# Developmental Evaluation Report Summary

## For residential services – sensory, learning and physical disability

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| **Name of provider:** | L'Arche Kapiti |
| **Number of locations visited by region** | 1 |
| **Date visit/s completed:** | 15/11/17 |
| **Name of Developmental Evaluation Agency:** | SAMS |

## General Overview

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| L’Arche is described as a community where people with and without disabilities share life together in a community of faith. Its foundations originate from the humanitarian and social visionary, Jean Vanier. L’Arche Kapiti is associated with the International Federation of L’Arche which is present in more than 30 countries around the world. All L’Arche communities operate independently yet are linked in their commitment to the L’Arche Statement of Identity and Mission. While L’Arche is faith-based following many Christian principles associated with a belief in God, all dominations are welcomed into the L’Arche community.The L’Arche structure is characterised by having a paid, live-in House Leader and one or more live-in House Assistants who live alongside Core Members under the same roof, sharing life as a family. Live-in House Assistants volunteer their time and are often visitors from overseas so their length of stay may be determined by their visas. The House Assistants are supported by a Community Leader, a Health Coordinator and an Administrator. A Board oversees governance and a Community Council provide support to the Community Leader. Additionally, ‘Friends of L’Arche’ (members of the wider Kapiti Community) offer support to the L’Arche community. The Core Members in this review have been associated with L’Arche for over fifteen years. Prior to shifting into one of the two new purpose-built homes on xxxxxxxxx Road, the people lived at another L’Arche home. The Core Members exercise a degree of independence and there is evidence that some are growing in skill development and autonomy. There are opportunities for the Core Members to be supported 1:1 and opportunities to engage in the wider Kapiti Community are increasing. xxxxx of the Core Members access an external day programme with the xxxxxx person participating in activities through the Senior Day Programme three days a week from their home. This enables them to have a slower start to their day and accommodates changing health needs.  |

## Quality of Life Domains – evaluative comment on how well the service is contributing to people achieving the quality of life they seek

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| 1) IDENTITYThe people are supported to have a personal plan and identify goals related to their interests. The plans are reviewed every 4 months and the status of goals is discussed. There is evidence of past goals being achieved. The Core Member chooses whether they want to continue with these goals and in at least one instance the Core Member requested a goal be discontinued. The support team (House Leader & House Assistants) work cohesively and share ways they can support the Core Members to achieve their goals. They hold weekly meetings where information can be shared in a formal way, although there was also considerable discussion in general about how they could further promote the interests of the Core Members. The House Assistants demonstrated a ‘can do’ attitude.L’Arche’s Mission and Identity Statement is: *“We are people with and without intellectual disability sharing a community of faith. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our life together. We seek to live a world that recognises the unique value of every person and our need for each other.”* There is strong evidence that the Mission and Identity Statement are not only upheld but ingrained in the practices of the service and are the reasons families and Core Members choose to live in the L'Arche community. How L’Arche Kapiti prepares for the new direction of Disability Support Services (DSS) in New Zealand, known as Service Transformation so it remains true to its Mission and Identity is worth further exploration.All of the people residing in xx xxxxxxxxx have lived together for nearly fifteen years before recently shifting into a new purpose-built home. There is evidence that Home Agreements were completed in 2017; however, it would be helpful for the service to review the Home Agreements to ensure they are up-to-date and include specific details related to their Work and Income Benefit. xxxxx people attend an external day programme five days a week or all or part of their week. One person splits their week by attending the external day programme two days a week and accessing activities from the home the remaining three days. One person has paid employment for 6 hours a week. The evidence indicates that the families and the people have input into the service through participation in planning meetings, house meetings, prayer sessions, shared meals and feedback surveys. The Community Leader held a ‘Vision and Mission’ meeting where families, Core Members, Assistants and members of the wider L'Arche community met to explore options about plans for the remaining property. L'Arche Kapiti is encouraged to continue to fully consult with its Core Members, the Friends of L'Arche, Assistants and House Leaders, Community Council and the Community Leader prior to further developments to the property.There is overwhelming evidence that the people enjoy a lifestyle of their choosing. Each person has a personal photo book, *Life Book,* which depicts many milestones in their lives. The people were happy to talk about what they do; however, they were very busy so spent little time chatting with the Evaluation Team. The camaraderie amongst the people and the Assistants was genuine and heart-felt.2) AUTONOMYThe people use verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to express themselves and some have basic literacy skills. More formalised communication strategies have been tried in the past with minimal success. Occasionally visual cues are provided to help the people visualise concepts such as meal planning, saving for specific items, etc. The people make basic decisions about their life, eg, what to eat, activities to pursue, what clothes to wear, etc.The people share all household tasks with the House Assistants; however, this is an area that sometimes requires considerable prompts. It was recognised that while people are encouraged to make their own choices, they often benefit from gentle guidance. We gained the impression some of the people help with drying the dishes, sorting cutlery, setting the table, chopping vegetables, emptying the dishwasher, choosing clothes for the next day, baking and cooking meat on the BBQ.There are four House Assistants and a House Leader who fill the rostered hours. There are many occasions when more than one Assistant is living/working alongside the people. This enables numerous opportunities for 1:1 interaction whether that is in the home or on outings outside the home. The large purpose built home provides the people and House Assistants with adequate space for privacy. The home has been built very close to another L'Arche purpose-built home and the wet weather has slowed the intended planting of trees, shrubs and grass. This causes the home to currently lack privacy from nearby neighbours. Thoughtful landscaping the grounds can maximise privacy while still enabling the Core Members of the two homes to intermingle easily.L'Arche is currently updating files so a more systematic approach is in place. This will ensure the files are clear, accurate and up-to-date.The Core Members experience similar life patterns to other members of the Kapiti community. They attend day programmes, work, use public transport, attend church, socialise with family and friends, use local shops and community facilities, go on holidays and volunteer.3) AFFILIATIONThe people enjoy shopping, attending church, playing sport competing in Special Olympics, using public transport, swimming, visiting friends, going to the local pub, having meals at the RSA, participating in the Shed Project, belonging to clubs/groups and frequenting cafés. The people have strong family networks through which they have additional opportunities to interact with the wider community. The people have regular visits to their doctors and dentists and visits to see a nurse occur every three months. Access to audiologists and an ophthalmologist occur as required.4) SAFEGUARDSThe people are linked to a number of networks including their families, the wider L'Arche family, the church community, the L'Arche community and work/volunteer groups. Some of the people have buddies they do things with. They are known to their immediate neighbours as they are also part of the L'Arche community. L'Arche has a variety of ways to help minimise any risks which may impact on the people’s lives. Proactive strategies are used to deescalate situations. The training records indicate that the Assistants participate in numerous training opportunities which enable them to effectively support the people. 5) RIGHTSL'Arche Kapiti is a very inclusive community who welcome the involvement of others in the lives of the Core Members. The Orientation process, staff meetings and training reinforce the rights of the Core Members. The families interviewed described their ability to raise concerns and are pleased to note that the way in which their issues are addressed has improved.The philosophy of ‘least restrictive option’ is clear in the way the staff support the people to stay safe while enabling them to experience ‘dignity of risk’. 6)HEALTH AND WELLNESSThe people are supported to maintain good health through thoughtful eating habits and gentle exercise. One person has been requested to be reminded about eating fewer sugary foods. Another person is vigilant in his quest to minimise salt and fat.  |

## Outline of requirements and recommendations (not including those relevant to support for specific individuals)[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Requirement**

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| N/A |

## Recommendations

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| L'Arche explores how it prepares for the new direction of DSS, eg, Service Transformation. L'Arche reviews the Home Agreements to ensure they are up-to-date and include specific details related to the Work and Income Benefit.L'Arche Kapiti to continue to fully consult with its Core Members, the Friends of L'Arche, Assistants and House Leaders, Community Council and the Community Leader prior to further developments to the property.L'Arche continues to be mindful of the impact on Core Members and House Assistances as and when their involvement changes.L'Arche ensures Core Members’ files are clear, accurate and up-to-date.L'Arche seeks advice about landscaping so maximum privacy is obtained while still enabling the Core Members of the two homes to intermingle easily.  |

1. Please see the [evaluation tool](http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/contracting-disability-support-services/developmental-evaluation-disability-support-services) for reference [↑](#footnote-ref-1)