

## PROJECTS UPDATE

APRIL 2010

*This update is a general summary about current projects. Any use of the information contained in it will need the prior consent of the Ministry of Health*

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### ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES (ESS)

#### **ESS Development Programme**

The value of applications received for equipment and housing modifications for disabled people of all ages increased by nearly 25% last year. Because of this rise in costs, and the level of funding available, many more people now have to wait to get the services they need. To try and reduce the length of time that people have to wait for their equipment and/or modifications the government has approved some additional one-off funding over the next two years to support this increased demand. However, even with this additional funding, the rising costs of equipment and modification services are not sustainable, so we need to look at how we can manage demand within the money that is available.

On 3 March this year the Ministry made some changes to the eligibility criteria for some services and has also introduced changes to funding limits for low cost equipment and high cost access housing modifications. We are also planning to extend the competitive processes for buying disability equipment, possibly including hearing aids, which will help bring overall costs down.

#### **What are the changes?**

We have raised the threshold for funding **low cost equipment** from \$37.00 (inc. GST) to \$50.00 (inc. GST).

**Housing access modifications** to allow people to get in/out of their home, including moving between floors, will not be funded in excess of \$15,000 (inc. GST). *Note:* this does not impact on applications for other types of housing modifications such as level access showers.

We are introducing fairer, simpler eligibility criteria for the funding of hearing aids. This will mean that people who previously only received a subsidy of \$198.00 for a hearing aid will now be able to get at least \$500.00 and in some cases, will be eligible to get a higher contribution towards the cost of an aid. More information about the recent changes can be found on the Ministry's website <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/disability-news-factsheets#equipmodifications>.

#### **Equipment and Modification Service Improvement Programme**

The Equipment and Modifications Service (EMS) Improvement Programme was established in November 2008 to undertake work in five key areas:

- Programme management of the overall work programme
- Prioritisation
- Complex Housing Modifications
- Equipment purchase and provision (including refurbishment and short term loan)
- Assessor accreditation (including an additional project exploring the viability of extending accreditation status to audiometrists)
- Service quality and outcomes (incorporating management of demand for new technology).

Acqumen and Associates carried out this work for the Ministry and reports containing a number of recommendations for each different workstream were completed at the end of February. We are now able to progress several of the recommendations, in particular the following areas:

- Implementation of the Prioritisation tool - this will be trialled in a small number of different areas over the next few months, then implemented nationally after the trial has been fully

evaluated. This work will continue to be lead by Alison Barber, whose secondment to Disability Support Services from another team within the Ministry of Health has been extended on a part-time basis.

- Implementation of the NASC/Specialised Assessor Guideline – use of this guideline will require a closer engagement with NASC staff and Specialised Assessors when consideration is being given to high cost housing modifications and equipment.
- Extension of procurement arrangements to support cost efficiencies – this will include tendering arrangements for a wider range of equipment and may also cover the purchase of hearing aids in the future.
- Audiometrists and accreditation for hearing aids - the earlier work in this project recommended that in some cases, audiometrists who demonstrated the necessary competencies could undertake assessments and recommendations for hearing aids when there was a clear structure of supervision from an audiologist who was a member of the New Zealand Audiological Society. We are therefore working towards putting a system in place that will allow this to happen where effective supervision can be guaranteed.
- Accredited Assessor framework - work will be progressed which will change some aspects of this framework and will include the development of training programmes for some specialised, higher cost services (such as communication assistive technology, wheelchairs and seating, housing modifications).

**Contact: Sue Primrose, Tel: 04 496 2294**

## **CHILD AND YOUTH**

The guideline on 'Roles and Responsibilities for Supporting Disabled Children and Young People under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989' is available on the Ministry of Health website. National implementation was jointly coordinated between Child Youth and Family (CYF) and Disability Support Services in June 2009.

Disability Support Services met with CYF to review the guideline in March 2010. Some changes have been made and these are about to be communicated across both agencies. The changes are mainly edits and do not change the context of the document. Disability Support Services and CYF are collaborating to strengthen approaches to working together, including developing new referral resources to support the implementation process.

Disability Support Services have initiated the development of a broad disability services focused Action Plan for Children and Youth, incorporating strategic priorities and government directions, including the government response to the Select Committee Report on the Inquiry into the Quality of Care and Service Provision for People with Disabilities (2009). A recent service development includes a trial project in Auckland to give providers funding to establish "wrap around" services for families so that children and young people with significantly complex needs can be supported to remain in the community and a home environment with flexible packages of care. The Ministry is trialling this to provide a range of disability services through one provider so that the children, young people and their families and whanau receive proactive, comprehensive, individualised, consistent and streamlined disability supports aimed at improving family resilience, and keeping children in their homes and communities.

**Contact: Pamela Henry, Tel: 09 580 9028**

## **REVIEW OF THE EQUIPMENT AND THERAPY PROTOCOLS**

The revised Therapy and Assistive Technology/Equipment Operational Protocols between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health are currently in the final stages of approval by both Ministries. The new Operational Protocols include a Memorandum of Understanding, a template for Local Level Agreements to be established and a section on roles and responsibilities as they

relate to the funding and provision of occupational therapy, physiotherapy services and assistive technology/equipment to children and young people with disabilities.

### **Implementation**

Implementation of the Operational Guideline will include a range of activities to be jointly undertaken by District Health Boards and the Ministry of Education where possible. Operational staff within both health and education will be required to develop local level agreements that reflect the regional differences in service delivery so that maximum service efficiencies are gained and all staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.

### **Speech-Language Therapy**

The Ministry of Health has also established a project to scope the work required to align practice and more clearly define roles and responsibilities that will enable the inclusion of Speech Language Therapy in the revised Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education Operational Protocols. This work will commence shortly, be undertaken jointly with the Ministry of Education, and will include:

- Developing agreed clinical pathways and access criteria for students (including pre-school and school-age children and during times of transition) nationally, that can be implemented across DHBs, NGOs and the education sector.
- Considering any funding implications of changes.
- Developing agreed roles and responsibilities for Speech Language Therapists.
- Agreeing an interdisciplinary model that may include a lead clinician (e.g. who may act as case manager) which will support integrated and coordinated service provision within and across services.
- Considering how roles and responsibilities and the range of services may vary across larger centres versus more regional or rural areas.
- Updating the Operational Guideline to include Speech Language Therapy and gaining agreement/sign-off of this (with due consideration to areas that may be able to be adopted within the current document).

**Contacts: Sue Primrose (equipment), Tel: 04 4962294, Pam Henry (therapy), Tel: 09 5809028**

## **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

Implementation of the NZ Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline continues based on the priorities agreed between the Ministries of Health and Education following consultation with the implementation advisory group, the ASD Intersectoral Advisory Group, and a group of senior officials from a range of government departments. The priority areas are assessment and diagnosis, support to strengthen families, interventions, respite and coordination of services.

We have called for expressions of interest from District Health Boards for the creation of coordination services across the country. This service is to be focused on the referral and assessment processes for children and young people with behaviour difficulties that may be due to ASD. More information, including application forms and a draft service specification, can be found at [www.nzgg.org.nz/asd](http://www.nzgg.org.nz/asd).

The ASD resources being produced by the New Zealand Guidelines Group including the new website are all on track to be launched in April 2010. The Werry Centre has been contracted to run ASD specialist training and this will be taking place before the end of June 2010. Replication of this training is likely in the next financial year.

The two ASD Parent Education programmes are fully operational and a RFP for the evaluation of these programmes will begin before 30 June 2010. More information about implementation is available in the December newsletter on our website. The next newsletter will be published on the website in April.

**Contact: Leigh Sturgiss, Tel: 04 816 2554**

## WORKFORCE

### **Workforce Action Plan**

In January, Te Pou was contracted by the Ministry of Health to develop and deliver a new National Training Coordination Service. This service was established to assist the Ministry and the sector to implement the *Disability Support Services Workforce Action Plan* (Action Plan).

The DSS Workforce Reference Group met on 10 March to reflect on what had been achieved since implementation of the Action Plan began in July 2009. An evaluation tool was presented for group members to use with their constituents. Data from the evaluation will be collated during April.

The reference group also met Te Pou representatives to provide feedback on the Draft National Training Plan for 2010. Feedback from the reference group will be used by Te Pou to finalise the training plan during April.

Please note that the Workforce Action Plan will not be published in hard copy but electronic copies can be requested.

### **National Training and Coordination Service**

The National Training Coordination Service (NTC), operated by Te Pou, will provide independent training coordination services and administer training grants. It will also support the existing DSS Leadership Development Scheme and Consumer Leadership and Training Fund initiatives. The overall aim of the NTC will be to contribute positively to the well-being of disabled people by supporting workforce development for frontline staff.

Te Pou is New Zealand's National Centre of Mental Health Research, Information and Workforce Development. Te Pou's work within the mental health and addictions sector has a focus on:

- development and translation of knowledge to action to improve services
- delivery of effective services through development of the workforce
- effective mental health services for pasifika through development of the workforce.

The new NTC Service will benefit from Te Pou's considerable experience in workforce development and service improvement.

Te Pou has acknowledged that working within the disability sector is a new and exciting challenge. Their first priority will be to collaborate closely with the sector to build effective working relationships. Recruitment for members of the NTC team is well underway.

Further information about this exciting new service is available at:  
<http://www.disabilityworkforce.co.nz/page/10-Welcome>.

### **Needs Assessment & Service Coordination (NASC) Workforce**

Enrolments for the 2010 intake of the new Graduate Diploma in Education (Disability Support)<sup>1</sup> have now closed. The programme has generated interest from outside the DSS NASC workforce. We assume that this interest will eventually result in the programme becoming a generic qualification for senior disability practitioners working in a variety of roles.

Enquiries from prospective students should be made directly to Auckland University in the first instance. The Programme Coordinator is Kathy Martindale from the School of Counseling within the Faculty of Education. You can contact Kathy by email at [k.martindale@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:k.martindale@auckland.ac.nz).

Enrolments for the May 2010 intake of the National Certificate in Disability Support Assessment Planning and Coordination are now open with Careerforce. This national certificate will have wide

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<sup>1</sup> An award of the University of Auckland

appeal to those who are new to roles involving needs assessment and service coordination in the disability support sector. Enquiries should be made directly to Careerforce in the first instance.

**Contact: Rob Gill, Tel: 09 5809111**

## **PACIFIC**

### ***Lu'i Ola Strategic Framework for Action 2009/13 (Auckland) 'Together I am Able'***

#### **Community Engagement Work Stream Group – Communications Campaign Project**

##### *Pasifika Church Disability Toolkit*

Due to be formally launched in late May, the final draft version of the toolkit incorporates comments from Pacific church ministers, Pacific peoples with disabilities, representatives from disability providers, members of the Pacific community and members of the Lu'i Ola group. An information manual, a training workbook and promotional materials as well as a DVD will all be part of the toolkit. Some of these resources will be translated into Pacific languages and the toolkit will be circulated to Pacific church communities in the Auckland region.



##### *Media Promotional Campaign*

A media campaign programme has been developed and is due to be implemented in late April in the lead up to the launch of the Pacific church toolkit in late May. This campaign will involve a series of interviews on Pacific radio, television and newspaper using Pacific disabled people that are part of Lu'i Ola.

The toolkit and the media promotional campaign are part of the communications campaign project which aims to heighten the awareness of disability and disability services in the Pacific church community and attempt to challenge and shift behaviour and attitudes.

#### **Access Work Stream Group - Mangere Access Pilot Project**

The pilot initiative in the Mangere area continues to make good progress. A central monitoring system aims to monitor and track referrals made between participating agencies. An evaluation report is due for completion by 30 June 2010 and will inform the roll-out of the pilot in other suburbs in the Auckland region.

#### **Provider Development Work Stream Group – Provider Development Project**

##### *Pacific Service Provider Development Mentoring Package*

A draft Provider Development Mentoring Package has been developed and finalised. This will be circulated to Pacific health and disability providers for comment before it is signed off by the Lu'i Ola Steering Group.

##### *Pacific Provider Development Group*

The terms of reference for the newly established Provider Development Group has been finalised and the group is due to meet on a bi-monthly basis.

### ***National Pasifika Disability Plan 2009 – 2013***

The National Pasifika Disability Plan 2009/13 has now been finalised, with Senior Leadership Team approval. The plan focuses on improving outcomes for Pacific peoples with disabilities, their aiga and caregivers.

Following a tender process, Le Va, the mental health workforce development unit within Te Pou, has been selected and contracted to deliver on the 2009-11 actions of the final plan. Work on implementation has started.

### ***Emerging Pacific Leaders' Dialogue 2010 Conference - 10–24 March 2010***

Feala Afoa, Development Manager Pacific, was one of fifteen delegates from New Zealand selected to attend the Emerging Pacific Leaders' Dialogue 2010 Conference. Endorsed by the governments of Australia and New Zealand, the conference aimed to strengthen the capacity of future leaders in the Pacific region to manage challenges collaboratively, positively and creatively. Over 130 managers and leaders from more than 20 Pacific nations and territories attended the conference. The opening plenary sessions of the conference took place in Samoa and the closing plenary sessions were held in Tonga.

Feala was part of the Australian study group, tasked with presenting a report on "The challenges and issues facing different communities in Australia are not so dissimilar than the challenges facing New Zealand and also nations across the Pacific region. Leadership at all levels was identified as key to addressing some of these challenges."

For more information on the Emerging Pacific Leaders Dialogue please visit [www.elpd2.com](http://www.elpd2.com).

**Contact: Feala Afoa, Tel: 09 5809053**

## **INDIVIDUALISED FUNDING**

The Ministry remains committed to expanding Individualised Funding (IF) during 2010, beginning with Home and Community Support Service (HCSS) allocations, and HCSS providers. HCSS has been chosen because it has had a recent review, a new service specification was introduced with a flexibility component, and outcome reporting frameworks are in place. This means that disabled people will be able to manage their own supports, choose their own staff, and design their own HCSS services.

The Ministry is currently in the process of negotiating contract variations with HCSS providers who have successfully applied to become IF Host Providers. We are aiming to have these providers contracted for IF by May 2010.

There will be more opportunities 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. We will have more information about this process for HCSS providers by the end of April 2010.

We will also be looking at how we can expand IF to other (non-contracted HCSS) providers. There will be more information about this process for non HCSS providers by July 2010.

Key things about IF at this stage:

- IF is a way of paying for disability support services, specifically Home and Community Support Services.
- The same processes for determining need and coordinating a support packages will apply to Individualised Funding.
- Eligibility for Individualised Funding is extended to those who are assessed by the NASC as eligible for HCSS.
- It is anticipated that a further intake of IF provider hosts will occur at a later stage in 2010, allowing other HCSS providers an opportunity to be considered.

- Guidelines, training and further information updates are being planned for NASCs, providers and consumers to ensure increased awareness and understanding of HCSS and how IF can be used as a way of buying support services.
- We are looking at how IF could be applied to other disability support services and will have more information about this by July 2010.
- The ongoing expansion and development of IF will take a “learn as we go” approach.

**Contact: Karen Smith, Tel: 09 580 9056**

### **RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY**

A report summarising the analysis completed for the Residential Services for People with a Physical Disability Project has been completed. The report also provides a summary of recommendations and proposed actions, which need to be done to achieve a reduction in numbers of younger people entering aged care facilities. The report signals that this work cannot be done in isolation without a concurrent focus on service development nationally.

The proposed actions focus on changes to Residential Services for People with a Physical Disability and the development of options that would expand the scope of services delivered in the community.

This next stage of the project will be developing an implementation plan including detailed costings for those actions agreed to by the Senior Leadership Team. During this stage the Ministry will seek input from service providers and people with a physical disability currently living in Residential Services funded by the Ministry of Health. The implementation plan will be completed by 30 June 2010.

**Contact: Raewyn Winiata, Tel: 07 858 7061**

### **NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SERVICE COORDINATION**

#### ***NASC Service Budget Management Framework Development Project 2009/10***

The work to support NASCs to enhance their budget management capability has continued to progress as planned.

The first stage of the work was completed in July 2009, when Service Budget and Actual Expenditure Financial Reporting was given to each Ministry funded NASC. This reporting has continued on a monthly basis and also includes a report back from each NASC to the Ministry's Service Access Team. This report back from the NASC Manager would typically include any comments on the reason for variances for Month and Year to Date, any potential risks / or known issues, any identifiable trends, and any actions currently being taken to mitigate or treat potential risks, or to address known issues.

The second stage of the work was completed in January 2010. This work refined and revised an existing management tool used by NASCs. The revised SPA NASC Management Tool will help NASCs to operate more consistently when coordinating services for a person, and additionally will help NASC Managers to improve their management of service expenditure. This management tool will be supported by Monthly Trend Reporting at both an individual NASC level, and at a national level. The tool will be launched in April 2010 with on-site training workshops at NASCs.

Directorate Services and Disability Support Services will continue to work closely on this throughout the remainder of this financial year.

**Contact: Mark Powell, Tel: 04 496 2384**

## **LOCAL AREA COORDINATION (LAC) TYPE PROCESSES AND A NEW MODEL FOR DISABILITY SUPPORT**

The initial investigation of LAC-type processes has been completed. The report to the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues in September 2009 noted that, while there are good grounds for LAC-type processes playing a more prominent role than at present in the Ministry of Health's disability support system, doing so without making changes to many parts of the current system would carry risks of duplication, confusion and additional cost.

The Committee agreed that the Ministry investigate a new model of disability support that incorporates the key elements of LAC, but also includes other features such as supported living and individualised funding. The report is available on the Ministry of Health website at <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/disability-news-latest>.

Work continues on building a new model, with a report due at the May meeting of the Ministerial Committee. The goal is to start a demonstration project by the end of 2010 to continue building and testing the model.

The work is being led jointly by Disability Support Services and Disability Policy.

**Contact: Jenny Moor, Tel: 09 580 9070 or John Wilkinson, Tel: 04 816 2780**

## **SUPPORTED LIVING PROJECT**

A Supported Living Implementation Project Plan is being completed. The plan will address implementation of the recently approved Supported Living service specification, and will address the following:

- development of a Companion Document to work alongside the new Service Specification.
- stocktake of the current contracted Supported Living Services
- information and Training Requirements for the implementation
- development of Supported Living document templates.

**Contact: Bryan Agnew, Tel: 09 580 9120**

## **CONSUMER CONSORTIUM**

The first consortium for 2010 was held in Wellington in March. The highlight of the two-day meeting was the session with the Honourable Minister Tariana Turia. The group was delighted with the news that Minister Turia plans to meet with the consortium at least twice each year.

The remainder of the group's time was devoted to working with Ministry representatives to advise on service development including: equipment and modification services, individualised funding and possible future models for funding and service delivery.

The following new members were welcomed to the Consortium:

1. Wendy Brenkley – Carers New Zealand
2. Heather Dawson – Hearing Association
3. Wendy Duff – Autism NZ
4. Phyllis McPherson, People First
5. Christine Morrison, IHC Advocacy

The next consortium will be held in July 2010.

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