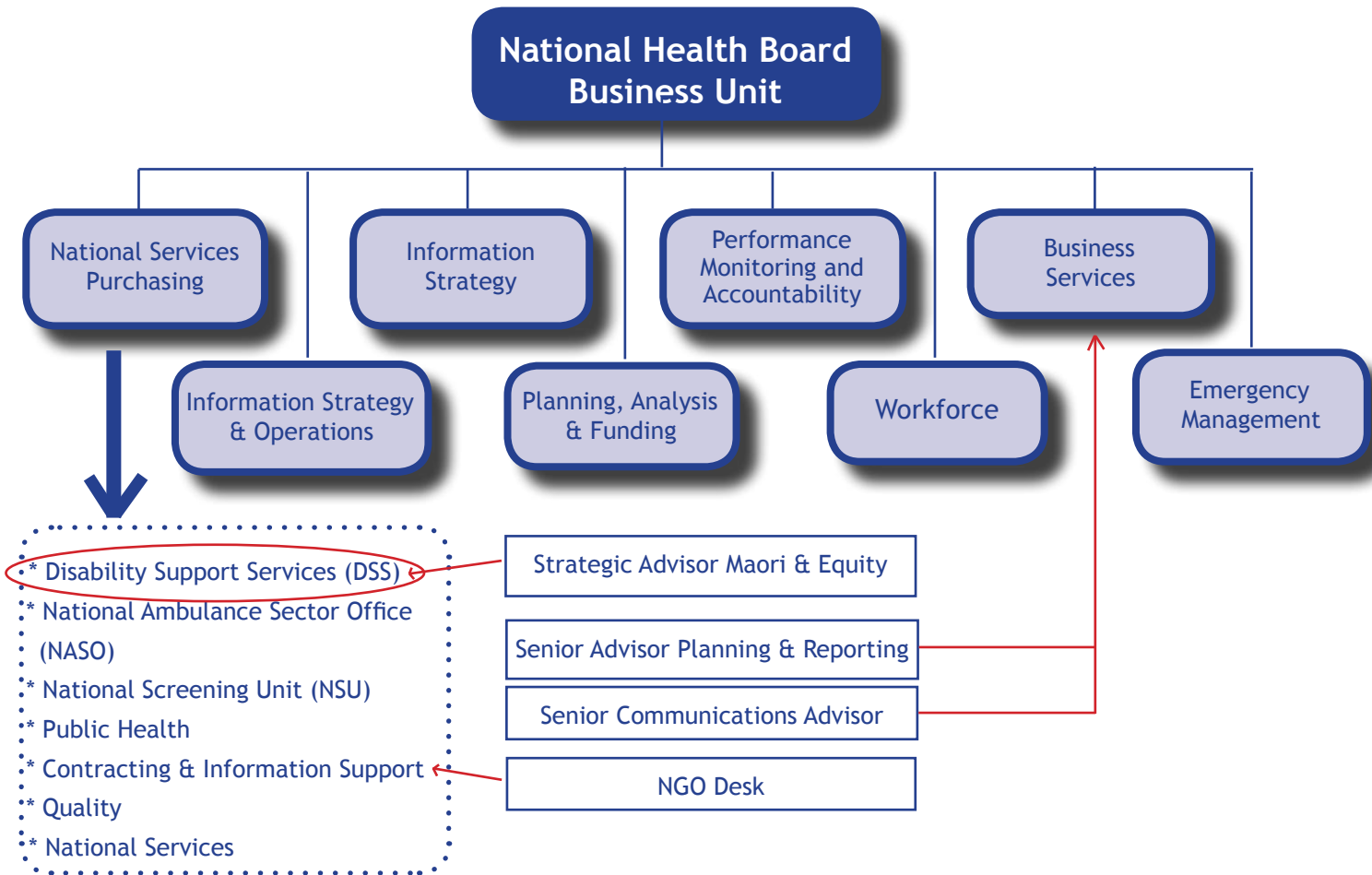
Go to: www.moh.govt.nz/disability

Email: disability@moh.govt.nz

Call: 0800 373 664

New National Health Board Website

www.nationalhealthboard.govt.nz



Individualised Funding

The Ministry is currently contracting with an additional 12 Home and Community Support Service Providers who successfully applied to become Individualised Funding Host Providers. Training was provided to all of these providers and all NASCs in June to assist them with operational implementation of Individualised Funding within their organisations. The Ministry will make a formal announcement once all contract formalities have been completed.

Additional communications material developed to date is being prepared for publication on the Ministry website to ensure access for all stakeholders to information relating to Individualised Funding and will be available in August 2010. This includes:

- Guidelines on Individualised Funding
- Service Specification
- NASC and Provider training tools
- A User Friendly Guide to Individualised Funding

The next steps to continue to develop the IF scheme will be developed during August 2010 in line with the new model for Disability Services. This is expected to include:

- Another opportunity for HCSS providers who did not submit an application or who were not successful in their initial application to be considered as an IF Host provider. This will take place later in 2010.
- Evaluation of progress with IF implementation within HCSS and HCSS providers.
- Increasing the number of IF Host Providers.
- Looking at how people could access other disability supports through IF.

4 New disability model update

New disability model

In May the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues agreed to recommendations from the Ministry of Health on a new model for supporting disabled people. This was also supported by Cabinet. The Cabinet paper, which includes a full depiction of the new model or framework, can be read on the Ministry of Health web-site at:

<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/disability-keyprojects-model>

The model, and the changes that are associated with it, have four key components:

Information and Personal Assistance. Making information and personal assistance available to disabled people, and their families and whanau, including through Local Area Coordinators (LAC). LACs will walk alongside people, support them to make decisions for themselves, and help them to access support, including that from their local communities

Allocation of Funding. Developing the ability to use self assessment and, over time, working towards allocating funding for the person within their family and whanau - rather than by type and level of services

Purchasing. Expanding the availability of Individualised Funding which will allow more people around the country to self manage their supports. In addition, moving to contracting for more flexible supports

Accountability. Developing a new accountability framework to support the changes and ongoing evaluation of the demonstration project will assist us to refine the model prior to implementing it further.

Demonstration Project

The Ministerial Committee agreed that the Ministry's immediate focus will be on developing and implementing the new model through

demonstrating its core elements at one to two sites initially.

We are working towards establishing a demonstration project in one of four short-listed regions. A Request for Proposal (RFP) for independent implementation support services for the demonstration project closed 19 August. Tasks will include the set up and facilitation of a local site working group and a national reference group.

Our initial development work will provide background material and thinking for the co-development and shared implementation planning that will happen with representative disabled people and other stakeholders in a specific site once that is determined.

We have established links with key disability groups and will have regular contact with these groups exchanging information and providing input into the development work. This includes their being part of the evaluation of the RFP tender proposals. We will continue to keep key stakeholders informed and enable them to give feedback throughout the demonstration project.

Further information:

Further information on LAC can be found on the Ministry's website at

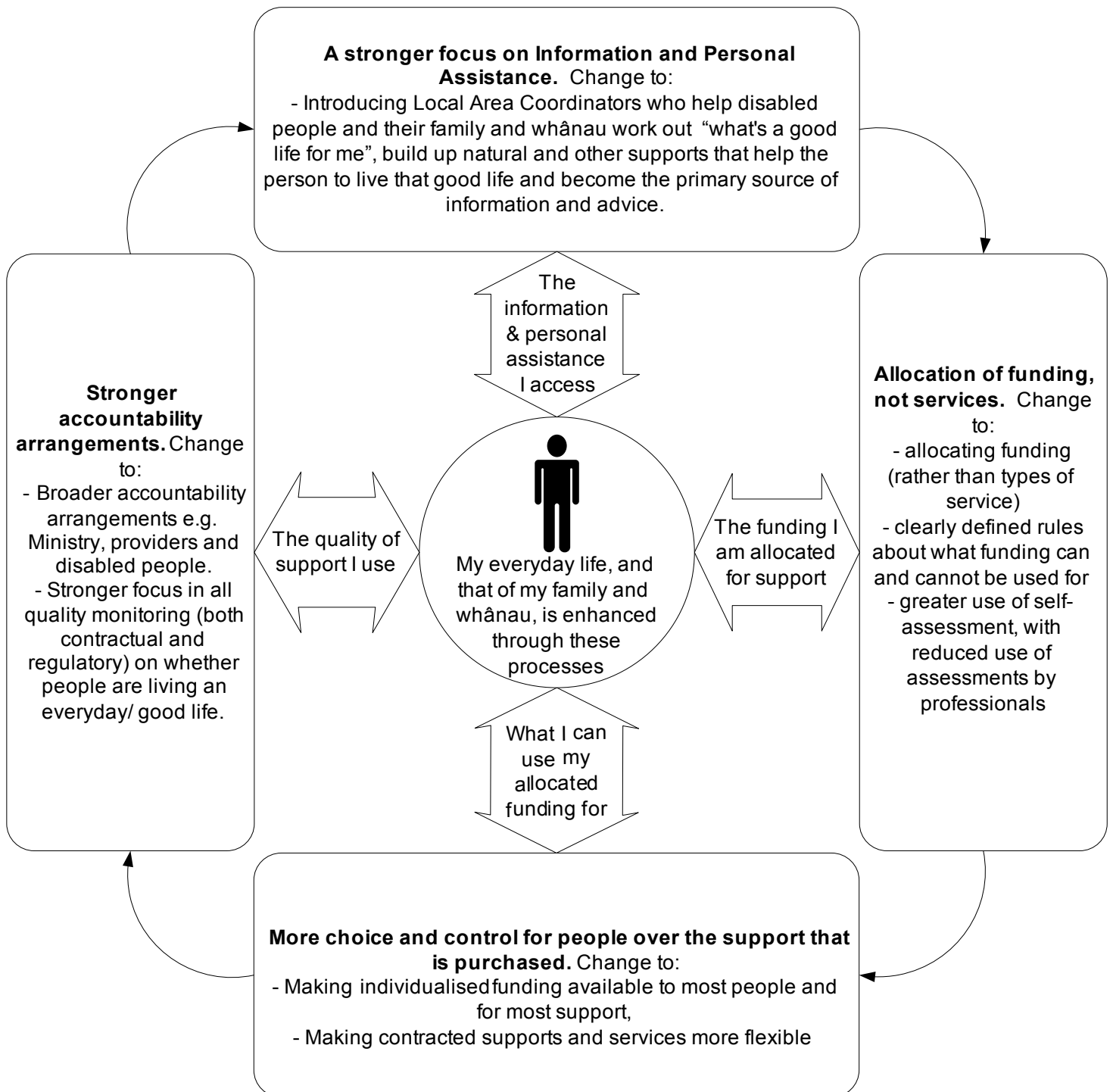
<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/disability-keyprojects-model>

Periodic updates on the ongoing work will be posted on the website and in this newsletter.

You can use the current Disability email address for feedback or more specific enquiries:

disability@moh.govt.nz

Overview of model



6 Staff movements

New to DSS

Kristyn Heaney - Analyst Strategy & Contracting Support Team

I have recently commenced the role of Contract Analyst within the Strategy and Contracting Support Team in DSS, moving from an Analyst role with Population Health Directorate. Prior to that I held a variety of roles with the Ministry such as Human Resources Advisor, Portfolio Manager, and Analyst.

In my spare time I enjoy socialising with friends, going to plays and movies and am a regular attendee of quiz nights. I also attempt to get to the gym and do regular walking as often as time permits.

Amanda Smith - EA Community Living Team

I am currently working in a temporary role within the Community Living Team as EA to Karen Hyland. This is my first role back in the workforce after having a couple of years off with my two young boys (aged 4 and 1 years). My working background is predominantly event management. LOVES: my babies and extended family, netball, rugby - actually any sport really and my iPhone. HATES: Facebook, The Wiggles and people that

put vegetables in a bacon and egg pie. It's not called a bacon and egg and vegetable pie for a reason.

Leigh Sturgiss - ASD Project Manager Family & Community Team

I started work as the ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) Project Manager in December 09 on a fixed term contract for two years. I am based in Wellington; I am part of the Family and Community Support Team. I am really enjoying the work, there are some great initiatives happening within the ASD work programme and it's great being a part of that work.

Before starting work here I was the Executive Director of the Obesity Action Coalition, I've also worked at the NZ Drug Foundation as their Programme Development Manager, and before that I was the Director of the Smokefree Coalition. One of the best working days in my life was December 10 2004, when all pubs, cafes and restaurants became smokefree, I am really proud of the fact that I played a role in the campaign.

My out of work interests include watching rugby, drinking a good pinot noir, and training for the Taupo bike challenge. The latter two interests are often in conflict!

Left DSS

Geraldine Woods Deputy Director-General HDNS

After five years at the Ministry Geraldine is leaving to take up a position of Deputy Chief Executive at the Department of Labour. Geraldine started as head of the Disability Services Directorate before taking on a wider leadership role for the Health and Disability Services Directorate. Geraldine has a long history of involvement and interest in disability issues. Geraldine's last day was 19 August.

Rob Gill Development Manager - Workforce

Rob left the Ministry two months ago after 6 1/2 years. Rob worked on a number of projects and programmes before taking up the Disability Workforce portfolio. Rob has taken up the position of General Manager for Manawanui in Charge who provide Individualised Funding services, so he's still involved in the disability area.

Flu Prevention: Vaccinate and Wash Hands

With the influenza season now here the Ministry of Health is recommending last minute vaccination and reminding New Zealanders about the importance of basic hygiene, like regular handwashing.

Influenza activity is beginning to increase significantly and this is reflected in the graph below showing the rates of influenza-like illness in the community. The number of calls to Healthline continues to increase, and last week 22.4% of all calls to Healthline were related to influenza-like illness. This is the highest rate this year, however, it is well below the 35.8% seen at this time last year, just after the peak of the 2009 pandemic wave.

The pandemic influenza strain is the predominant strain circulating this winter. In some areas, particularly those who were not greatly affected last year, are now being hit with high levels of illness in the community.

We are seeing higher levels of hospitalisation in areas that weren't severely affected last year. There have been 58 people admitted to hospital reported in the last week with influenza type illness, bringing the total to 222 admitted to hospital this year.

This year more than 1,030,000 people have been vaccinated with seasonal influenza vaccine - which provides protection against the pandemic strain.

Dr Jacobs says the more these messages are reinforced at home, at school and at work, the

more likely we all are to help slow the spread of the influenza.

Know how to protect yourself and your family

For some people influenza can be a very serious illness. The basic measures to protect yourself and others remain the same, but are even more important as we see more flu circulating in the community. These include:

- get your seasonal influenza immunisation, which includes protection against swine flu
- know the symptoms of influenza, which can include a high fever, headache, cough, sore throat, tiredness and generally aching all over
- phone for medical advice quickly (GP or Healthline) if you have influenza-like symptoms, including consideration of whether you need antiviral medicine treatment.
- seeking early medical advice is especially important for women who are pregnant, severely overweight people and those with underlying medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, cancer, heart and lung disease and other conditions including autoimmune diseases
- wash and dry hands frequently, cover coughs and sneezes and stay home if you are sick.

Phone early for advice

If you or your family are ill and you are concerned, or if your condition worsens, get health advice by calling your GP or Healthline on 0800 611 116.



The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Health. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this newsletter, the Ministry of Health is not responsible for any omissions, inaccuracies or changes that may have taken place after publication.