

# **Progress in Implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy**

**Report of the  
Minister for Disability Issues  
to the House of Representatives**

**For the Period  
1 October 2001 to 30 June 2002**

# Office for Disability issues

Te Tari Mō Ngā Take Hauātanga  
Administered by the Ministry of Social Development

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# Minister's Foreword

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It is my great honour as the Minister for Disability Issues to present to the House of Representatives the second government report on implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

The launch of the Strategy in April 2001 by the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Helen Clark and the former Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Lianne Dalziel, fulfilled a key Labour-Alliance pre-election promise and marked a turning point in the relationship between the Government and people with disabilities.



It is important not to lose sight of what the Strategy's vision is about. The Strategy's vision is of a society based on the human rights, empowerment and participation of all New Zealanders and of a society that values and celebrates diversity and recognises the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Its primary focus is on what government departments and other publicly funded organisations need to do to remove the barriers that face people with disabilities.

As I said in my first report, the Strategy gives us a national framework to address disability issues across agencies, policies, services and legislation. The Strategy's 15 objectives and 113 detailed actions continue to influence government action to promote a more inclusive society. This report continues to measure our progress against the 2001/2002 implementation plans of ten key government departments, covering projects from 1 October 2001 to 30 June 2002.

This report notes a higher level of participation of people with disabilities on various advisory and reference groups and I am encouraged by this. The report also indicates increased consultation between the disability sector and the Government on policy matters that affect people with disabilities. Nevertheless, further work by all departments to continue to improve consultation with the disability sector should occur. Input from people with disabilities is pivotal, as it will contribute to the development of better policies which will enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities in the future.

A comprehensive evaluation framework and a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the Strategy have now to be developed by the Office for Disability Issues. These will help ensure that future reports can provide an account of outcomes as well as inputs. The Office is also to examine timeframes for reporting, to help overcome the problem of work commencing after an implementation plan has been published and being completed before the plan has been reported on. Overall, the Office will work with departments to develop a more measurable implementation plan and a report structure which will not be arduous for departments to work with.

Future annual reports to Parliament will be more comprehensive, monitoring the progress of government departments over a full year. I am very keen to see changes occur in the style of the implementation plans and reporting process to show how the implementation of the Strategy has changed the lives of people with disabilities. The Government's overall progress in implementing the Strategy will be evaluated after five years and ten years with the first major evaluation occurring in 2005.

Again, I want to acknowledge the leadership and commitment of the national advocacy organisation DPA (the Assembly of People with Disabilities) and thank their National President, Bill Wrightson, for DPA's message of support.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy is a powerful tool for change. I congratulate all those who have contributed to the progress already made, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to build a better society that values all its citizens and encourages their full participation.



Hon Ruth Dyson  
Minister for Disability Issues

# Message from DPA

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DPA (NZ) Inc appreciates the invitation and the opportunity to comment on this second report on the implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy which was launched in April 2001.

Since our creation 20 years ago, DPA remains New Zealand's only comprehensive disability advocacy voice. We played an active leadership role in the production of the Strategy and remain committed to its implementation.

The Strategy has led to much expectation amongst disabled people that a 'new era' of development has begun. In this respect DPA welcomes the current Government's aggregation of disability issues into a single ministerial focus and creation of the Office for Disability Issues within the Ministry of Social Development. This is a unique step forward and something we have actively sought for some time.

DPA is also pleased to acknowledge the range of practical achievements and activities of the various government departments identified in this report. These reflect commitment to, and interest in, 'making progress' towards the 15 objectives of the Strategy. DPA is grateful for the opportunity it has had to contribute.

However, for most in our DPA constituency, and for the 20% of our New Zealand population who identified as disabled in the latest census, the most important outcome of the Strategy will ultimately be determined by the positive impact it has on our individual circumstances. To address this, and to capitalise on progress to date, our organisation is keen to see future Strategy implementation identify resource allocation and time-lines for:

- The need to translate the framework of the Strategy into more detailed entitlement (by way of regulation and standards), providing national consistency and guarantees that can be equitably negotiated by disabled service users
- The need to legally mandate the operation of the Office for Disability Issues with governance by disabled people
- The need for more consumer-directed research on service provision (Objective 10)

- The need for improved support across all sectors of the education system from pre-school children to older people (Objective 3)
- The need for real incentives to employment and for continued progress in addressing current benefit anomalies (Objective 4)
- The need for more activity in the Strategy objectives: 12 – Pacific Island Peoples, 14 – Women, and 15 – Family/Whānau support.

Finally, we remain confident that the Strategy will continue to address and deliver on our needs and concerns and DPA remains committed to working with Government to ensure this happens.



Bill Wrightson  
National President  
DPA (NZ) Inc

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# 1. Introduction

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The New Zealand Disability Strategy was launched on 30 April 2001, after extensive consultation with the disability sector. This is the second progress report on implementing the Strategy. It covers the activities of ten key public service departments for the nine-month period from 1 October 2001 to 30 June 2002, based on plans they submitted for the 12 month period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002. The first progress report tabled in Parliament was for the first three months of this period.

The Strategy presents a long-term framework to move New Zealand from a disabling to a fully inclusive society. Its vision, based on a human rights philosophy, is for people with disabilities<sup>1</sup> to be able to say that they live in “a society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation”.

To achieve this vision, the Strategy outlines 15 objectives and 113 associated actions.

## **Objectives of the New Zealand Disability Strategy**

1. Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society.
2. Ensure rights for disabled people.
3. Provide the best education for disabled people.
4. Provide opportunities in employment and economic development for disabled people.
5. Foster leadership by disabled people.
6. Foster an aware and responsive public service.
7. Create long-term support systems centred on the individual.
8. Support quality living in the community for disabled people.
9. Support lifestyle choices, recreation and culture for disabled people.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, ‘people with disabilities’ and ‘disabled people’ are used interchangeably, reflecting current practice in the disability sector.

10. Collect and use relevant information about disabled people and disability issues.
11. Promote participation of disabled Māori.
12. Promote participation of disabled Pacific peoples.
13. Enable disabled children and youth to lead full and active lives.
14. Promote participation of disabled women in order to improve their quality of life.
15. Value families, whānau and people providing ongoing support.

A number of other official strategies and initiatives complement the New Zealand Disability Strategy. They include the:

- New Zealand Health Strategy
- New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy
- Māori Health Strategy
- Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan
- Pacific Provider Development Framework (service infrastructure for Pacific people)
- Pacific Capacity Building Strategy
- Youth Development Strategy
- Agenda for Children
- New Zealand Transport Strategy
- *Pathways to Inclusion: Improving vocational services for people with disabilities*
- New Zealand Injury Prevention Strategy (draft for consultation)
- Action Plan for New Zealand Women (draft for consultation).

## 2. Background

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The New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 requires the Minister for Disability Issues to develop a Disability Strategy for New Zealand, to “provide the framework for the Government’s overall direction for the disability sector in improving disability support services”<sup>2</sup>.

Under the Act, the Minister is required to consult with relevant organisations and individuals before determining or altering the Strategy<sup>3</sup>, and to report on progress in implementing the Strategy each year<sup>4</sup>. The Strategy, and any amendment, replacement or report, must be made available to the public and to the House of Representatives<sup>5</sup>.

The Strategy is the first government strategy to address the needs of people with disabilities on a cross-sectoral basis. Ten key public service departments drew up work plans for 2001/2002. These departments are:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Justice
- Department of Labour
- Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- Ministry of Social Development
- State Services Commission
- Te Puni Kōkiri
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Women’s Affairs.

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<sup>2</sup> New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000, section 8(2).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, section 8(3).

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, section 8(4).

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, section 8(5).

In addition, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) and Specialist Education Services (SES) contributed to the implementation work plans through agencies to which they are linked (the Department of Labour and the Ministry of Education, respectively).

On 1 July 2002, the responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation work plans and the reporting process was transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Office for Disability Issues.

The Ministry of Health had encouraged departments:

- To target their work plans to identify short-term and achievable projects, as well as steps towards larger, long-term projects
- To approach the Strategy at corporate, policy and service-delivery levels and
- To consider generic government activities (such as developing an accessible website), work unique to each department, and intersectoral work (identifying which department would take a leading role).

Work plans had to take account of the department's assessment of the relative priority of the objectives of the Strategy, including intersectoral priorities, and work that was needed as a matter of urgency. Consideration was also to be given to work under way that aligned with the Strategy's vision, objectives and actions, and the Strategy sector reference group's set of proposals for the Strategy, put forward to the Government in late 2000.

In 2001, the Government approved the work plans of the ten key public service departments. Their work plans can be found at [www.odi.govt.nz](http://www.odi.govt.nz), or by contacting the department of interest or the Office for Disability Issues.

### 3. Overall Progress Since the First Report

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In the first report (covering the three-month period 1 July to 30 September 2001), the focus of work to implement the Strategy was on extending or enhancing work that departments had already planned to do. The current report (based on the same workplans but for the last three quarters of that year) shows progress in these areas and, in some instances, reports on new projects to which departments have committed resources.

While the first report suggested considerable progress in the implementation of the Strategy by departments for the first quarter of 2001, in some areas the progress over the whole year appears to have been less than expected. Few measurable results are apparent at this stage that indicate how well projects are progressing. This will improve in future reports when a robust monitoring and evaluation system has been developed.

In order to better measure progress in achieving the Strategy's objectives, a long-term monitoring framework and evaluation process will be developed by the Office for Disability Issues, in conjunction with other departments and the disability sector. Overarching reviews of progress will also be undertaken after five and ten years.

Some apparent lack of progress can, in part, be attributed to reporting timeframes. In some instances projects (such as the setting up of the Office for Disability Issues) have been actioned but they do not appear in implementation plans or departmental progress reports, as the project is complete before the next year's plan is developed.

The government is taking the lead in implementing the Strategy. However, the Strategy's long-term success will also depend on the active support of other agencies, such as territorial local authorities and non-governmental organisations. In the first report some progress related to activities by these agencies was noted. In this second report progress from territorial local authorities and non-governmental organisations has not been noted. A separate report will do this at a later date, and it is hoped to include as many of these organisations as possible.

## 4. Office for Disability Issues

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In March 2002 approval was given by Cabinet to establish an Office for Disability Issues, to be located within the Ministry of Social Development. One of the Office's primary functions is to become the lead agency for the monitoring and implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.

The Office was formally established on 1 July 2002. In addition to it being the lead agency for the Strategy, it will provide policy advice on disability issues, including strategic and cross-sectoral disability policy, and provide support for the Minister for Disability Issues.

The Office will build the profile of the disability issues portfolio, and co-ordinate disability issues across government. It will also lead work on equity of access to, and coherence of, services and support for people with disabilities. This work was initiated by Government at the time of the launch of the Strategy. Cabinet approval for the continuation of this work is now being sought. It will include considerable input from relevant agencies and key players in the disability sector.

All Cabinet papers, and departmental policy development, are now required to reflect a disability perspective where appropriate. The Office is developing a disability framework for departments to use when applying a disability perspective to their work.

### **Responsibility for reporting**

Last year the first report on progress in implementing the Strategy was presented by the Disability Issues Directorate of the Ministry of Health. With the establishment of the Office, responsibility for compiling the report has been included in the Office's work programme.

The Disability Issues Directorate has been renamed the Disability Services Directorate. This change reflects its concentration on the funding and provision of disability services, as opposed to the Office's more strategic, cross-sectoral focus.

## 5. Government Department Reports

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The following section is based on self-reporting of the ten key public service departments that drew up implementation work plans for 2001/2002, and covers the nine months from 1 October 2001 to 30 June 2002.

Departments' achievements and initiatives are grouped under the 15 objectives of the Strategy and, where relevant, may be repeated under a number of objectives.

## **Objective 1: Encourage and Educate for a Non-Disabling Society**

The launch of the Strategy has been the catalyst for increased disability awareness, to the extent that most of the ten departments reported that disability awareness is being built into staff induction and training programmes.

The Ministry of Health's 'Like Minds, Like Mine' campaign to counter discrimination against people with mental illness is an example of how awareness levels can be raised. Surveys have shown 80% awareness of the advertising campaign amongst the target group (15 to 40 year olds in the general population).

The Ministry of Education has a number of advisory groups on special education policy development and implementation. These groups include representation by people with disabilities. In addition, the Ministry contracted ACHIEVE (an Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) network for tertiary students with disabilities) for provision of advice on development of the Tertiary Education Strategy and the Statement for Tertiary Education Priorities (STEP).

The Ministry of Justice has published guidelines about discrimination, which have been distributed to all government departments and crown entities. Work has commenced on guidelines for the public sector on the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, and on revisions to the Cabinet Office Manual to clarify and update the requirements for consideration in Cabinet papers of both the Bill of Rights Act and the Human Rights Act. These initiatives are intended to strengthen the consideration of human rights issues at an early stage of policy development.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice has provided policy advice for the development of legislation regulating the provision and ethical approval of assisted human reproduction procedures and research. The proposed regulatory framework will take into account the interests of people with disabilities. Drafting instructions are currently with the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

## **Objective 2: Ensure Rights for Disabled People**

Many projects related to the Strategy have a human rights component.

The Ministry of Justice has led development of the Human Rights Amendment Act, which was passed in December 2001. Central to this Act is removal of the exemption of government activities from the Human Rights Act 1993.

The Bill of Rights Act anti-discrimination standard has been inserted into the Human Rights Act and applies to all government activities, except employment-related discrimination and racial or sexual harassment to which the Human Rights Act standard will still apply.

As a result of the Human Rights Amendment Act, the Human Rights Commission now provides a publicly funded complaints process. This process provides a readily accessible way to hold government and private sectors accountable, with appropriate remedies in respect of unjustified or unlawful discrimination, including discrimination on the ground of disability. Out of 652 complaints, 172 or 26.4% of complaints about discrimination are on the basis of disability.

The Ministry of Justice has completed extensive consultation on a draft Cabinet paper seeking approval for policy work relating to protection of those who grant enduring powers of attorney under the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988.

Development of a national plan of action on human rights is a key task of the newly mandated Human Rights Commission (Human Rights Act, section 5(2)(m)). This plan is to be developed with full stakeholder consultation – including organisations representing people with disabilities. The Human Rights Commission has set up a project team and is consulting with the Ministry of Justice and other relevant agencies.

Planning and preparation for the 2002 General Election were completed by 30 June 2002. Of the 2815 polling places used, 2222 (79%) were designated as having access for people with disabilities. New cardboard issuing tables produced were at an appropriate height for people who use wheelchairs. The Chief Electoral Office is currently undertaking a review of all procedures and processes relating to the General Election, including

criteria and specifications for designating polling places as having access for people with disabilities.

The repeal of the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act 1960 is being led by the Department of Labour and the Ministry of Social Development. As the law currently stands, approved sheltered workshops are granted an exemption from minimum wage and holiday legislation. The aim of the repeal is to ensure that people with disabilities working in sheltered workshops receive the same employment rights as those working in open employment. This is consistent with the goals in *Pathways to Inclusion*, released in September 2001, which outlines the Government's intentions regarding vocational services for people with disabilities. The repeal Bill has not yet been considered by the Cabinet Legislation Committee, and there are some minor policy issues still to be clarified. The Ministry of Health and the Inland Revenue Department are also contributing to this work (see also Objective 4).

The Ministry of Education, in partnership with stakeholders, has developed two resources on rights and responsibilities of students with special needs: one for parents and whānau; and the other for school Boards of Trustees. These were published in January 2002.

The Ministry of Health and the Department of Labour agreed to transfer funding and purchasing responsibility to ACC for the rehabilitation of ACC claimants who are receiving post-acute, inpatient rehabilitation in publicly funded hospitals.

## **Objective 3: Provide the Best Education for Disabled People**

The Ministry of Education is responsible for most reported initiatives relating to this objective.

Amendments to the Education Act (in October 2001) have enabled the Ministry to provide more active leadership to schools. The implementation of recently amended national administration guidelines increases the requirements of all schools to identify and support students with special education needs.

The Ministry of Education is striving to ensure that young people with disabilities help to inform decisions about their education. This has been achieved by such activities as students contributing to the scoping phase of the research into integrated, effective practices to support children and young people with physical disabilities, and being asked to provide feedback on residential services at Homai National School for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

From March 2002, SES were integrated into a new Group Special Education within the Ministry of Education. This new Group will work with local communities to develop learning support networks for children, parents, early intervention programmes, schools and specialist service providers. A staff training component on the Strategy is included as part of the transition to the new Group.

The learning support networks will help provide a more coordinated service for children with special education needs. They will enable special education to be more responsive to local needs, while creating national consistency, leadership and a direct line of accountability to the Government for fund holding and service provision.

A new special education professional development programme for teacher aides and kaiawhina was launched in February 2002.

## **Objective 4: Provide Opportunities in Employment and Economic Development for Disabled People**

The launch of *Pathways to Inclusion*, in September 2001, following a review of vocational services led by the Department of Labour, was the most significant employment-related achievement in the previous reporting period. The Ministry of Social Development and the Department of Labour led work evolving from this report, including:

- **Repeal of the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act 1960:** The Department of Labour, with the Ministry of Social Development, are working through policy issues that will provide for a five-year transition period to enable sheltered workshop providers to manage the change to the new environment (see also Objective 2)
- **Employment Strategy:** The Employment Senior Officials' Group is recommending to the Minister of Social Services and Employment that one of the goals for the Employment Strategy be to increase the employment participation of, the earnings of, and the quality of employment for, people with disabilities.

Reports from other departments continue to indicate ongoing efforts to improve:

- Internal EEO processes
- Employment support and monitoring related to people with disabilities (Te Puni Kōkiri, and the Ministries of Social Development, Justice, Transport, and Women's Affairs)
- Staff disability and strategy awareness training (Ministries of Education and Social Development)
- Recognition of the needs of employees with disabilities where agencies are responsible for work-related legislation, codes and manuals (Department of Labour).

Considerable progress has been made during the reporting timeframe on EmployABLE – Ngā Pukenga Hei Whai Mahi, a project assisting support for Sickness and Invalids Benefit recipients to move into the paid workforce (Ministry of Social Development).

In November 2001 Cabinet agreed to five specified demonstration project models and their evaluation. In June 2002, four community-based demonstration projects began that will run for two years. Data collected from evaluation of these projects will contribute to the development of interventions that assist people with disabilities, sickness or injury to obtain and retain employment (see Objective 10).

The State Services Commission has taken a lead role in recruitment and advancement of people with disabilities in the public service, and initiated a number of projects. These include:

- As part of the Public Service as Employer of Choice project, a report on perceptions of students and graduates with disabilities was completed in December 2001. Barriers identified by graduates will be addressed in an EEO disability guide. The objective of this guide is to provide practical strategies for departments to enhance the recruitment, retention and career development of people with disabilities within the public service
- A project to improve senior management development within the public service, which includes a goal to remove barriers to recruitment for people with disabilities
- An EEO disabilities seminar (understanding of disability and impairment in everyday lives) for EEO co-ordinators and human resources advisors in the Public Service
- Managed growth of the Mainstream programme from 134 participants (1 October 2001) to 142 participants (30 June 2002), which provides supported employment opportunities for people with disabilities within the state sector. The Ministries of Health and Social Development both report having employed people from this programme during the current reporting period.

The State Services Commission has two publications: *The Human Resource Capability Data Collection for 2001* and *Human Resource Guidance – EEO Data in the Public Service*. Both publications have been distributed to departments and placed on the State Services Commission website ([www.ssc.govt.nz](http://www.ssc.govt.nz)).

## **Objective 5: Foster Leadership by Disabled People**

Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Affairs are continuing efforts to increase the number of people with disabilities held on their agency files of people available for appointment to decision-making positions.

The Ministry of Health has appointed people with disabilities to the Youth Health Strategy Sector Reference Group, the Health Workforce Advisory Committee and the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability.

The Ministry of Education has a number of advisory groups on special education policy development and implementation. These groups include representation by people with disabilities.

Considerable progress has been made during the reporting timeframe on EmployABLE – Ngā Pukenga Hei Whai Mahi, a project assisting support for Sickness and Invalids Benefit recipients to move into the paid workforce (Ministry of Social Development).

## **Objective 6: Foster an Aware and Responsive Public Service**

Most ministries and departments are making progress in this area and have reported accordingly.

### **Improved accessibility of communications and information**

The inaccessibility of much government information to people with disabilities was highlighted in submissions during consultation on the Strategy. In response to this, an increased awareness of providing publications in alternative formats has occurred within the Ministries of Transport, Education, Women's Affairs and Health.

The State Services Commission E-Government Unit completed the first version of government web guidelines, which aim to standardise the development of government websites. The guidelines include a requirement that websites be accessible to all, including people with disabilities. Other departments report ongoing activity in this area (Ministries of Education, Social Development, Justice, Transport, Health and Women's Affairs, and Te Puni Kōkiri).

Two departments are changing their print standards to make their written material easier to read by people with vision impairments (Ministries of Health and Education).

As part of decisions related to the introduction of a new human rights framework, the State Services Commission will also lead work to produce guidelines on access to non-electronic government information to improve access for people with disabilities.

## **Improved physical access to buildings and equipment for staff or clients**

The State Services Commission and the Ministry of Health have completed audits of physical access in their buildings. As a result both agencies have undertaken modifications to improve access for people with disabilities.

Designated accessible car parks are provided to visitors on request (Ministries of Justice, Social Development and Women's Affairs). The Ministry of Transport provides accessible computer systems. The Ministry of Social Development has updated its *Manager's Guide to Building Access and Usability Requirements* which will be available in hard copy and on its website.

## **Objective 7: Create Long-Term Support Systems Centred on the Individual**

The Ministry of Social Development has led the following work:

- In August 2001, a report on *Services and Support for People with Disabilities: Issues Relating to Equity of Access and to Coherence* was presented to the Minister for Disability Issues, for referral to the Minister of Social Services and Employment, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education and the Minister for Accident Insurance.

This report identified a need to develop a framework to ensure that government-funded services and support for people with disabilities are provided in a coherent and equitable way. Such a framework would clarify the overall strategic direction for government-funded services and support for people with disabilities, and clarify responsibilities for ensuring this is maintained. A need was also identified for improved data collection across government agencies on the use of services and support, and improved information for clients on the availability of and ways to access services and support.

Cabinet approval is being sought for the Office for Disability Issues to consult with other government departments and the disability community to further develop this work.

- The Ministry of Social Development continues work looking at options to improve current eligibility, assessment and review processes for the Invalids Benefit. This work has been included within a project on the reform of the social assistance system (Future Directions project).

The Ministry of Health focused on a number of areas:

- In July 2001, the Government acknowledged that older and younger people with disabilities have different needs. Older people's disabilities are often linked with their health needs while younger people with disabilities are more likely to need support across a range of sectors. In April 2002, the Health of Older People Strategy was published. The Strategy aims to implement an integrated continuum of care across older people's health and support needs.

- Over 2001/2002, the Ministry of Health scoped work on the future of disability support services for younger people and established a number of workstreams which aim to improve assessment, service co-ordination and support for younger people with disabilities.

The Ministry of Health progressed a number of other initiatives over the year that aim to build comprehensive support systems focused on the individual. They include:

- Development of *Support Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination Policy, Procedure and Information Reporting Guidelines*, to assist with national consistency. Published in February 2002, the Guidelines have been accepted by all needs assessment and service co-ordination agencies as required practice
- Development of services for specific population or high-need groups, such as people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and their families. Autistic Spectrum Disorders service development has included improving access to assessment, increasing access to support services and enhancing the ability of needs assessment and service co-ordination agencies to work on a cross-sectoral basis
- Workforce development initiatives, particularly the workforce that supports people with intellectual disability or with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Quality initiatives, such as the development with ACC of a standard for home and community-based support workers.

The Ministries of Education and Health have developed a process for seamless transfer of assistive equipment from Education to Health when students leave compulsory education.

The scoping phase of Ministry of Education funded research into integrated, effective therapy services for children and young people with physical disabilities has ended. The Ministry of Health will be involved in the next phase of the research beginning in 2002, which will consist of an analysis of overall resourcing and individual case studies in a range of settings.

## **Objective 8: Support Quality Living in the Community for Disabled People**

Much of this work is focused around housing needs for people with intellectual disabilities or mental illness.

Work continues on projects to develop awareness among private providers of housing services, of the needs of people with mental illness, and of opportunities for improving and developing housing facilitation services.

The Ministry of Social Development researched housing needs of people with mental illness for Housing New Zealand, and released a report in December 2001 detailing the findings.

The Ministry of Health led an intersectoral work programme on a range of issues, including housing needs, for people with mental illness. The 2001/2002 work programme mandated by Cabinet has been completed.

In December 2000, the Government agreed to the deinstitutionalisation of residents at Braemar Hospital, Nelson. Work to progress the resettlement of Braemar residents during 2001/2002 included:

- Contracts for all services to support people in the community
- Appointment of a Service Coordination team and advocacy services person
- Contract for the provision of behaviour support services agreed
- Formation of an advisory group
- Complex equipment assessments underway
- Sections for 13 community homes purchased.

In August 2001, the Minister for Disability Issues and the Minister of Health agreed to the deinstitutionalisation of all 379 residents at the Kimberley Centre in Levin, and that all residents would be resettled in the community over the next four years. This decision recognises the right of people with intellectual disabilities to live in the community with the necessary supports to meet their personal, medical and social needs.

The associated work plan was agreed in September 2001. By 30 June 2002, a number of key steps had been taken to progress the resettlement of residents in the community, including:

- The identification of Residential and Day Activity Service providers;
- Contracts let for Service Co-ordination and Advocacy Services;
- Project Steering Group and communication plan established.

## **Objective 9: Support Lifestyle Choices, Recreation and Culture for Disabled People**

Other than the Ministry of Justice, no other department identified work towards this objective.

This objective includes reference to supporting people with disabilities in making their own choices about their relationships, sexuality and reproductive potential. In relation to this (and also to Objectives 1 and 2), the Ministry of Justice has provided advice for the development of legislation on the provision of assisted human reproduction procedures and research. The resulting regulatory framework will take into account the interests of people with disabilities. Drafting instructions for this legislation are currently with the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

## **Objective 10: Collect and Use Relevant Information about Disabled People and Disability Issues**

Research on people with disabilities comes under this objective.

Reviews such as the Ministry of Social Development-led work on equity of access to and coherence of services and support for people with disabilities (see Objective 7) will yield some relevant data. This will assist with the monitoring of the Strategy and will provide a clearer picture of, for example, current service uptake and unmet service needs.

The Ministry of Health is continuing to develop nationally consistent approaches to collecting disability support services data.

Many departmental work projects (some already mentioned) have a research component. For example, the Ministry of Education has completed:

- The scoping phase of research into developing more effective practices to support children and young people with physical disabilities. Phase two continues to have input from young people with disabilities into decisions on this research
- A contract for participatory action research into services for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Evaluation of the EarlyBird parent capability-building programme
- Development of a national database of children and young people who are deaf or hearing impaired.

These projects incorporated the ‘voice’ of children and young people with disabilities, and their families.

The Ministry of Social Development has contributed to this objective in two ways:

- Data collected from the evaluation of the EmployABLE – Ngā Pukenga Hei Whai Mahi project (see Objective 4), will contribute to the development of interventions that will assist people with disabilities, sickness or injury to obtain and retain employment.
- The publication of *Mental Health and Independent Housing Need – Parts 1-5* (December 2001).

The Ministry of Health led an intersectoral working group to develop an in-depth publication analysing the post-censal disability surveys that will complement and supplement Statistics New Zealand's descriptive report *Disability Counts*. It comprised ACC, Ministry of Social Development, Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, Housing New Zealand Corporation, Department of Labour, Ministry of Education, DPA and Statistics New Zealand (observer).

The State Services Commission has undertaken a review of EEO statistics, and published *Human Resource Guidance – EEO Data in the Public Service*.

## **Objective 11: Promote Participation of Disabled Māori**

The Strategy acknowledges that the Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document and that the Government is committed to fulfilling its obligations as a Treaty partner. Central to the Treaty relationship and implementation of Treaty principles is a common understanding that Māori will have a key role in developing and implementing disability strategies for Māori, and that the Crown and Māori will relate to each other in good faith with mutual respect, co-operation and trust.

The Strategy states that Te Puni Kōkiri should undertake a leadership role in promoting the participation of Māori with disabilities. Te Puni Kōkiri reports development in the following areas:

- Te Puni Kōkiri's human resources and recruitment policies and processes are reported to be responsive to the needs of Māori, including disabled Māori. All vacancies are advertised in accessible formats.
- Staff induction training has a specific section on discrimination and addresses the grounds specified in the Human Rights Act, including disability.
- Te Puni Kōkiri's national office is accessible to disabled people, and meets accessibility standards.
- Accessible website development has continued. All navigation on Te Puni Kōkiri's website is in HTML or has an HTML alternative. Publications and forms are generally available as PDF or Word documents.
- The Ministry of Social Development has a contract with ASENZ (the Association of Supported Employment in New Zealand) to assess service delivery for Māori. ASENZ has held hui for Māori providers and their clients and their clients' whānau.
- The Disability Services Directorate of the Ministry of Health is developing a Māori Disability Action Plan for disability support services. The Plan will include specific actions and initiatives to be implemented nationally or locally.

## **Objective 12: Promote Participation of Disabled Pacific Peoples**

The Strategy states that the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs should undertake a leadership role in promoting the participation of Pacific peoples with disabilities. Reports under this objective show several initiatives to make services more appropriate for Pacific peoples, and to build capacity of Pacific providers:

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has continued working closely with the Ministry of Health and with District Health Boards on the implementation and monitoring of agreed milestones within the eight regional Pacific Capacity Building Programmes of Action:

- Of the eight Community Reference Groups that have been established, three have Pacific people with disabilities on them.
- New milestones will include disability issues for Pacific people.

In February 2002, the Ministry of Health launched the Pacific Health and Disability Action Plan. Priority five of the Action Plan is ‘to promote participation of disabled Pacific peoples’, and outlines key action areas for the Ministry over the next three years. The Pacific Health Branch of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs are currently working together on monitoring the action plan milestones.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs is leading work on a state sector-wide Pacific Workforce Development Strategy which extends to workforce issues facing Pacific people with disabilities and communities. It will work towards including them within this framework.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs is also continuing to add to its databases. These databases will:

- Identify appropriate Pacific disability service providers and organisations
- Identify individuals who have indicated that they hold a particular interest in disability issues
- Assist in improving Pacific representation on health and disability boards and groups
- Improve the dissemination of information to the Pacific disability community.

The Government has approved a State Sector Pacific Provider Development Framework, which the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs developed with input from five other agencies.

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and the Health and Disability Commissioner's office are working on a strategy to improve responses to Pacific peoples who need advocacy or support services.

## **Objective 13: Enable Disabled Children and Youth to Lead Full and Active Lives**

Most progress reports did not identify a specific age group focus for respective projects. However, many of the reported projects impact directly and indirectly on the ability of children and youth with disabilities to lead full and active lives. These projects are listed under Strategy objectives such as:

- Objective 3: Provide the Best Education for Disabled People
- Objective 7: Create Long-Term Support Systems Centred on the Individual
- Objective 8: Support Quality Living in the Community for Disabled People.

Relevant action reported by the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Development, Pacific Island Affairs, and Te Puni Kōkiri and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, includes:

- Students with disabilities contributing to the scoping phase of research to develop more effective practices for children and young people with physical disabilities
- Students with disabilities providing feedback on residential services at Homai National School for the Blind and Vision Impaired
- A review of operational protocols for equipment and therapy initiated by the Ministries of Health and Education. This work is ongoing.

The Ministries of Health and Education have collaborated on the following initiatives:

- Improving support services for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- Discussion on developing joint assessment processes to support children and young people with high and complex needs.

A project has been established, funded by the Ministry of Health, to develop services for people who are deafblind – the first government funding specifically for these services.

## **Objective 14: Promote Participation of Disabled Women in Order to Improve their Quality of Life**

The Strategy states that the Ministry of Women's Affairs should undertake a leadership role in promoting the participation of women with disabilities. The Ministry of Women's Affairs is developing a Women's Strategy, which will look at increasing women's equality and participation in society. Priority groups have been identified and include women with disabilities, Māori, Pacific, low-income, rural and migrant women. Consultation with women (including women with disabilities) will occur early in 2003.

Other departmental reports did not separately identify the extent to which women with disabilities were the focus of projects. However, many issues relevant to women with disabilities are included under:

- Objective 7: Create Long-Term Support Systems Centred on the Individual
- Objective 8: Support Quality Living in the Community for Disabled People
- Objective 9: Action 9.1: Support disabled people in making their own choices about their relationships, sexuality and reproductive potential
- Objective 15: Value Families, Whānau, and People Providing Ongoing Support.

## **Objective 15: Value Families, Whānau and People Providing Ongoing Support**

Projects relevant to this objective have also been referred to under several earlier objectives.

The Ministry of Health completed a review of training programmes for informal carers in early 2001. As a result, the family and whānau carer support project was established, consisting of three elements:

- The family and whānau carer support programme, which will see support and training programmes for carers established all over New Zealand.
- The Carers New Zealand Information Network, which includes a website for carers launched in May 2002, and linkages between various carer groups.
- Alternative funding projects, which support new projects trying new ways to support carers.

The EarlyBird programme has continued to be joint-funded by the Ministries of Health and Education. The programme supports and trains parents of children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

As noted under Objective 2, the Ministry of Education published an information resource, in January 2002, on the rights of children, young people, their parents and whānau.

At the other end of the age spectrum the Health of Older People Strategy focuses on integrating health and support services to promote positive ageing (see Objective 7). The Health of Older People Strategy has a strong emphasis on services that are responsive to the needs of older people and their family, whānau or carers.

## 6. Conclusion

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This report covers initiatives and progress in implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy, by ten key public service departments, for the nine months from 1 October 2001 to 30 June 2002. It shows good progress in some areas, and limited progress in others.

Contributing departments have responded well to the Strategy's challenge to change attitudes, policies, practices and legislation. Though many of these changes are not complete, work is continuing towards building a more inclusive society.

All departments have focused on infrastructure issues such as human resources, physical access, communications, consultation, staff training and information. A number of departments have demonstrated improved consultation processes by ensuring that people with disabilities have places on various advisory and reference groups which give input into policy development. In addition, departments are working together on cross-sectoral initiatives.

A key initiative that has occurred in the current reporting timeframe is the establishment of the Office for Disability Issues. The Office is tasked with co-ordinating implementation of, and monitoring of progress on, the Strategy – as well as providing policy advice for departments and support for the Minister for Disability Issues.

Future reports on progress will be more comprehensive and will cover a full calendar year. All government departments have prepared work plans for implementation of the Strategy in the year ending 30 June 2003. Progress on these work plans will be reported in next year's report on implementation.

For future reports, a more systematic picture of progress will emerge from the formal monitoring process, which is to be developed by the Office for Disability Issues in conjunction with the disability sector.

# Notes

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