



Work in Progress

2009

The annual report from the Minister for Disability Issues
to the House of Representatives on implementing
the New Zealand Disability Strategy



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Minister's foreword



I am pleased to present the 2009 report on government agencies' implementation of Whakanui Oranga, the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

Like previous years' progress reports, this report provides information on achievements over 2008/2009 and on the actions departments are planning to implement over 2009/2010 and beyond. These planned actions provide a summary of departmental plans for action on disability issues.

I am aware many people in the disability sector have expressed impatience at the pace of the Disability Strategy's implementation. While lots of good things have happened, people want more progress, and they want it to happen more quickly. This Government is committed to providing leadership and accountability for progress on disability issues. We have signalled this through our establishment of the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues, of which I am chairperson, and our appointment of an Associate Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Pansy Wong, to work alongside me.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy is all about ensuring disabled people, and their families, have the same opportunities to participate and contribute as other New Zealanders. They are not passive recipients of charity. They are capable citizens who, like non-disabled citizens, have rights and responsibilities and expect to contribute to society.

The Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues believes we can make better progress through focusing our actions on the three major influences on what disabled people can do: their personal circumstances, and those of their whānau and friends who support them; the accessibility of the world we live in; and the degree to which specialised disability supports work for them.

The actions in this report are organised according to these areas of influence: resourceful citizens; an accessible New Zealand; and modern disability supports.

Even in difficult economic times we must be able to make progress towards achieving the vision of the New Zealand Disability Strategy. We cannot make real social and economic gains as a country without addressing the challenges that face New Zealand's disabled citizens. As people with disabilities will tell us, "Nothing about us without us".

Mauriora!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Tariana Turia". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Na Hon Tariana Turia
Minister for Disability Issues

Message from Disabled Persons Assembly (NZ) Inc



DPA is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute our foreword to this progress report on the implementation of Whakanui Oranga, the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

The backdrop to this report is a global economic recession, and it is unsurprising that government agencies throughout the world are more careful with expenditure as a result. Nevertheless, initiatives which are important to address long-term imbalances should not be sacrificed for short-term fiscal gains.

As a group, disabled people already occupy a poorer, more marginalised position in society. We are keen that our position is not made worse by an under-enthusiastic approach to the New Zealand Disability Strategy's implementation.

The World Bank estimates it costs the global economy between \$US1.3 and \$US1.9 trillion a year to exclude disabled people. For New Zealand, DPA estimates this cost is about \$10 billion a year. This is a huge lost opportunity for our country, and it is a good illustration of what can be gained – both by disabled people and the country as a whole – by implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

A further opportunity to see progress in an international context is when New Zealand presents its first report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities next year. The report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is likely to be substantially informed by progress reports such as these. We are, like the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues, keen to see further actions. We are also keen to see more participatory or partnership initiatives. We want the New Zealand Disability Strategy's implementation to be the best it can be.

However, for the last eight years it has been evident the implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy has lacked direction. It seems that, while the very essence of the Strategy was to have a whole-of-government approach, most agencies act in a mutually exclusive way with no discernable end goal.

We call on government agencies to have budgets and timelines for the successful implementation of the Disability Strategy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'G. WILLIAMS'.

Gary Williams
Chief Executive

Introduction

The New Zealand Disability Strategy

The New Zealand Disability Strategy, launched in 2001, has the vision of an inclusive society that highly values disabled people and continually enhances their participation. The Disability Strategy was developed from consultation between government and the disability sector. It has been endorsed by both the disability sector and the government as the way forward for action on disability issues, providing a framework for government actions to remove barriers.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide government's actions towards disabled people. The focus of both documents is that disabled people have the same rights of citizenship as everyone else, including the same opportunities to participate in society and to lead lives similar to those of other people.

While departments' effective implementation of the Disability Strategy is not the only factor in improving outcomes for disabled people, it is a crucial factor. All government departments are required to report annually on their plans for implementing the Disability Strategy and the progress they have made over the last year.

Progress to date

An independent review of departments' implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy, released in August 2008, found that central government agencies have undertaken a significant level of activity to implement the Disability Strategy.

However, progress had not been as fast as disabled people wanted, and had tended to focus on departments gaining a greater understanding of disability issues. The review recommended, among other changes, that departments focus more on activities that will make a real difference to disabled people.

Other sources of information have also indicated that much more needs to happen:

- the September 2008 report of the Social Services Select Committee's inquiry into the quality of care and service provision for disabled people said the overall implementation of the Disability Strategy had been unsatisfactory
- information from the three Disability Surveys conducted by Statistics New Zealand – in 1996, 2001 and 2006 – found that, for each of the survey years, disabled people continued to have poorer outcomes than non-disabled people.

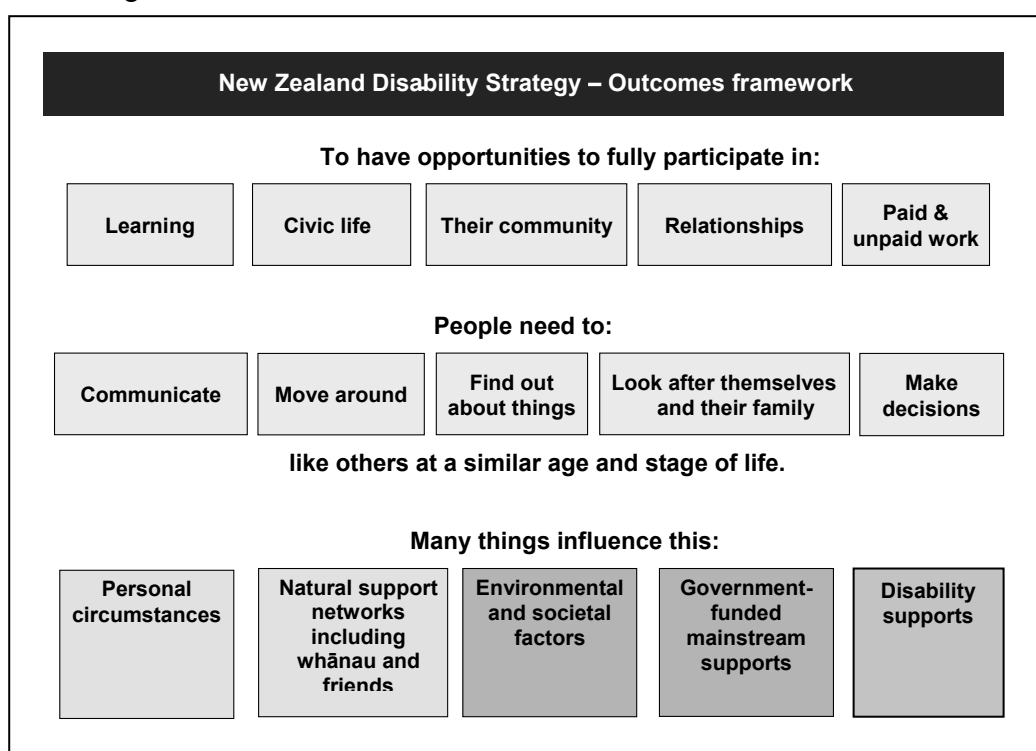
Future directions

The first actions of this government included its decisions to establish the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues, and to create the position of Associate Minister for Disability Issues. These decisions were made to increase leadership and

accountability for disability issues, and to help make sure all departmental work affecting disabled people focuses on what will make a real difference in their lives. The Committee first met in June 2009.

In September 2009, the Ministerial Committee decided that the best opportunities for making rapid and effective progress on implementing the Disability Strategy would result from focusing explicitly on those things that influence disabled people's ability to undertake the basic activities necessary for their participation in society.

This approach is based on the outcomes framework developed by the Office for Disability Issues to help departments implement the Disability Strategy, as presented in the diagram below:



The outcomes framework is based on the principle that, if disabled people are to get access to opportunities to participate in the areas of life appropriate to their age and stage of life, they must be able to undertake the basic activities required to do so. Whether they can undertake these activities will depend on a number of things: their personal circumstances, and those of their whānau and friends who support them; the accessibility of the world we live in, in relation to both its physical environment and its social environment, including the services it provides for everyone; and the degree to which specialised disability supports work for them.

The Ministerial Committee therefore wants departments to make sure their actions to implement the Disability Strategy are focused on these areas of influence:

- resourceful citizens
- accessible New Zealand and
- modern disability supports.

What this report does

This report provides an overview of government departments' achievements over 2008/2009 in implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy, and the actions they have planned for 2009/2010 and beyond. The actions are organised according to their relationship to the areas of resourceful citizens; accessible New Zealand; and modern disability supports.

Not all achievements and planned actions are included in this report. Furthermore, this report does not refer to actions which departments initiated earlier and which are now incorporated into departmental work plans as 'business as usual' actions. However, the full versions of all the departmental reports will be published on the Office for Disability Issues' website www.odi.govt.nz.

Resourceful citizens

Government departments are working to help ensure that disabled people and their informal support networks have opportunities to develop the skills and resources needed for them to participate in and contribute to society.

Getting the best education

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 3: Provide the best education for disabled people)

Access to a good education is a crucial factor in determining whether disabled people can develop skills and get access to opportunities, including employment opportunities, so they can participate in and contribute to society. In past years, disabled people have tended to miss out on opportunities for education, whether because of a lack of support, low expectations, or outright exclusion.

Government is giving increasing attention to ensuring schools provide a welcoming and supportive environment for disabled students, and they improve the educational outcomes for those students.

Review of Special Education

The major action planned for 2009/2010 is the Ministry of Education's review of Special Education. This is to determine the future directions of Special Education and to inform the use of Budget 2009 funding (\$51 million over four years) to extend support to more children under the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Scheme. A report on the review is to be provided to Cabinet in July 2010.

A welcoming and supportive school environment

Achievements in 2008/2009 included:

- the development and circulation of a guide for educators on their obligations for the education and support of children and young people with special education needs (Ministry of Education)
- the preparation and circulation of a letter to the chairpersons of boards of trustees emphasising their responsibilities to enrol all students (Ministry of Education)
- the development of an enrolment resolution process to ensure a nationally consistent, effective and timely management of enrolment issues of children and young people with special education needs (Ministry of Education)
- the development of an approach to ensure students with disabilities are visible in all external communications of the Ministry of Education, such as its website and the Education Gazette.

Resourceful citizens

Actions planned by departments for 2009/2010 include:

- ensuring disabled people get the same access to learning in the early childhood and school sectors as others do at a similar age and stage in life, so all disabled people can get access to the learning opportunities of their choice from early childhood to secondary school and can attend with their peers: 2009–2012 (Ministry of Education)
- providing accessible information to educators and families to help them make informed decisions regarding children and young people with special education needs (Ministry of Education)
- evaluating how schools manage the inclusion of high needs students and their issues, and identifying exemplars of good practice in including students with high needs: July 2009/March 2010 (Education Review Office).

The Ministry of Education will also continue to implement its plan for the removal of language barriers for Deaf people's access to education, through the three approaches of communication and raising awareness, workforce development relating to New Zealand Sign Language, and access to learning through New Zealand Sign Language. The strategy aims to work with the public, educators and parents and family/whānau of Deaf/hearing impaired children.

Improving educational outcomes

Achievements in 2008/2009 included:

- the development of a three-year Autism Spectrum Disorder Action Plan, focused on increasing the capability of teachers and specialists working with children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health)
- the completion and circulation of a publication on teaching strategies for students who may be struggling to acquire literacy skills (Ministry of Education)
- the commencement of a contact register to record all contact with Special Education, particularly complaints (Ministry of Education)
- the establishment of the Deaf Education Steering Group, to consider a range of issues relating to the provision of resourcing of specialist Deaf education services across New Zealand (Ministry of Education)
- the extension of Ministry of Education library services to disability resource teachers, therapists in special schools and specialist school providers (Ministry of Education)
- the implementation of the Pasifika Education Plan, to run from 2008–2012; this is aimed at improving outcomes for Pacific students and acknowledges the need to improve educational opportunities for Pacific students with special education

needs, as well as the need for a better understanding of Pasifika culture in relation to special education (Ministry of Education)

- a review of training for Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour focused on shaping and improving future training to ensure the best possible outcomes for students with special education needs; this is to proceed alongside a general review of the structure of Special Education training (Ministry of Education).

Other actions planned to improve educational outcomes include:

- a programme (Te Hikoitanga) preparing teaching staff to work with Māori who are disabled and/or who have special education needs (Ministry of Education)
- developing a diversity framework as part of the Education Workforce Strategy work programme, so the future workforce is trained and skilled to support disabled students: 2009/2010 (Ministry of Education).

Optimum opportunities for employment

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 4: Provide opportunities in employment and economic development for disabled people)

Through employment, disabled people can build up their self-reliance, their standard of living and their financial security, as well as make a contribution to the country's productivity.

Government agencies are giving increasing attention to ways of increasing disabled people's opportunities for entering, retaining and advancing in employment. This includes making sure disabled people have access to employment opportunities, and disabled people get a fair deal in employment. This may mean making changes to the working environment – known as 'workplace accommodations' or 'reasonable accommodations'.

More opportunities for employment

Departmental actions planned for increasing employment opportunities include:

- encouraging local communities, through the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs forum, to give disabled young people opportunities for employment: this work began in April 2009 and is to run over the next three years (Department of Labour)
- Sickness Benefit engagement and planning, to help Work and Income case managers decide on the most appropriate services for Sickness Benefit clients, with a view to supporting them into sustainable employment: rolled out nationally in late 2009, for implementation on an ongoing basis (Ministry of Social Development)

Resourceful citizens

- providing employment and work place experience opportunities for special education students: over 2009/2010 (Ministry of Education)
- the Interagency Transition from School to Work project, undertaken as part of the ministries' strategy for getting disabled people into work; the national rollout will take place by June 2011 (Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Education)
- the implementation by ACC of its Stay at Work programme, an early intervention service that enables a client to safely recover from injury while participating in employment to the fullest extent possible; in 2009/2010, ACC will look at how this programme can be broadened.

As well, there are plans for increasing employment opportunities specifically within government departments:

- the employment by a number of government agencies of disabled people under the Mainstream programme (for which the Ministry of Social Development has responsibility) to provide work experience
- work by New Zealand Police over 2009/2010 towards developing a team of visually impaired people capable of listening to audio taped interviews and transcribing these
- a review by New Zealand Police over 2009/2010, in association with the New Zealand Diabetes Association, of its current recruitment policy that people with type 1 or 2 diabetes cannot be recruited as police officers.

Promoting positive employer attitudes

The Employers' Disability Network is an employer-led organisation aimed at driving employer change and creating a barrier-free employment and business sector. Its Establishment Group, facilitated by the Ministry of Social Development with the help of Dr Roderick Deane, comprised Westpac, Progressive Enterprises, Fletcher Building, ANZ, IBM, Vodafone, Vero, New Zealand Post, Manpower, AUT, Manukau City Council, ACC, the Department of Corrections, and the Ministry of Social Development.

During 2008/2009 the group worked on getting agreement to the vision and mission statement of the group, and the development of a trust deed. The trust deed will be signed by the trustees by mid-January 2010. John Allen of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (ex New Zealand Post) is the chairperson.

The Employers' Disability Network has already developed and agreed on an Employment Charter. The Employers' Disability Network will be launched in Auckland in March 2010 with a seminar jointly chaired by the Auckland University of Technology and the Employers' Disability Network. This seminar will examine the potential business opportunities provided by disabled employees and disabled customers.

During 2010 services will be developed: network meetings and a website providing businesses with information and advice about the opportunities and practical details of employing disabled people and serving disabled customers.

Ensuring workplace accommodations for disabled people

In 2008/2009, the State Services Commission produced the report “Enabling Ability – meeting the Employment Requirements of People with Disabilities in the Public Service”. This report provides departments with practical examples of good practice initiatives towards disabled employees.

Actions planned by departments include:

- a resource on ‘reasonable accommodation’ to promote understanding within the private sector of their requirements under law relating to accommodations for disabled people: the timing of this will depend on the results of initial consultation on knowledge gaps (Ministry of Justice)
- improving the integration of new staff with hearing impairments into the Ministry of Education, through the use of technology and other resources (for example, New Zealand Sign Language interpreters at meetings and in professional development training), over 2009/2010
- a review of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Arrangements) Amendment Act 2007: initial work for this has started; while the Act’s focus is on flexibility for people caring for disabled people, flexible work arrangements also significantly benefit disabled employees (Department of Labour)
- continuing work in many government departments to support their disabled employees, including ensuring health and safety measures meet their needs, and encouraging support networks for disabled staff and others with an interest in disability issues.

Promoting employment rights

The Ministry of Social Development began work in 2008, to be completed by June 2012, on developing an employment advocacy service to help disabled people negotiating employment contracts or minimum wage exemptions.

Between March and June 2010, the Department of Labour will work towards ensuring the accessibility of its Workplace Contact Centre – which provides information and guidance on a range of workplace issues – for Deaf, hearing impaired and speech impaired clients.

Getting healthy and staying healthy

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 7: Create long-term support systems centred on the individual)

Disabled people need to have the best health possible if they are to make the most of their opportunities for inclusion and participation in the community. As a group, they have tended to have poorer health than non-disabled people.

The National Health Committee's 2003 report "To Have an 'Ordinary' Life: Community membership for adults with an intellectual disability" found that people with intellectual disabilities were particularly at risk of poor health.

Government agencies are giving attention to helping ensure disabled people can achieve and continue to have a good standard of health.

Improving health for disabled people

In 2008/2009, the Ministry of Women's Affairs completed the disability report-back for the Action Plan for New Zealand Women. Among its findings, the report identified an approach to improve disabled women's access to and participation in health services.

Sport and Recreation New Zealand has a commitment to provide funding over four years from 2008/2009 to:

- the Halberg Trust and Special Olympics New Zealand to support initiatives that aim to get more disabled New Zealanders involved in and supporting sport and recreation
- projects proposed by Parafeds and other national sports organisations; and to Paralympics New Zealand.

Departments also undertook work which is to continue into 2009/2010 and beyond to improve the health of disabled people:

- the development of a work programme to improve the health status of people with intellectual disabilities: this follows information gathering and analysis which confirmed the unnecessarily poor health status of this group and identified a wide range of causes for this (Ministry of Health)
- the development of mental health and addiction service specifications for adult, child and youth services: these are available for use by district health board funders and planners to contract for non-government organisations from 1 July 2009 and district health board providers from 1 July 2010 (Ministry of Health)
- research on the health of disabled prisoners and their families, to look at the key obstacles to supporting disabled prisoners, their reintegration into the community and the problems faced by their families: input for this is being sought from

disabled people, family members and those working with disabled prisoners
(National Health Committee)

- the commissioning of a report from the Māori Development Research Centre on research priorities to promote improved health outcomes and participation for disabled Māori (the Ministry of Health and the Health Research Council)
- the completion by the end of 2009/2010 of two research programmes into noise-induced hearing loss in workplaces, to be followed by raising awareness and revisiting programmes to eliminate noise at source; the overall aim is to protect the hearing of employees, including those who already have some hearing loss (the Department of Labour in association with ACC).

In 2008/2009, the Ministry of Health undertook a number of actions to create a sound information base for the planning and delivery of services:

- The Ministry established the Programme for the Integration of Mental Health Data (PRIMHD). This involves capturing data provided by contributing district health boards and non-government organisations from 1 July 2008 to create a single national mental health information collection of mental health services activity and, for the first time, outcomes data. All district health boards and the majority of mental health non-government organisations will be required to submit data for this by 1 July 2010. It is intended that the PRIMHD data will be used to support the management of mental health and addiction service systems and the delivery of care to consumers.
- The Ministry commissioned Te Pou (the National Centre of Mental Health Research, Information and Workforce Development) to develop the Te Pae Kaiawha website, which went live in early 2009. The website (<http://www.primarymentalhealth.co.nz>) is designed to make it easier for district health boards, primary health organisations and primary mental health practitioners to access information about the primary mental health service delivery models and tools being used in different parts of the country. The aim is to enhance the outcomes for people accessing mental health and addiction services within primary care.

The Ministry of Health will also:

- develop new service specifications for providers of services to people accessing mental health and addiction services, who also have a hearing impairment or an intellectual disability, with the aim of ensuring more consistent services across the country based on current best practice
- develop a resource document to provide guidance to the Ministry of Health and district health boards on how best to support an integrated approach across the traditional boundaries to deal with older people's mental health, addictions, disability and chronic conditions: some district health boards are already using this integrated approach, but it will be mandatory from 1 July 2010.

Developing individual leadership

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 2: Ensure rights for disabled people; Objective 5: Foster leadership by disabled people)

Departments are giving attention to actions that will help disabled people know their rights and develop as leaders so they can be in a better position to take advantage of opportunities within society.

The Office for Disability Issues provided funds in 2009 for a website for the Stepping Up leadership programme run by the Auckland City Council for disabled people and others from the disability sector.

Relevant planned actions include:

- training for disabled people in their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: over 2010 (Office for Disability Issues)
- producing a Māori language version of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: in 2010 (Office for Disability Issues)
- preparing accessible versions of human rights legislation (Ministry of Justice)
- ensuring the delivery of the Ministry for the Environment's accreditation course Making Good Decisions, for Regional Management Authority decision-makers, is accessible by people who are visually impaired: 2010 (Ministry for the Environment).

Strengthening family/whānau

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 15: Value families, whānau and people providing ongoing support)

Family/ whānau usually constitute a disabled person's primary natural support network. Government is giving increasing attention to actions which strengthen families/whānau and promote their resilience.

Much of this work is being done through the Action Plan for the New Zealand Carers' Strategy, released in 2008. The Action Plan has a five-year timeframe for its work. The Ministry of Social Development has overarching responsibility for the plan, and is working with other departments to make progress towards achieving its vision for carers.

Financial assistance for carers

The Ministry of Social Development is undertaking continuing work to raise awareness of the availability of income support for carers through the Domestic Purposes Benefit for carers of disabled people, the Disability Allowance and the Child

Disability Allowance. The aim is to make sure carers eligible for financial support receive it.

In related work, the Ministry has developed a new guide and a new medical certificate, in association with doctors, to encourage more consistent assessments for the Domestic Purposes Benefit for carers of disabled people.

Increasing carers' capacity

Actions undertaken in 2008/2009 include:

- the release in September 2009 of the resource document "A Guide for Carers" that provides information about a wide range of supports and services for people caring for disabled people (Ministry of Social Development and other departments)
- the implementation of a carer wellbeing and learning programme for informal carers, including carer publications, Family Care Radio shows, and workshops at the 2009 national Carers Conference (ACC).

Planned actions to increase carers' capacity include:

- the updating of informal carers' training requirements, by including strategies for planning in emergencies, as part of the service specifications for Ministry of Health funded clients with long-term physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities (Ministry of Health)
- the development over 2009/2010 by the Family and Community Services of the Ministry of Social Development to refresh guiding principles to include objectives relating to the New Zealand Disability Strategy. This will focus on early intervention to build the capability and resilience of families and communities.

Developing an information base

In 2008/2009, the Department of Labour completed background research on support and services for carers and their transition into and participation in paid employment.

The Ministry of Research, Science and Technology reports that the Health Research Council is now providing funding for research into the support and services currently available to disabled fathers and whether current policy adequately addresses their needs.

Accessible New Zealand

An accessible New Zealand requires changes to the physical and social environments, and to government-funded supports available to all, so that disabled people can use society's systems and processes on the same basis as non-disabled people to undertake basic activities. Government provision, transport, buildings, and channels of communication need to be readily accessible to disabled people.

Disabled people also need accessible police and justice systems. Disabled people are particularly at risk of becoming targets of violence, abuse and neglect, whether in their own homes, in the community or in residential facilities. Disabled people may of course also encounter the police and justice systems as offenders. Government agencies are increasingly recognising that action is required to ensure disabled people in all these situations receive a fair deal.

As well, disabled people need to have equal access to safety and justice, and to recreation and leisure. Also, an accessible New Zealand requires communities to be accepting of disabled people and responsive to their needs.

Accessible government services

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 6: Foster an aware and responsive public service)

Accessible government services: general

A notable action taken in 2008/2009 was the development and implementation of a multifaceted accessibility action plan for the 2008 General Election, Access '08, by the Chief Electoral Office, the Electoral Enrolment Centre and the Electoral Commission in consultation with disability sector groups. The plan's initiatives included the development of the "Easy Guide to Voting"; the provision of information about voting in a range of formats including Braille, audio tapes and large print; the distribution of information about accessible polling places to disability groups throughout the country; and the production of a New Zealand Sign Language DVD in collaboration with the Deaf Association (now Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand) explaining enrolment and voting procedures.

Government departments are aware of the need to continually enhance their accessibility to disabled people. Their reported actions in 2008/2009, and their planned actions for 2009/2010, include an emphasis on promoting accessibility in their provision of information, particularly through their websites and documents; and in departmental buildings:

- completed and planned actions for accessible websites include actions for meeting or exceeding the government Web Standards, and for auditing these, with some plans including the provision for these to be tested by disabled people
- completed and planned actions for documents include plans for ensuring information on departmental services is more readily accessible to disabled people

- completed and planned actions for the accessibility of buildings include actions for ensuring these meet regulatory access requirements, with some departments also planning building changes to ensure better accessibility for Deaf and hearing impaired clients, such as assistive listening devices in meeting rooms.

Other specific actions to make government services more accessible include:

- the rollout of 15 more Community Link sites by February 2010: these sites provide for the integration of services for clients with complex needs, and the planned 15 will be in addition to the eight sites already established (Ministry of Social Development)
- assessments and online applications for support from Work and Income: this was implemented in October 2009, and the new online channel is to be progressively enabled over 2009/2010 (Ministry of Social Development)
- the appointment of a National Child Disability Advisor and four Regional Child Disability Advisors so disabled children and young people in Child, Youth and Family's care can have their support needs appropriately addressed: ongoing from March 2009 (Ministry of Social Development)
- the introduction of transition planning for disabled children and young people leaving Child, Youth and Family's services, to help them to effectively transition to appropriate adult support services: ongoing from March 2009 (Ministry of Social Development)
- work towards capturing information on disabled children and young people more effectively in the Child, Youth and Family database, to contribute to the better planning of services for them: this work began in September 2009 (Ministry of Social Development)
- research on best practice interventions for children and young people in Child, Youth and Family's care with disabilities and problem sexual behaviour: this began in March 2009 (Ministry of Social Development)
- the letting of contracts for the provision of specialist family support services for families of disabled children and young people under the care of Child, Youth and Family: July 2009–July 2011 (Ministry of Social Development)
- the development of culturally responsive child disability services in Auckland, to improve access to services for families from refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds: this work has been underway from 1 March 2009 (Ministry of Health)
- Equality Impact assessments of the Department of Labour's policy, delivery and human resources, to check for unconscious discrimination: to be launched in 2009/2010, applied over 2010/2011, and reviewed over 2011/2012 (Department of Labour)

Accessible New Zealand

- the publication of guidelines for departments on making information accessible: in 2010 (Office for Disability Issues)
- the implementation of the CommunityNet Aotearoa (CNA) website: an information-sharing resource for New Zealand community and voluntary groups providing guides, news and tools, and its design will take into account the needs of disabled people for accessing its information (Department of Internal Affairs)
- the completion in 2008/2009 of research on ACC's service accessibility for disabled people, identifying barriers to service and recommended solutions; ACC will consider this research to develop decisions about steps to respond to its findings: over 2009/2010 (ACC)
- extensions to online service options for ACC levy payers, for accessing levy information, requesting changes to information and receiving notification for key events via text messaging and email: over 2009/2010 (ACC)
- online services to enable people to get access to and manage their tax affairs: these went live on 19 July 2009 (Inland Revenue)
- a formal customer feedback and complaint process implemented for National Archives' Access Services by June 2010 (National Archives)
- the inclusion in December 2009 of Pacific disability community representatives on the Steering Group for Lu'i Ola, the interagency project aimed at better meeting the needs of disabled Pacific peoples in the Auckland region, co-sponsored by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- an investigation of the possibility of a transport disability advisory group, to give disabled people more direct participation in transport policy developments: July 2009/December 2009 (Ministry of Transport)
- provision for verbal submissions to be made in consultations, where a disabled person's impairment means she or he is not able to provide a word document or other written submission: by December 2009 (Electricity Commission)
- funding provided by the Health Research Council for research by the Māori Development Research Centre into problems faced by Māori in getting access to disability support services (Ministry of Research, Science and Technology)
- the development and initiation by Auckland Metro Crime Support in association with Auckland Land Search and Rescue of the Autism/Dementia project which uses the Wanda Trak tracking system to search for people with autism/dementia (among other groups) who regularly wander from their place of residence (New Zealand Police).

The New Zealand Police also has planned initiatives for 2009/2010 for providing increased access to crime prevention, safety and for disabled people, in particular as

part of its Service First project, aimed at improving the public's satisfaction with police services:

- exploring the potential for analysing the information gathered in its Citizens Satisfaction Surveys by disability
- exploring the possibility of completing disability audit templates on site visits by Service First teams
- working with ACC on auditing for emergency readiness and injury management.

Other actions planned for 2009/2010 to make government services more accessible include:

- an evaluation by the Ministry of Justice of technology to increase disabled people's access to courts and court proceedings, for example through audio visual links; the timing of this is to be confirmed -- the Courts (Remote Participation) Bill, enabling courts to make greater use of video links, was introduced in December 2009
- the inclusion by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of a chapter in its consular instruction manual on improving access to consular services for disabled New Zealanders who get into distress overseas.

Increasing the accessibility of services for Deaf people

A number of actions in 2008/2009 related specifically to increasing accessibility for Deaf people:

- the preparation of a DVD providing information in New Zealand Sign Language on the services provided by the Ministry of Social Development's Work and Income, Child, Youth and Family, and StudyLink Services, to be distributed in late 2009 (Ministry of Social Development)
- the publication of guidelines for government departments working with New Zealand Sign Language interpreters (Office for Disability Issues)
- the completion of New Zealand Sign Language versions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Office for Disability Issues)
- ACC's implementation of policies:
 - to inform staff and clients of the iSign interpreter service (the online booking service for New Zealand Sign Language Interpreters) and to encourage its use when needed

Accessible New Zealand

- to apply captions to all ACC's DVDs, not only those for client/claim based information (ACC).

A number of initiatives were undertaken by the New Zealand Police in 2008/2009:

- New Zealand Police's Tasman District:
 - prepared a guide on the use and provision of New Zealand Sign Language interpreters in the District, and guidelines on communicating with Deaf people
 - developed and trialled a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community Resource Pack, with the regional Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand office, that provides useful information on dealing with Deaf and hearing impaired people
- New Zealand Police's Waitemata District developed a Deaf Awareness training package in association with the local Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand branch, and provided it to all its frontline staff.

The New Zealand Police also initiated engagement with Deaf and hearing impaired groups on the development of services: in particular in the Text to Emergency Communications Centre project, aimed at enabling people to text crime reports and calls for emergency assistance into the emergency communications centre. This work is continuing, with the project to be piloted to Deaf and hearing impaired communities before being rolled out to the general public.

Other planned actions to increase the accessibility of services for Deaf people include:

- working with Deaf people and government agencies to identify the best ways to ensure departmental services are readily accessible to Deaf people (Office for Disability Issues)
- the use of the iSign online booking system for New Zealand Sign Language interpreters by Work and Income, with related training on why sign language is important to the Deaf community: to be available by March 2010 (Ministry of Social Development).

Training initiatives

A new New Zealand Qualifications Authority Pasefika Unit Standard, unit standard 25987, was registered in August 2009. Developed by Careerforce, an independent Industry Training Organisation supporting the health and disability sector, this aims to equip frontline staff with the competencies in Pacific culture and the necessary skills to ensure positive outcomes when communicating with Pacific peoples with disabilities, their family members and caregivers. The Lu'i Ola Steering Group made input to its development in 2008/2009.

A number of departments are planning training for their staff in disability awareness, to help ensure responsiveness to disabled people and thus enhance disabled

people's access to the services they need. While some departments are planning to provide training on general disability awareness, more specific training is also planned, including:

- training in New Zealand Sign Language for departmental staff and/or training in working with New Zealand Sign Language interpreters and accessing interpreters
- training for the Ministry of Social Development's frontline staff on effectively working with people on the Autism spectrum: this is to be rolled out across Work and Income by 30 June 2010.

Accessible travel

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 8: Support quality living in the community for disabled people)

Like non-disabled people, disabled people need to be able to get readily from place to place, within their neighbourhood or beyond, to get things done and to generally participate in their communities.

Many disabled people rely on public transport, so it needs to be readily available to them, and to be easy for them to use. There has been a growing realisation that making public transport more accessible will be to the advantage not only of disabled people, but to people across society: people with temporary injuries or illness, parents with children and buggies, people with limited mobility and even people carrying groceries.

The Ministry of Transport reports that:

- the Public Transport Management Act 2008, which came into force on 1 January 2009, enables regional councils to require that commercial public transport services meet minimum standards in a number of areas, including accessibility
- the New Zealand Transport Agency developed, and published in December 2008, requirements for the accessibility of buses. These come into effect on 1 January 2010 and will apply to all buses, new and used imports, which enter urban services from these dates. While it is expected to be at least 15 years before all buses meet these requirements, some buses are already being built to the specifications.

The following actions, commissioned by the New Zealand Transport Agency, will provide more information about transport needs for future planning:

- the development of a Public Transport Accessibility Audit Tool which will enable regional councils and other bodies to audit the accessibility of public transport: to be completed in early 2010
- the Gisborne Integrated Planning Pilot, which is to quantify the barriers disabled people face in Gisborne in getting access to employment, education, shopping

and recreation, following which actions will be identified to address these barriers: September 2009–March 2010.

Accessible houses and other buildings

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 8: Support quality living in the community for disabled people)

Disabled people want to carry out domestic tasks in their own homes as well as to undertake social, economic and civic activities in their communities. Houses and other buildings need to be structured so they can do these things.

Increasing attention is being given to the ‘lifetime design’ of buildings, by which buildings are designed so they can be used by all people with minimal or no further adaptation. Like more accessible transport, buildings developed according to lifetime design principles benefit all people, not only disabled people. In particular, if non-disabled occupants become less agile or mobile as they grow older, their houses either will not need to be modified to accommodate these changes or will require less costly modifications than would be required with ‘traditional’ housing.

Lifetime design

In 2008/2009, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development and the Housing New Zealand Corporation continued their contract – running until 30 August 2009 – to provide financial support for the Lifetime Design Foundation established by CCS Disability Action. This work has included the establishment of Lifemark as a symbol that a building meets the Lifetime Design standard of accessibility.

In November 2009, the Ministry of Social Development released a report prepared on behalf of Lifemark which outlined how using lifetime design principles in housing could save up to \$60 million in the housing sector for disabled people.

Planned actions for 2009/2010 include:

- the development of standards for lifetime design and accessible design for incorporation into Housing Corporation New Zealand’s new construction work: the standards are to be completed by the end of the 2009/2010 year (Housing Corporation New Zealand)
- the Healthy Housing programme, helping disabled people by making design improvements to their homes: over 2009/2010 (Housing Corporation New Zealand and district health boards).

An accessible built environment

Other actions undertaken in 2008/2009 to make buildings more accessible included:

- a best practice guide to refurbishment and fair wear and tear in retirement villages, to help operators and residents with disabilities understand their rights and obligations (Department of Building and Housing)
- the publication of research commissioned by the Centre for Housing Research Aotearoa New Zealand (CHRANZ), a business unit of Housing New Zealand Corporation, on:
 - scenarios for older people's housing
 - access to safe and secure housing for at-risk and vulnerable young people, including young disabled people needing additional support in their transition to independence and young people recovering from mental illness and/or addictions (jointly commissioned with the Ministry of Youth Development).

Planned actions include:

- research on the private rental market, including on renters in the private market who are employed in part or full-time work and cannot afford to buy at lower quartile house sale prices (commissioned by CHRANZ, to be incorporated into research commissioned by the Department of Building and Housing)
- research on the older renter (Department of Building and Housing)
- a review of the Building Code so that it includes requirements for uniform signage to help disabled people to find their way safely and efficiently in buildings: proposals for public consultation on possible options are to be prepared by June 2010 (Department of Building and Housing)
- a long-term, strategic plan for school property which takes into account the needs of disabled students: this will be ongoing, and targets have been set for the Ministry of Education's 2009/2010 Property Investment work programme (Ministry of Education).

Getting information and communicating with others

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 6: Foster an aware and responsive public service; Objective 8: Support quality living in the community for disabled people)

The channels of communication available in society need to be accessible so that disabled people can use them as they require, both to receive information and to communicate with others.

Major developments in recent years, which provide a foundation for further actions, have been the implementation of New Zealand Relay (NZ Relay) in 2005 by the Ministry for Economic Development to provide a telecommunications service for people who are Deaf, hearing impaired, Deaf-blind, or speech impaired; and the

passing of the New Zealand Sign Language Act in 2006, which recognised New Zealand Sign Language as an official language.

Telecommunications services

A number of developments are underway:

- A trial is running between July 2009 and November 2009 of a Video Relay Service operating under NZ Relay, which enables users of New Zealand Sign Language to communicate via video through the internet or videophone.
- The Ministry of Economic Development is consulting with users of NZ Relay and other stakeholders on the most appropriate services for it to provide and on the best ways to fund its services. The consultation is running from October 2009–December 2009.
- Extra funding has been provided by government to keep the Video Relay Service running for another year while the results of its trial and the consultation on NZ Relay are considered.

New Zealand Sign Language interpreters

The Office for Disability Issues has provided a grant to evaluate a one-year pilot post-graduate skills diploma course in New Zealand Sign Language interpreting. The course, to be provided at Victoria University of Wellington and beginning in the summer term of 2009/2010, is the first post-graduate Sign Language interpreters course in New Zealand. It is aimed at enhancing the communication between Deaf people and hearing people in complex settings, including legal and medical settings.

Broadband access

In 2008/2009, the National Library of New Zealand installed free broadband access at public libraries (over 500 libraries in 119 library sites) to help give blind and vision impaired people access to the internet. This initiative comprised the investigation, testing and installation of two software products: a portable screen reader called NVDA which reads information out loud, and Magnifying Glass which zooms on to the screen area which the mouse is hovering over. In October 2009 this initiative received the Extra Touch award, made annually by the Association of Blind Citizens for outstanding contributions towards improving access or services for blind or vision impaired people.

Access to broadcasting programmes

The Ministry of Culture and Heritage is undertaking a work programme to ensure that people with sensory impairments can access broadcasting programmes. This work

includes the examination of options such as increased captioning and the introduction of audio description services. Its timing is still to be determined.

Opportunities for leisure and recreation

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 9: Support lifestyle choices, recreation and culture for disabled people)

Opportunities for disabled people to participate in leisure and recreation are increasingly acknowledged as being an integral part of their participation in the community. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises the importance of such opportunities in its inclusion of a specific article on this, Article 30: Participation in Cultural Life, Recreation and Sport.

Increasing the opportunities for disabled people to take part in leisure and recreation helps to improve their health and quality of life, as it does for non-disabled people; it also promotes their visibility in the community, and provides chances for disabled people and non-disabled people to get together.

As discussed in relation to Resourceful citizens: Getting healthy and staying healthy, Sport and Recreation New Zealand provided funding in 2008/2009, and will continue to do so over 2009–2012, for the Halberg Trust and Special Olympics New Zealand to support initiatives to get more disabled New Zealanders involved in and supporting sport and recreation.

The following actions will also help to increase disabled people's opportunities for leisure and recreation:

- a resource document "Arts for All" was launched in December 2009 by Creative New Zealand in partnership with Arts Access Aotearoa – a practical resource guide for arts organisations to encourage them to market the arts to disabled people (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)
- open rehearsals of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for blind people and the general public: its timing is still to be determined (Ministry for Culture and Heritage).

Accepting and responsive communities

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 1: Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society)

Disabled people can take advantage of the opportunities available to them more readily when their communities provide a welcoming environment. This means communities are accepting of disabled people, not fearful; see them as individuals with much to offer, rather than hold stereotyped and negative views about them; and appreciate the barriers they may face.

Actions towards making communities accepting and responsive include:

- a collaborative initiative, led by the Waikato District Health Board's Population Health Unit and Community Waikato, to identify and address barriers for kaumātua and disabled whānau in participating in activities on marae: the timeline for this will be determined with reference to communities' needs (Ministry of Health)
- a number of initiatives under the Lu'i Ola project, to be completed by the end of March 2010 and evaluated by the end of June 2010: a community leadership fono; community media activity; and the release of a resource guide for use by Pacific church Ministers – the Church Engagement toolkit – to counter negative community attitudes to disability (funded by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the Office for Disability Issues)
- the Ministry of Health's contracting of Age Concern New Zealand to carry out health promotion activities to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing needs of older people, to promote respect, and to reduce discrimination against older people: the current contract ends 31 December 2009
- two projects to be undertaken under the Like Minds, Like Mine programme, to provide a better understanding of the barriers of stigma and discrimination and of their impact on mental health service users; a project to measure and monitor discrimination and social inclusion, and a mental health services user survey: to be completed in 2010 (Ministry of Health).

Modern disability supports

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 7: Create long-term support systems centred on the individual)

Disabled people need to have ready access to the specialised supports that will help them to make choices and participate as fully as possible in society. The supports need to provide the kind of help which allows people to get on with their lives and to participate as much as they would like to in learning, working, relationships, civic life and the community.

The factors making a major contribution to this are enhancing choice, self-determination and control; improving access; improving services; and ensuring the disability support workforce can provide good quality care.

These factors are in accordance with the directions provided by the August 2007 report of the Review of Long-term Disability Supports, led by the Office for Disability Issues; the 2008 report of the Social Services Select Committee's inquiry into the quality of care and service provision for disabled people; and the February 2009 Government response to the Select Committee's report. Government agencies are undertaking actions in accordance with these directions.

Increased choice, self-determination and control

Disabled people have often felt they have little control over the disability supports they receive, and the services are not flexible enough to meet their individual needs.

Government agencies are undertaking actions to answer these concerns, recognising the need to remove a 'once size fits all approach', and to increase the flexibility in supports so they can be more appropriate to individual circumstances.

In 2008/2009, the Ministry of Health developed a resource booklet for disabled people living in, or thinking of living in, community residential support services for people with physical, intellectual or sensory disabilities.

The Ministry is to undertake a number of further actions to help promote the exercise of choice and self-determination:

- the provision of a consistent national framework for Individualised Funding arrangements, under which disabled people can take control of the disability supports for which they have been assessed by holding, managing and governing the funding for these: to be in place by May 2010
- an expansion of the use of 'supported living' (in which services are wrapped around a person to meet their goals): a draft service specification was completed in October 2009 and an implementation plan for its delivery is to be completed by December 2009.

Modern disability supports

Funding is being provided through the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology for projects aimed at assessing or developing technology to enhance disabled people's independence and otherwise help them in their day-to-day lives (Ministry of Research, Science and Technology).

Improving access

Attention is being given to ensuring that assessments of disabled people for supports are more accurate and are streamlined. In particular, the Ministry of Health began work in July 2009 to implement InterRAI Home Care and Contact Assessment tools in all district health boards, to improve needs assessment for long-term home support and aged residential care. This work will be completed over three to four years.

As well, since disabled people have often found support services to be fragmented, with different agencies dealing with different aspects of one disabled person's needs, government agencies are now giving attention to a 'whole of life' focus, including improved co-ordination of services. The Ministry of Health is now investigating local area co-ordination-type models to help improve identification of what individual disabled people need to live "a good life", and their access to related supports. A report-back on developments will be provided to the Ministerial Committee on Disability Issues in March 2010.

Improving services

Government agencies are giving increasing attention to ensuring that services meet disabled people's support needs more effectively, including recognising the diversity of needs.

Achievements in 2008/2009 included:

- the development of options to enable young people with high support needs to live in residential care which is age-appropriate, so they no longer are placed in aged care facilities: a review of current service models will be completed by February 2010 and an options paper completed in June 2010
- the establishment in November 2009 of the Lu'i Ola Pacific Disability Provider Network Committee, comprising senior representatives of Pacific disability services provider groups, to provide the Lu'i Ola Steering Group with service delivery advice in relation to the disability-related needs of Pacific peoples (Ministry of Health).

The Ministry of Health is also undertaking a number of projects aiming to enhance services and improve access to equipment and modifications. These fall into five categories: complex housing modifications; prioritisation of services; measurement of service quality and outcomes; assessor accreditation; and equipment purchasing and provision. Recommendations and an implementation plan are due in February 2010.

The Ministry of Health is also giving increasing attention to improving services for carers of disabled people. Achievements over 2008/2009 include:

- the implementation of new respite services so carers can have a break; and the securing of new funding in Budget 2009 for dedicated residential beds for older people
- the development of service specifications for planned respite services for caregivers of people with mental health needs and addictions: these are available for use by district health board funders and planners to contract for non-government organisations from 1 July 2009 and district health board providers from 1 July 2010
- the completion of a stocktake of current respite care and carer relief, to be released in 2010.

The Ministry of Health is also undertaking:

- a stocktake and gap analysis of currently contracted services to determine the improvements to be made to help informal carers of disabled people to recruit relief carers
- work to examine what changes or enhancements can be made to improve support for carers using the Carer Support Subsidy within current financial parameters.

An effective disability support workforce

The quality of the disability support workforce has a major impact on the quality of life for disabled people requiring specialised support. Government is undertaking actions to help ensure there are sufficient support workers to meet the demand for them; there is a continuity of the service provided, especially through reducing the turnover of staff; and the workforce is skilled and empowered to deliver quality support.

In 2008/2009, two new qualifications were introduced to meet the Ministry of Health's need for a qualification pathway for Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination workers. The Ministry has had close involvement with the independent industry training organisation Careerforce in the development of the National Certificate in Disability Support Assessment, Planning and Co-ordination. The Graduate Diploma in Education – Disability Support Specialisation was initiated by the Ministry and is offered through the University of Auckland.

In September 2008, the Ministry of Health released "Let's Get Real: Real Skills for people working in mental health and addiction," a competency and capability framework being phased in from 2009 to 2011. This framework aims to guide workforce development activities in the mental health and addiction centre. Its first

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phase has been the development of guides, tools and other resources to support the use and application of the framework.

The Ministry of Health's Disability Support Services Workforce Action Plan is the basis for all new funding and planning for the disability support workforce funded by the Ministry from 2009 to 2014. There are three major new initiatives for 2009/2010:

- A National Training Co-ordination Service is to be established to prepare an annual training plan and implement this by administering disability support services training grants. These training grants will be used by the Ministry as incentives for employers to increase the number of their workers who are qualified to provide disability support services. This work is to begin in early 2010.
- Funding for Disability Support – Leadership Initiatives for 2010 will create leadership development opportunities for consumers of disability support services and emerging leaders within the paid workforce. The fund was established in 2008 but has been modified to include initiatives that will improve health outcomes for people with a disability and their carers.
- A project is being funded through the Health Workforce Information Programme within District Health Boards New Zealand to gather comprehensive data on the disability support services workforce. This project, which is now under way, will ensure more efficient and effective workforce planning from 2011.

Other planned actions include:

- the support of professional development for Pacific providers of services for Pacific disabled people, through the continued implementation of the Lu'i Ola programme: 2009–2014 (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and Ministry of Health)
- research by the Donald Beasley Institute, funded through the Health Research Council, on the high turnover of frontline support staff in residential services for people with intellectual disability; this will inform policy and practice to improve staff retention in intellectual disability services in New Zealand (Ministry of Research, Science and Technology).

Improving information

(New Zealand Disability Strategy Objective 10: Collect and use relevant information about disabled people and disability issues)

Statistics New Zealand is undertaking initiatives that will provide better information overall on the situations of disabled people, and a basis for better planning to meet their needs:

- the development of the 2011 Census of Population and the 2011 Post-Census Disability Survey: the developmental work now being undertaken will include liaison with disability groups, to ensure the data collected is appropriate information for use by government agencies and community and disability groups
- the publication of reports from the analysis of the 2006 Disability Survey data: reports on Disability and the Labour Market, Disability and Education, Disability and Informal Care, and Disability and Travel and Transport have already been published; the reports yet to be published are Disability and Māori and Disability and Unmet Needs
- a Time Use Survey, collecting information over 2009/2010, which will include information on family carers of disabled people
- an extended analytical programme, using existing data sources, to gather information on the most important family statistics.

Statistics New Zealand also initiated the following actions in 2008/2009, to continue throughout 2009/2010, so disabled people will have better access to the information it has available:

- a review and external audit of Statistics New Zealand's field interviewer processes, with a specific focus on its customer services provided to survey respondents who have disabilities
- the development of protocols for service delivery to cater for the needs of Statistics New Zealand customers and statistics users who are Deaf.

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