

# New Zealand Disability Action Plan Progress Report 2019 – 2023 | Executive Summary for the third progress report January 2021 to June 2021

The Disability Action Plan 2019–2023 (the DAP), was launched in November 2019, it aims to improve the wellbeing of disabled people through establishing work programmes that align with the eight outcomes of the New Zealand Disability Strategy. There are 29 work programmes, 28 that are overseen by distinct ministries and one that takes a cross government approach to improving disability data and evidence. In total 9 agencies are represented. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) manages the six-monthly reporting as the key monitoring mechanism of the DAP. This is the third six-monthly report to be produced.

Progress on the 29 work programmes can be recorded as follows:

* 2 (6.9%) work programmes were reported as Completed.
* 4 (13.8%) work programmes were reported being on-track or ahead.
* 18 (62.1%) work programmes were reported being on-track with minimal risks/issues.
* 4 (13.8%) work programmes were reported to be off-track with minimal risks/issues.
* 1 (3.4%) of work programmes were reported as off track with significant risks or issues.

This is excellent progress with over 80% of work programmes being on track and just over 20% either having been completed or ahead of where they ought to be. It is concerning that any reports are off track, but only one report was seriously off track. Off Track refers to a work programme that is not meeting the targets set down for the six-month period of the report. One of the reasons for work not running to schedule has been the continued effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Several Ministries, but particularly the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development, have put in a vast amount of energy over the last fifteen months into responding to the pandemic and as a result, resources were diverted away from the Disability Action Plan projects. With the continuing nature of the pandemic, it is likely that some ministries will continue to be impacted for some time.

Whilst the quality of the reports is increasing, there are some agencies who are struggling to meet the reporting deadlines.

Some of these agencies are finding it difficult to keep their focus on what they are being asked to report on and providing too much information on projects that are not strictly part of the Disability Action Plan.

Below is a summary of some of the key actions from the eight outcomes of the DAP;

## Outcome 1: Education

The Education reports were submitted late and whilst they have now been incorporated into the Disability Action Plan, they have not been through the usual approval process agreed with the Disabled Persons Organisations (DPO) coalition. As a result, the outcomes of these reports will not be dealt with here.

## Outcome Two: Employment and Economic Security

Key actions from Outcome Two are that:

* A New Zealand Diploma, in Health and Wellbeing Level Five (Employment Support) has been established and will be launched soon.
* The Minister for Disability Issues highlighted a desire to move accessibility forward therefore, a partnership has been forged between MSD Officials and the Access Alliance for this purpose.
* An internship Co-Ordinator has been appointed and has begun work with tertiary education institutions, encouraging disabled students to apply for public sector internships.

## Outcome Three: Health and Wellbeing

 Most of the work due to be undertaken by the Ministry of Health is ‘Off Track’ due to the ongoing nature of the Covid-19 Pandemic. On a positive note, the amendments to the Mental Health Compulsory Assessment and Treatment Bill were introduced to Parliament in March 2021 and are making their way through the legislative process.

Other key outcomes include:

* The Office for Seniors, Better Later Life plan is on track. Budget 2021 allocated funding for the initiatives in this plan to be implemented.
* The Sport New Zealand Action Plan is progressing well.

## Outcome Four: Rights Protection and Justice

Under this outcome, the Ministry of Justice oversees a number of work programmes.

Key Outcome are that:

* The Washington Group Short Set Questions have been incorporated into the form that is completed for all new prisoners. This allows disability data to be collated for prisoners;
* The Sexual Violence Legislation Bill had its first reading in Parliament, the legislative process should be completed by April 2022. The amendments in this legislation help to protect survivors of sexual violence and prevent them from being retraumatised as they give evidence in court.
* The Ministry of justice has completed the setting up of the communication assistance programme. This means that where disabled people participating in court proceedings need assistance to communicate, this need is assessed in advance and the appropriate support provided.
* Public consultation is underway on adoption law reform.
* The Family Court, Supporting Children in Court legislation reached the select committee stage of the legislative process during this timeframe. The legislation aims to ensure that children’s views are considered in family court cases that affect them.

## Outcome Five: Accessibility

Much of the work in Outcome Five has been discussed above with regards to the introduction of Accessibility Legislation.

Some other major achievements for outcome five have been that:

* As of June 2021, 4,500 Kaianga Ora homes have been adapted to meet tenants individual needs;
* Waka Kotahi has commenced two research projects about:
	+ Understanding the transport experiences of disabled people including the barriers to using the Total Mobility Scheme;
	+ Investigating the external noises emitted by electric buses;

Waka Kotahi also wishes to ensure that new and existing tools e.g. journey-planner meets the needs of disabled people.

## Outcome Six: Attitudes

Outcome Six, Attitudes, did not have an agreed work programme during this reporting period and therefore does not have agency reporting. It is hoped that work programmes delivered under other outcomes will contribute to attitude changes.

## Outcome Seven: Choice and Control

Key results for outcome seven are as follows:

* Support continues to be provided through the Mana Whaikaha and Enabling Good Lives schemes to disabled people in the regions selected for the trial;
* A cabinet paper is in development advising a national rollout of EGL, including ensuring the voice of disabled people is represented;
* A Person was recruited to edit the overview document about Supported Decision Making.

## Outcome Eight: Leadership

Outcome Eight is about encouraging and enabling more disabled people to take up positions of leadership within the New Zealand Government Sector, mostly through advertising opportunities on crown boards and advisory committees. Most of the work in this outcome is concerned with continuing to advertise opportunities to those on the database, maintaining the database and promoting the database across the public services sector. Work is ongoing in these areas.

## Cross Cutting Project: Disability Data

In order for disabled people to be included in government policies, the situation for disabled people needs to be quantified. Therefore, reliable disability data needs to be gathered. To this end:

* Regular meetings of the Disability Data and Evidence working group are in progress;
* Six-monthly reporting to the Minister has been established;
* Development of the New Zealand Disability Strategy Outcomes Framework has been completed.
* There is a large amount of Mahi being undertaken in relation to the eight outcomes associated with the New Zealand Disability Strategy and Action Plan. This is despite the ongoing difficulties associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the work that is off track has been delayed due to COVID and it is hoped that when New Zealand emerges from the pandemic, progress on this work will pick up again.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy and earlier DAP reports and executive summaries can be found on the ODI website: [www.odi.govt.nz](http://www.odi.govt.nz).