



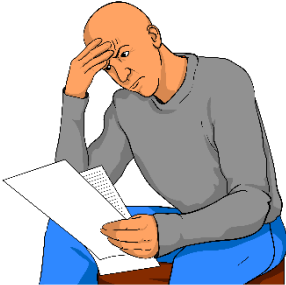
**A message from Whaikaha –  
Ministry of Disabled People  
to disabled survivors of abuse in care**



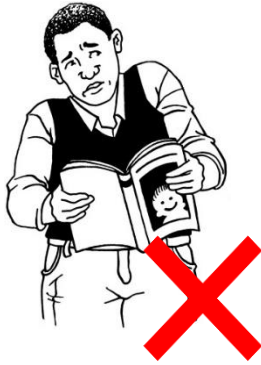
**Paula Tesoriero**  
**Chief Executive**

**Published: November 2024**

## Before you start



This Easy Read document talks about abuse.



This information may upset some people when they are reading it.

This information is not meant to scare anyone.



If you are upset after reading this Easy Read document you can talk to your:



- whānau / family
- friends.



You can contact the Survivor Experiences Service for support.

In New Zealand you can **phone:**

**0800 456 090**



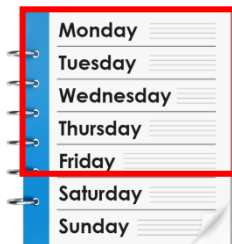
If you are calling from Australia you can **phone:**

**1 800 456 032**

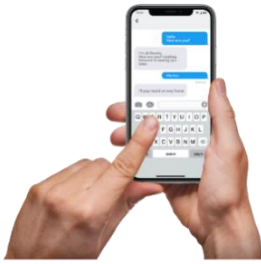


You can call this number:

- between **8:30 am** to **4:30 pm**
- from **Monday** to **Friday**.



These times are for the New Zealand time zones.



You can also send a **text** to the Survivor Experiences Service.



In New Zealand you can send a **text** to:

**8328**



If you are texting from Australia you can send a **text** to:

**+61 438 384 957**



It does not cost any money to call / text the Survivor Experiences Service.



You can also send the Survivor Experiences Service an **email** at:

**[contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz](mailto:contact@survivorexperiences.govt.nz)**

## About this document



On the 12 November 2024 different parts of Government made a **public apology** to people who had been abused while in:

- state / government care
- faith-based care.



A **public apology** is when someone says sorry to a group of people in a way that means everyone can be a part of what is said.



This document is a **summary** of the **transcript** of a video message from Paula Tesoriero.



A **summary** is:

- shorter than the original message
- tells you what you need to know.



A **transcript** is a written document of the words someone has said.



Paula Tesoriero is the **Chief Executive** of Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.

A **Chief Executive** is the person in charge of an organisation.

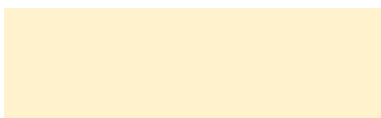


The video message is in support of the public apology that has been made to the survivors of abuse in care.



This document includes some **quotes** from Paula Tesoriero.

A **quote** is an exact copy in writing of what someone has said.



The quotes are in yellow boxes like this.

# Message from Paula Tesoriero Chief Executive of Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People



The message begins with Paula Tesoriero greeting everyone in:

- te reo Māori
- Pacific languages.

Paula says:



“E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā mōrehu o te motu, tēnā koutou katoa.



Talofa lava, kia orana, mālō e lelei, nisa bula vinaka, warm Pacific greetings.”





Paula also introduces herself in te reo Māori by saying:

“Ko Paula Tesoriero tōku ingoa.

Ko te Tumu Whakarae ahau i te Manatū Whaikaha, Ministry of Disabled People.”

Paula then says in English:

“My name is Paula Tesoriero, and I am the Chief Executive of Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People

I am a disabled woman with short brown hair wearing a white top with black spots.”



“I would like to begin by **acknowledging** how important, and also how **challenging** today is for:

- disabled people
- Deaf
- tāngata whaikaha Māori
- tāngata Turi

right across Aotearoa.



**Acknowledge** means you:

- say you know that something happened
- understand something is true.



**Challenging** means hard / difficult.



**“Survivors, you courageously** shared your experiences in the hope your peers, those that follow, will not **endure** what you did.



I have heard and read many of your experiences, I have witnessed your pain, and I have seen your strength.

Thank you for sharing with Aotearoa.”



People who have been through abuse in care are called **survivors**.



**Courageous** means someone is:

- very brave
- mentally strong which means being strong in your mind.



**Endure** means to go through something that is not nice.



“I am making this statement today to support the apologies for abuse in care made by the Prime Minister and my Chief Executive colleagues that deliver care.”



“The apology, which was made today [12 November 2024], is also challenging for:



- whānau / family
- carers
- supporters



and

- friends.”



For many, you were told by people you should have been able to trust, that it was best if your disabled or Deaf whānau member was cared for **professionally** by the state.



**Professionally** means the people who were being paid as carers should have:

- looked after people well
- given the care / support needed
- kept people safe.



“You thought you were doing right by them. And in many situations this decision was made for you, not with you.

Sadly, the state failed you too.”



“Because of the poor health outcomes for disabled people, there are many disabled people survivors who were too unwell or not alive to share their experiences with the Royal Commission [Abuse in Care] or to be part of this significant day.



I acknowledge their passing.”



There were many more survivors who:

- did not speak to the Royal Commission
- could not come forward because they were ill.





“I know that today can mean nothing without action.

Whanaketia, the title of the Royal Commission’s final report, means moving from the darkness to the light.



We must do this together.

I join my Chief Executive colleagues in their **commitment** to change.”



A **commitment** is an agreement to do something.



“We know disabled people experience poorer outcomes in many areas compared to non-disabled people.”



“The **creation** of Whaikaha, the Ministry of Disabled people provides a **dedicated voice** for disability in the leadership of government agencies.

Our role is to work with other government agencies to **improve** things for disabled people.”



**Creation** means to make or set something up.



Here **dedicated voice** means to give disabled people a voice so they can be heard / seen



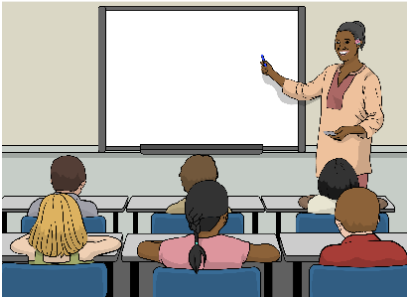
**Improve** means to make things better.





“We must **educate** and change **attitudes**.

When society values disabled people and works to remove **barriers** to full inclusion, we **reduce** the risk of violence towards our community.”

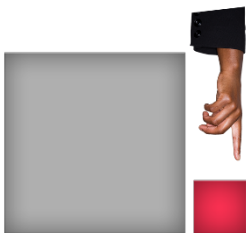


**Educate** means to teach people.



**Attitudes** means how people think about things.

**Barriers** are things that make it hard to do things.



**Reduce** means to make something smaller / less.



“I have **engaged** with the Abuse in Care Royal Commission, and I have been responsible for people’s care through providing disability supports.

I have gained a greater understanding for what is involved in building a system where people are free from abuse and neglect.

There is still so much work to do.”

**Engaged** means to work together.



“For example, much more needs to be done to ensure disabled people can also access **mainstream safeguarding and support services.**”



**Mainstream safeguarding and support services** means support services that:

- are for everyone
- keep people safe.



**Safeguarding** protects the rights of a person to make their own decisions about their life.



“I am proud of the actions that Whaikaha took to strengthen the **quality and safeguarding system** for disabled people.”

**Quality** is about how good or bad something is.



“This includes, developing a quality framework for disability support services, and services to prevent violence and abuse of disabled people.



These [services] are informed by and led by disabled people.”



“As we move towards the **future**, we must have a system that allows all people to **flourish**, and to live a life where they are safe and shown **unconditional care and respect.**”



The **future** in time / years to come.



**Flourish** means to:

- do well in life
- make your own choices / decisions
- be safe from harm.



**Unconditional care and respect** means to accept somebody for who they are.



“Thank you for your strength throughout history, your strength today and your strength as you continue to engage with the state so future **generations** have a better experience.”



Future **generations** are people who live in the years to come.



“A heartfelt personal thanks to survivors both past and present who have engaged with our work, and across government to give disabled people more choice and control.



Your courage, your stories, your work will guide me, my colleagues, and the next generation of leaders.

This, this will be your **legacy**.”



Here **legacy** means the things someone does now will mean good changes for other people in the time to come.



Paula ends her message by thanking everyone in te reo Māori.

Paula says:



“Ngā mihi nui, ki a koutou katoa.”

This information has been written by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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