
Recommended Content of the New Zealand Disability Strategy

Making a World of Difference: Whakanui Oranga

**The New Zealand Disability Strategy Sector Reference
Group's Recommendations to the
Minister for Disability Issues**

20 December 2000

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Introduction

“Disability is in society, not in me”

“I have the right to dignity, to develop my potential, to use my qualities and skills”

“I’m not sick, but I still need healthcare sometimes”

We live in a disabling society. The New Zealand Disability Strategy presents a plan for changing this.

Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments.

Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have. Our society is built in a way that assumes that we can all move quickly from one side of the road to the other, that we can all see signs, read directions, hear announcements, reach buttons, have the strength to open heavy doors and have stable moods and perceptions. Although New Zealand has standards for accessibility, schools, workplaces, supermarkets, banks, movie theatres, Marae, churches and houses are, in the main, designed and built by non-disabled people for non-disabled users. This is our history of disability in New Zealand.

Disability relates to the interaction between the person with the impairment and the environment. It has a lot to do with discrimination, and has a lot in common with other attitudes and behaviours that are not acceptable in our society such as racism and sexism. People and groups of people should not be judged by one particular aspect of their lives – whether it’s their race, gender, age or impairment. They are not entitled to less than the group that does the judging. Individual beliefs and assumptions, as well as the practices of institutions, means that many Disabled people are not able to access things that many non-disabled people take for granted.

The desire to break down the barriers that cause disability is also quite closely linked to ideas about the human rights of people with impairments. Without human rights we cannot live as full human beings. Human rights are those conditions of life that allow us to develop fully, use our human qualities of intelligence and conscience and satisfy our spiritual needs.

Human rights are based on peoples’ increasing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity of each human being will receive respect and protection. Human rights include political, civil, social, cultural and economic rights.

Human rights are described by international instruments – such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and conventions on the rights of indigenous peoples, children and women. In New Zealand we have legislation such as the Bill of Rights Act, the Human Rights Act and the Privacy Act.

Vision of a non-disabling society

Along with other New Zealanders, Disabled people aspire to a good life.

The vision of this Strategy is a fully inclusive society. New Zealand will be inclusive when people with impairments can say they live in:

“A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation.”

This will happen in New Zealand when:

- ?? there is acknowledgement of the special relationship between the tangata whenua and the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi
- ?? Disabled people have a meaningful partnership with Government, communities and support agencies, based on respect and equality
- ?? we have moved forward from exclusion, tolerance and accommodation of people with impairments to a fully inclusive and mutually supportive society
- ?? Disabled people are integrated into community life on their own terms. This means that equal opportunities are assured but individual choices are available and respected
- ?? Disabled peoples' abilities are valued and not questioned
- ?? interdependence is recognised and valued, especially the important relationships between Disabled people and their families, friends, whānau and other people who provide support
- ?? human rights are protected as a fundamental cornerstone of government policy and practice
- ?? the diversity of Disabled people, including their cultural backgrounds, is recognised, and there is flexibility to meet their differing aspirations and goals

- ?? Disabled people have equity, regardless of gender, age, cultural background, type of impairment and when the impairment was acquired
- ?? community-based services increase to ensure people are supported to live in their own communities and institutionalisation is eliminated
- ?? the idea that it is society that imposes many of the disabling barriers faced by people with impairments is widely understood and, therefore, legislation, policy and other activities enhance rather than disable the lives of people with impairments.

Barriers

“More often than not ‘barriers’ are man-made out of peoples’ ignorance towards something different”

One in five people in New Zealand report having a long-term impairment. Because everyone comes from different backgrounds, holds different beliefs and has different needs, there is a great diversity of people who have impairments.

The key common factor among people with impairments is that they face many lifelong barriers to their full participation in New Zealand society.

Attitudes have been identified, through consultation, as the major barrier that operates at all levels of daily life in the general population. Attitudes and ignorance make their presence felt as stigma, prejudice and discrimination. In the year to June 1999, disability discrimination was the largest category of complaints to the Human Rights Commission.

Stigma, prejudice and discrimination affect our behaviours. Sometimes the combination of attitudes and behaviours can seem to create almost insurmountable barriers, for example, whole systems or organisations can become a barrier much in the way that institutional racism operates.

When I’m a child ...

- ?? For disabled children, it is hard to get the best start to their life ahead. Children’s needs can put big demands, including financial pressure, on their families and whānau.

When I'm a youth ...

- ?? Disabled people are much less likely to have educational qualifications than non-disabled people.
- ?? Poor literacy is a problem for many - causing communication barriers. This problem extends to sign language literacy, even though sign language is the first language of most Deaf people. Similarly, Braille is the primary literacy medium for people who are born blind, but a recent survey suggests that one in three Blind people could be unable to read what they themselves have written or access any other form of written or printed material.

When I'm an adult ...

- ?? Disabled people are much less likely to be employed. For instance, the unemployment rate for people with ongoing mental illness is very high. Half of recent complaints to the Human Rights Commission in regard to disability related to employment.
- ?? The public service employs a far lower proportion of Disabled people than exist in the general working age population, despite Equal Employment Opportunity policies.
- ?? Disabled people often have reduced housing options through poverty or factors such as discrimination when neighbours object to supported houses being established in their area.

When I'm older ...

- ?? Older people experience difficulties when their problems are seen as an inevitable part of ageing. Faced with this attitude, they may miss the opportunity to remain able and independent through rehabilitation, correction of health problems or provision of support services.
- ?? For older Disabled people, one of the biggest problems can be being denied the opportunity to remain in their familiar surroundings and 'age in place'. Even in their own homes, some people can feel isolated and insecure if they have limited contact with families, friends and their community.

My whole life ...

- ?? Despite New Zealand having strong standards for physical accessibility, access to public facilities and other buildings such as Marae is poor. On top of that, most public transport is not independently accessible, and car modifications are expensive.
- ?? Disabled people, especially those with psychiatric or intellectual impairments, are often shut out of social networks and full participation because people are ignorant or fearful of behaviour they perceive as different.
- ?? Forty-four percent of Māori with a long-term impairment report that they have an unmet need for some kind of service or assistance. Twenty-nine percent of non-Māori with a long-term impairment report an unmet need. The majority of support for everyday activities comes from families.
- ?? As a group, Disabled people are likely to have lower incomes and fewer financial and family resources than the general population. This economic disadvantage is compounded by the financial cost of disability. The earning potential of families with disabled children can be curtailed by their need to provide support for their children or live and work in areas where they can access family or professional support.
- ?? Disabled women are more likely to have low incomes than men or non-disabled women. Seventy-one percent of women with long-term impairments report an annual personal income of less than \$15,000.
- ?? Disabled people are almost three times as likely to get income from a government benefit than non-disabled people (excluding superannuation from this calculation).
- ?? People in higher socioeconomic areas are more likely to access and receive support services than people in low socioeconomic areas. Reflecting this situation, Māori as well as Pacific people are typically low users of support services.

Although the Government provides a range of services, the experience of accessing these services can be very disabling because sometimes they are not flexible enough to meet individual needs. To get a benefit, a piece of equipment, or maybe some help at home you might have to tell your story to three or four different people — just to get what you need at that particular time. Next year those three or four people may have moved on, with a new lot of assessors in their place. These kind of arrangements and turnover of staff are disabling because the person, their families and whānau spend a lot of time fighting the system, in order to get access to the same opportunities other New Zealanders have.

The Government needs to help open the way into community life for Disabled people — by removing the barriers to their participation.

Delivering the Strategy

A lot of work is required to remove the barriers to participation faced by Disabled people and create a fully inclusive society. An Action Plan has been developed to achieve this. It starts on page 18 and is summarised below.

The Minister for Disability Issues is required to have a New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS) under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act. Government departments are expected to develop an annual Disability Action Plan spelling out how they will implement the NZDS. The Minister will report to Parliament annually on progress in implementing the NZDS.

However, the decisions that territorial local authorities make also have a significant impact on the lives of Disabled people. It is important that territorial local authorities support and assist with implementing the NZDS. Ways of making this happen need to be considered in discussion with the authorities, including, if appropriate, reviewing the Local Government Act to make it consistent with the NZDS.

Action plan

Summary of action areas and key steps

Action Area	Key Step
1. Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop national and locally-based anti-discrimination programmes2. Educate Disabled people to be an expert on their own experience3. Honour the achievements of Disabled people4. Include the perspectives of Disabled people in ethical and bioethical debates5. Encourage ongoing debate on disability issues
2. Ensure rights for Disabled people	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide information for everyone about the rights of Disabled people2. Signal Government commitment to human rights for Disabled New Zealanders3. Lead the development of a United Nations convention on the rights of Disabled people4. Establish an overarching, independent advocacy service for Disabled people5. Evaluate New Zealand's performance on the rights of Disabled people6. Consider Disabled people when New Zealand's performance against other human rights obligations is evaluated

<p>3. Provide the best education</p>	<p><i>Compulsory education</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that no child is denied access to their local, regular school because of their impairment 2. Ensure that all Deaf children have access to education in New Zealand Sign Language 3. Ensure that teachers and education understand the learning needs of Disabled people 4. Ensure that Disabled students, families, teachers and educational institutions can access the resources they need 5. Facilitate opportunities for Disabled students in regular schools to meet with their disabled peers in other schools 6. Improve schools' responsiveness and accountability to the needs of Disabled students 7. Develop timelines to implement steps 1-6 above and phase out education settings segregated on the basis of impairment <p><i>Post-compulsory education</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Improve post-compulsory education options for Disabled people, including: promoting best practice, providing career guidance, increasing lifelong opportunities for learning and better aligning financial support with educational opportunities
<p>4. Provide opportunities for employment and economic development</p>	<p><i>Planning and training for entering employment</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the individual capacity of Disabled people to go into jobs 2. Enable Disabled people to lead the development of their own training and employment goals, and to decide the support required 3. Educate employers about the abilities of Disabled people

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Provide information about career options, ways to generate income and assistance available for Disabled people 5. Investigate longer-term incentives to train, employ and develop Disabled people 6. Ensure a smooth transition from school to work 7. Take the steps necessary to ratify the International Labour Organisation Convention on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment <p><i>Employment and economic development</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Make employment options available, including paid job opportunities 9. Ensure Disabled people have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements as everyone else has 10. Ensure Disabled workers are paid at least the minimum wage 11. Make communication services, resources and flexible workplace options available 12. Operate EEO and affirmative action policies in the public sector 13. Investigate the establishment of society-wide EEO legislation 14. Ensure Disabled people have equal access to economic development initiatives 15. Encourage staff and service organisations to appoint Disabled people as delegates and members of their executives 16. Provide more flexible income support benefits to make entering work and training easier 17. Increase the incomes of Disabled people without paid work to an adequate level
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<p>5. Foster leadership by Disabled people</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that Disabled people take part in decision-making as service users, as staff in the delivery of services, and in governance, management, planning and evaluation within government funded agencies and services 2. Resource self-help initiatives, service provision and advocacy organisations run by Disabled people for Disabled people 3. Strengthen the leadership of Disabled people at the national level 4. Support the establishment of a leadership development and mentoring programme for Disabled people 5. Establish a register of Disabled leaders for appointments to positions of influence 6. Make information on how to influence government available to Disabled people and their advocacy organisations
<p>6. Foster an aware and responsive public service</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt training and mechanisms to ensure that all legislation, policy, service development and service delivery are consistent with the NZDS 2. Ensure that government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies co-operate to ensure that the Disabled person is at the centre of service delivery 3. Amend departmental Codes of Conduct to include a requirement that public servants treat Disabled people with dignity and respect 4. Improve the quality of information available, including, where to go for more information, the services available and how to access them 5. Make all information and communication methods offered to the general public available in formats appropriate to the different needs of Disabled people

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Make all government agencies, publicly funded service and publicly accountable body locations and buildings accessible 7. Develop ways to ensure territorial local authorities can comply with the NZDS
<p>7. Create long-term support systems centred on the individual</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that overarching processes and allocation of resources are nationally consistent but that individual needs are treated flexibly, and develop eligibility criteria 2. Establish a long-term service development initiative that ensures a single assessment process and co-ordinated services, and applies across agencies and funding sources 3. Invest in effective rehabilitation services 4. Remove the inequity that exists between ACC and Ministry of Health-funded disability services 5. Identify unmet need and develop solutions to fill these gaps 6. Ensure people get services at the right time, instead of after inappropriately long delays 7. Develop a highly skilled workforce to support Disabled people 8. Ensure that services do not perpetuate the myth that Disabled people are ill
<p>8. Support quality living in the community</p>	<p><i>Living in the community</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase opportunities to live in the community with choice of good housing 2. Support the development of independent communication for Disabled people 3. Ensure Disabled people are able to access appropriate mainstream health services within their communities

	<p><i>Moving around the community</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Require all new public transport to be accessible and phase out inaccessible public transport 5. Provide accessible routes to connect buildings, public spaces and transport systems 6. Ensure that nationally consistent transport alternatives are available where there is no accessible public transport
<p>9. Support lifestyle choices, recreation and culture</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure Disabled people make their own choices about their relationships, sexuality and reproductive potential 2. Educate agencies responsible for supporting children and families about the capacity and rights of Disabled parents 3. Provide opportunities for Disabled people to create, perform and develop their own arts, and to access arts activities 4. Educate arts administrators/organisations and other recreational and sporting organisations about disability issues and inclusion 5. Support the development of arts, recreational and sports projects run by and for Disabled people
<p>10. Collect and use relevant information about Disabled people and disability issues</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the current guidelines for research funding with the intention of increasing research on disability issues 2. Ensure Disabled people lead development and monitoring of the disability research agenda 3. Researchers and research bodies will create mechanisms for Disabled people to put their own research and experiences forward 4. Collect relevant and useful information about disability through the Census and all other relevant surveys

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Analyse and use disability research to contribute to policy work, service development and monitoring 6. Make disability research information available to Disabled people in culturally appropriate and accessible formats 7. Adopt ethical and procedural standards for disability research projects 8. Appoint Disabled people as members of ethics committees
<p>11. Promote participation of Disabled Māori</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build the capacity of Disabled Māori through the equitable allocation of resources within the context of Māori development frameworks 2. Increase access of Disabled Māori and their whānau to mainstream providers of disability services 3. Establish more disability support services designed and provided by Māori for Māori. 4. Train more Māori disability professionals and increase the advisory capacity of Māori. 5. Ensure Disabled Māori have equal access to culturally appropriate services and facilities 6. Ensure that Government funded or sponsored Marae initiatives adhere to the access expectations of Disabled people 7. Support training and development of trilingual interpreters for the Deaf 8. Ensure there is leadership for implementing Action 11 within Te Puni Kōkiri

<p>12. Promote participation of Disabled Pacific people</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase access of Disabled Pacific people, their families and communities to both Pacific and mainstream providers of disability services 2. Train Pacific people as providers of disability information and services for their local communities 3. Encourage Pacific communities to consider disability issues and perspectives and further their own understanding of disability through the development of community-based plans for disability issues 4. Support training and development of trilingual interpreters for the Deaf
<p>13. Enable Disabled children and youth to lead full and active lives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure government agencies, disability sector agencies, organisations of children, youth and families, and other people who provide supports work to support Disabled children and youth and their families 2. Make the agencies and places in (1) above accessible and welcoming for children and youth 3. Implement a Development Strategy for Disabled children and youth 4. Conduct anti-discrimination and education campaigns that are age-appropriate and appealing 5. Consider establishing positions to advise on disability issues for children and youth within relevant government agencies and Commissioners' offices 6. Provide access to child or youth and family-focused support, education, health care services, rehabilitation services, recreation opportunities and training 7. Introduce ways of involving Disabled children and youth in decision-making and giving them greater control over their lives 8. Develop accommodation options for Disabled youth so they can leave home

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Provide and evaluate educational initiatives about sexuality, safety and relationships for Disabled children and youth
<p>14. Improve quality of life for Disabled women</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote women’s rights and provide opportunities for Disabled women to achieve the same level of economic well-being and educational attainment as men 2. Provide equitable, appropriate and welcoming access to women’s and other services 3. Support Disabled women to live independent and secure lives in the environment and with the people of their choosing 4. Ensure that criteria and considerations for the health and reproduction-related treatment of Disabled women are the same as for non-disabled women 5. Inform and provide support for the choices made by Disabled women 6. Include the perspectives of Disabled women in the development of other population group strategies 7. Ensure there is leadership for implementing Action 14 within the Ministry of Women’s Affairs
<p>15. Value families, whānau and people providing ongoing support</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop needs assessment processes that are holistic and take account of the needs of families/whānau as well as the Disabled person 2. Improve the support and choices provided to those who support Disabled people 3. Provide education and information for families with Disabled family members 4. Ensure that, where appropriate, the family, whānau and those who support Disabled people are given a legitimate voice in issues that affect them or their loved ones

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Develop a resource kit for professionals on when and how to interact with families/whānau of Disabled people 6. Work actively to ensure that the families, whānau and those who support Disabled people can be involved in policy and service development and delivery, and in monitoring and evaluation processes where appropriate 7. Encourage debate around responsibility for caring, payment for caring and how to further recognise and value the caring role.
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Action 1: Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society

Encourage the emergence of a non-disabling society that respects and highly values the lives of people with impairments and supports inclusive communities.

“Valuing difference”

“Varied journeys – worthwhile lives”

Key steps:

1. Develop national and locally based anti-discrimination programmes that are led by Disabled people, nationally funded and co-ordinated, and supported by long-term funding. A priority is to focus on workforce development for the ‘helping professions’ such as social work, health, education and government agency workforces.
2. Educate Disabled people to:
 - ?? recognise when they are being excluded and discriminated against
 - ?? retain their own power and be an expert on their own experience.
3. Honour the achievements of Disabled people.
4. Ensure the perspectives of Disabled people are included in ethical and bioethical debates, reinforcing the equal value of their lives.
5. Encourage ongoing debate on disability issues and cultural issues amongst Disabled people and in society, for example: the role of children in decision-making, parenting choices, abuse, the role of family and whānau in decision-making, use of language, Deaf culture, and Māori and Pacific concepts of disability.

Action 2: Ensure rights for Disabled people

Uphold and promote the rights of Disabled people.

Key steps:

1. Provide simple, clear, accessible and ongoing information for everyone about the rights of Disabled people.
2. Signal a strong Government commitment to the whole range of human rights for disabled New Zealanders by:
 - ?? reviewing current human rights legislation to enhance and strengthen the rights of Disabled people, eliminate systemic discrimination, review exemptions, and revisit the concept of 'reasonable accommodation'¹ and
 - ?? ensuring the Government's own processes and those of public organisations adhere to human rights legislation, including ensuring that all legislation, regulations and policies are in line with the legislation from the time the Government exemption on the Human Rights Act expires.
3. Lead the development of a United Nations convention on the rights of Disabled people and take action:
 - ?? against the discriminatory killing of Disabled people and
 - ?? to support the rights of Disabled people in the Pacific.
4. Establish an overarching, independent rights-based public advocacy service for Disabled people. The service would focus on empowering people to advocate for themselves and would proactively advocate for Disabled people, rather than just respond to complaints. This advocacy service would cover all sectors, including: support services, health, education, justice, employment and income.
5. Evaluate New Zealand's performance on the rights of Disabled people. Use this evaluation to provide a base to monitor our ongoing performance on human rights and implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
6. Include consideration of Disabled people when evaluations of New Zealand's performance against population-based international human rights obligations are undertaken (for example, those for women, children and indigenous peoples).

¹ For example, an employer is required to reasonably accommodate the needs of a disabled person, unless this would cause unreasonable disruption, or pose a risk to health or safety.

Action 3: Provide the best education

Education must be improved so we can be confident that all students will have equal opportunities to learn and develop in the mainstream.

Key steps:

Compulsory education

1. Ensure that no child is denied access to their local school because of their impairment. All students, whether they are Disabled or not, should have access to quality education in their local, regular school.
2. The importance of sign language as the medium of communication for Deaf people should be recognised and provision made to ensure that all Deaf children have access to education in New Zealand Sign Language.
3. Ensure that teachers and education institutions understand the learning needs of Disabled people, and incorporate that understanding into their everyday practice, so that teachers are able to effectively teach students with diverse needs. To support this, there should be:
 - ?? compulsory pre-service and ongoing professional development for all teachers and teacher educators in all sectors on strategies for successfully teaching diverse learners in regular classrooms
 - ?? compulsory professional development for educators and Boards of Trustees on disability issues
 - ?? active recruitment of Disabled people into teacher and early childhood training, and into teacher education.
4. Ensure that students, families, teachers and educational institutions can access the resources needed to maximise educational opportunities for Disabled students (including information technology and other equipment, and reviewing funding structures). Disabled students have equal rights to appropriate education to meet their learning potential.
5. Facilitate opportunities for Disabled students in regular schools to meet with Disabled peers in other schools if they wish to.
6. Schools and Boards of Trustees should be accountable for the quality of the school experience and learning outcomes of their students. Outcomes should be viewed holistically in terms of both academic and non-academic growth and attainment. Ways of improving schools responses to the needs of disabled students could include: development of plans for meeting the needs of individual students, audits and having a parent of a Disabled student on the Board of Trustees.

7. Develop timelines for the implementation of key steps 1-6 and associated phasing out of educational settings segregated because of impairment (rather than on the basis of cultural and linguistic features).

Post-compulsory education

8. Improve post-compulsory education options for Disabled people, including:
 - ?? promote best practice in the post-compulsory sector, including increasing options for attaining recognised qualifications
 - ?? provide career guidance planning for Disabled people before and during their post-compulsory education
 - ?? increase lifelong opportunities for learning for Disabled people, especially 'second-chance' opportunities for people who missed out on a good education
 - ?? better align financial support with the educational opportunities available. For example, Disabled people may take longer to complete a course and may need to continue to access student allowances and other income assistance for longer than other students.

Action 4: Provide opportunities for employment and economic development

Enable Disabled people to work in the open labour market (in accordance with human rights principles) and maintain an adequate income.

Key steps:

Planning and training for entering employment

1. Develop the individual capacity of Disabled people to go into jobs (through education, improved literacy, career mentoring and training).
2. Disabled people will lead the development of their own training and employment goals where appropriate and ideally make decisions about services and support options to achieve those goals.
3. Educate employers about the abilities and motivation of Disabled people who want to access training and work.

4. Provide information for employers and Disabled people about career options for Disabled people, ways to generate income and assistance available. Promote Disabled people in private-sector employment who are good role models.
5. Investigate longer-term incentives for employers and mainstream providers of employment and vocational services to train, employ and develop Disabled people.
6. Ensure that Disabled people have a smooth transition from school into employment, and that people move into vocational training and employment at an age-appropriate time.
7. Take the steps necessary to ratify International Labour Organisation convention 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)(1983).²

Employment and economic development

8. Make employment options available (including for part-time work), and actively intervene to make paid job opportunities available.
9. Disabled people will have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements that everyone else has and be covered by the same employment legislation.
10. Ensure Disabled workers are paid at least the minimum wage by repealing the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act. Establish a managed process of change linked to new opportunities for work and meaningful activity based on individual abilities and choices.
11. Ensure that communication services, resources, and flexible workplace options are available to enable Disabled people to be employed.
12. Government agencies and publicly funded services will:
 - ?? operate with affirmative action and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies
 - ?? establish real EEO targets for Disabled people
 - ?? proactively recruit, professionally develop and promote Disabled people at all levels of operation

² ILO Convention 159 requires ratifying member states to formulate, implement and periodically review national policy on vocational rehabilitation and employment of Disabled people. New Zealand has not ratified the Convention as it does not have one single national policy.

- ?? employ Disabled people for their skills and knowledge and as the best person for the job
 - ?? aim for Disabled people to be over-represented in areas that develop or operate disability policy or provide disability services
 - ?? monitor performance against these policies and apply meaningful incentives and sanctions
 - ?? proactively distribute EEO statistics to the public (through the State Services Commission's annual EEO report).
13. Investigate the establishment of society-wide EEO legislation with a strong educative component.
 14. Disabled people will have equal access to economic development initiatives, including business opportunities.
 15. Encourage staff and service organisations, such as unions, to appoint Disabled people as delegates and members of their executives.
 16. Provide more flexible income support benefits so that Disabled people are able to enter and re-enter new work and training opportunities and take risks.
 17. In the absence of paid work, the incomes of Disabled people should be increased to an adequate level that takes into account the extra costs of impairment.

Action 5: Foster leadership by Disabled people

Acknowledge the experience of disability as a form of specialised knowledge and strengthen the leadership of Disabled people.

“Nothing about us without us”

Key steps:

1. Require government-funded agencies and services to actively ensure that Disabled people take part:
 - ?? as service users in decision-making about the services they receive
 - ?? as staff in the delivery of services
 - ?? in governance
 - ?? in management
 - ?? in planning and evaluation of the service.

2. Resource the development of self-help initiatives, service provision and advocacy organisations run by Disabled people for Disabled people.
3. Strengthen the leadership of Disabled people at the national level so they can make a fuller contribution to the development of legislation and policy.
4. Support the establishment of a leadership development and mentoring programme for Disabled people.
5. Establish a register of leaders amongst Disabled people who are willing to be appointed to government advisory groups and other positions of influence.
6. Make key information and practical skills on how to influence government available to Disabled people and their advocacy organisations.

Action 6: Foster an aware and responsive public service

Ensure that government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies (such as territorial local authorities) are aware of and responsive to Disabled people.

Key steps:

1. Government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies will have training and mechanisms in place to ensure that all their legislation, policy, service development and service delivery are consistent with the New Zealand Disability Strategy. This will include, but is not limited to:
 - ?? providing training and other resources to increase understanding of disability issues and their relationship to the work of their agency
 - ?? including consideration of disability issues in the development of legislation, policy and services
 - ?? implementing EEO and affirmative action strategies.
2. Government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies will co-operate to ensure that the Disabled person is at the centre of service delivery. Agencies will review current processes, with the aims of eliminating the replication of requirements (including unnecessary multiple assessments and repeat assessment of permanent disability) and ensuring agency responsibilities are clear.
3. Departmental Codes of Conduct will include a requirement that public servants treat Disabled people with dignity and respect.

4. Government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies will improve the quality of information available to Disabled people, their families, whānau and other people who provide support so people:
 - ?? know where to go for further information
 - ?? know what they can expect from mainstream and disability-specific services, including what services they are entitled to and how they can access them
 - ?? are able to make decisions on the basis of the best evidence available.
5. Government agencies, publicly funded services and publicly accountable bodies will make all information and communication methods offered to the general public available in formats appropriate to the different communication needs of Disabled people as an 'ordinary choice' not as a 'special option' to be requested. This includes:
 - ?? designing and maintaining accessible websites to WC3 Web Access Initiative AA standard
 - ?? offering accessible personal telecommunication technologies (for example, teletypewriter services)
 - ?? writing public information and personal communications in plain language (and making them available in formats such as Braille, large print and electronically or by e-mail) and
 - ?? providing access to interpreters for the Deaf.
6. Ensure all government agencies, publicly funded service and publicly accountable body locations and buildings are accessible³.
7. Develop ways, with territorial local authorities, to ensure they can comply with the Strategy.

³ Building locations are already required to meet access requirements in the Building Act, and should exceed the revised Standard, NZ S4121, Code of Practice for Design for Access and Mobility – Buildings and Related Facilities.

Action 7: Create long-term support systems centred on the individual

Create a quality assessment and service delivery system, controlled by Disabled people, that has invisible borders and improved access.

Key steps:

1. Ensure that overarching processes and allocation of resources are nationally consistent, but that individual needs are treated flexibly. Develop and implement transparent, consistent and equitable eligibility criteria to clarify what Disabled people can expect in terms of accessing support.
2. Establish a long-term service development initiative (beginning with children and families/whānau) that ensures a single assessment process and co-ordinated access to services, and applies across agencies and funding sources. The initiative will:
 - ?? give the individual and, where appropriate, their family/whānau the primary position in the process, and the ability to make their own decisions
 - ?? be strategic, covering long-term goals and going beyond paid support
 - ?? be holistic (across educational, employment, leisure, health, support and family needs etc)
 - ?? have natural update points based around the individual's changes in lifestyle and needs
 - ?? have portable resources attached to the assessment (for example, funding should be able to move across geographical areas, services and funding groups)
 - ?? have multiple points of entry
 - ?? include a minimum level of entitlement (for example, people should be entitled to access the assessment process and receive advocacy and advice)
 - ?? move towards equity in the services provided to Disabled people – regardless of how their impairment was acquired.
3. Invest in realising and maintaining people's potential through effective rehabilitation services, regardless of whether those in need of the service have an impairment that is acquired or lifelong.
4. Remove the inequity that exists between ACC and Ministry of Health-funded disability services. The level of support and funding provided

should be based on need, not on cause or type of impairment, or funding source/agency.

5. Identify unmet need and develop solutions to fill these gaps.
6. Ensure people get services at the right time, instead of after inappropriately long delays.
7. Develop a highly skilled workforce. Ensure that people working directly to support Disabled people are highly skilled and valued, by providing appropriate training and pay.
8. Ensure that services, including assessment, co-ordination and support, do not perpetuate the myth that Disabled people are ill. Agencies in the business of hospital care should not own or govern assessment and support systems for Disabled people.

Action 8: Support quality living in the community

Provide opportunities for Disabled people to have their own homes and lives in the community.

Key steps:

Living in the community

1. Increase opportunities to live in the community, with choice of good housing by:
 - ?? building physically accessible state housing
 - ?? increasing supported living options and affordable home ownership options, and removing institutionalisation
 - ?? providing support for people living in rural areas to remain living in their own environment, including access to a wider variety of services than generally exist in rural areas.

2. Support the development of independent communication for Disabled people by:
 - ?? providing access to interpreter services and establishing New Zealand Sign Language as an official language
 - ?? supporting access to learning Braille
 - ?? providing access to augmentative and alternative communication technologies, and human aids to communication for daily use
 - ?? assisting with accessing mainstream skills and tools where these are important for communication.
3. Ensure Disabled people are able to access appropriate mainstream health services within their community.

Moving around the community

4. Require all new public transport to be accessible and develop a timeframe for phasing out existing inaccessible public transport.
5. Accessible routes are to be provided to connect buildings, public spaces and transport systems. This includes the journey from plentiful car parks for Disabled people, via appropriate curb cuts, and audible and tactile traffic indicators, to and throughout the buildings (including accessible bathrooms).
6. Ensure that nationally consistent transport alternatives are available where there is no accessible public transport. These alternatives should not financially disadvantage Disabled people.

Action 9: Support lifestyle choices, recreation and culture

Create and support lifestyle choices within the community and promote access to recreation and cultural opportunities.

Key steps:

1. Disabled people will make their own choices about their relationships, sexuality and reproductive potential.
2. Educate agencies responsible for supporting children and families about the capacity and rights of disabled parents.
3. All Disabled people will have opportunities to create, perform and develop their own arts, and to access arts activities as practitioners, participants and audiences.
4. Educate arts administrators/organisations and other recreational and sporting organisations about disability issues, and how to create inclusive opportunities for participation.
5. Support the development of arts, recreational and sports projects run by and for Disabled people, and promote those activities that celebrate and are representative of their communities and cultures.

Action 10: Collect and use relevant information about Disabled people and disability issues

Improve the quality of relevant disability information collated, used and interpreted.

Key steps:

1. Review the current guidelines for research funding with the intention of increasing research on disability issues. Research should aim to collect useful information of both a qualitative and a quantitative nature that focuses on experiences of disability.
2. Ensure Disabled people lead development and monitoring of the disability research agenda.
3. Researchers and research bodies will create mechanisms for Disabled people to put their own research and experiences forward.
4. The Census and all relevant surveys undertaken or contracted by Government agencies and publicly funded services will collect relevant and useful information about disability.

5. Government agencies and publicly funded services will analyse and use disability research to contribute to policy work, service development and monitoring, including implementation and monitoring of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
6. Disability research information should be available to Disabled people in culturally appropriate and accessible formats.
7. Ethical and procedural standards for disability research projects will:
 - ?? involve Disabled people in design, implementation and analysis of research
 - ?? ensure that people with the specific condition being researched provide ethical oversight for the project
 - ?? ensure that research processes are open, ethical and publicly transparent
 - ?? collect information about the age, gender and ethnicity of the research subjects, and over-sample where necessary to ensure that sample sizes are significant
 - ?? identify the purpose for which research information is being collected.
8. Membership of ethics committees should include Disabled people. Disabled members should be provided with appropriate support and training.

Action 11: Promote participation of Disabled Māori

Promote opportunities for Disabled Māori to participate in their communities and access disability services.

Key steps:

1. Build the capacity of Disabled Māori through the equitable allocation of resources within the context of Māori development frameworks such as the Whare Tapa Whā model and He Anga Whakamana.
2. Increase access of Disabled Māori and their whānau to mainstream providers of disability services by ensuring that mainstream services innovate and take on board Māori perspectives and understandings, without causing cultural alienation.
3. Establish more disability support services designed and provided by Māori for Māori.

4. Support the development of Māori services and increase mainstream responsiveness to Māori by:
 - ?? training more Māori disability professionals and
 - ?? increasing the advisory capacity of Māori.
5. Disabled Māori should have equal access to culturally appropriate services and facilities, for example, Māori rehabilitation and disability support services, Kohanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori and Māori cultural programmes.
6. Government-funded or sponsored Marae initiatives should adhere to the access expectations of Disabled people. These expectations include:
 - ?? physical accessibility
 - ?? access for guide dogs
 - ?? access to trilingual interpreters for the Deaf.
7. The Government should proactively support training and development of trilingual interpreters for the Deaf.
8. Te Puni Kōkiri should manage and lead (in collaboration with other departments and within the scope of its role) the implementation of Action 11. Te Puni Kōkiri should consider establishing a specific senior position to ensure leadership and co-ordination.

Action 12: Promote participation of Disabled Pacific people

Promote opportunities for Disabled Pacific people to participate in their communities and access disability services. Disabled Pacific people should be receiving an equitable level of resource that is delivered in a culturally appropriate way.

Key steps:

1. Increase access of Disabled Pacific people, their families and communities to both Pacific and mainstream providers of disability services.
2. Train Pacific people as providers of disability information and services for their local communities, and support them in their knowledge of cultural structures to design ways to augment, implement and deliver these most effectively.
 - ?? The information disseminated should include information about disability and accessing disability services, and how some long-term impairments can be prevented by healthy environments and health interventions.
 - ?? In developing and implementing policy for Disabled Pacific people, acknowledge and adapt to the differences between and within Pacific cultures (for example, differences between generations, and between individuals and families that are established in New Zealand as well as those who are newer immigrants).
3. Encourage Pacific communities to consider disability issues and perspectives and further their own understanding of disability. The wider New Zealand society needs to appreciate there are differences and similarities in cultural definitions that should be continually and openly explored.
 - ?? The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs should lead (in collaboration with other departments and within the scope of its role) a programme to support Pacific communities to establish their own community-based plan for disability issues. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs should consider establishing a specific senior position to ensure leadership and co-ordination.
 - ?? This programme could utilise existing structures and processes (such as churches and other community networks) to start discussing Pacific perspectives of disability and new views and ideas about disability, but should also be mindful of Pacific people who choose to be outside these structures.
4. The Government should proactively support training and development of trilingual interpreters for the Deaf.

Action 13: Enable Disabled children and youth to lead full and active lives

Disabled children and youth should enjoy full and active lives, in conditions that prepare them for adulthood and which:

- ?? ensure their dignity**
- ?? affirm their right to a good future and to participate in education, relationships, leisure, work and political processes**
- ?? recognise their emerging identities as individuals and reinforce their sense of self**
- ?? promote self-reliance**
- ?? recognise their important links with family and friends**
- ?? facilitate their active participation in the community.⁴**

Key steps:

1. Government agencies, disability sector agencies, organisations of children, youth and families, and other people who provide support will work in a collaborative and empowering way to support Disabled children and youth and their families.
2. Make the agencies and places in (1) above accessible and welcoming for children and youth.
3. Develop and implement a Development Strategy for Disabled children and youth. Design and implementation of the Strategy should include input from Disabled children and youth so they can own the vision and actions. An effective way of getting this input could be to run on-going child and youth forums that aim to develop leadership skills in Disabled children and youth.
4. Conduct anti-discrimination and education campaigns that are age-appropriate and appealing to children and young people.
5. Government agencies and Commissioners with particular responsibility for children and youth should consider establishing positions to advise on disability issues for children and youth.

⁴ Developed from Article 23 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. Children, youth and their families will access effective child or youth and family-focused support, education, health care services, rehabilitation services, recreation opportunities and training to help children and youth to achieve the greatest possible self-reliance and lead full and active lives in society. Particular effort should be focused on supporting transition periods by providing services that are age-appropriate and co-ordinated.
7. Introduce ways of involving Disabled children and youth in decision-making and giving them greater control over their lives.
8. Develop accommodation options for Disabled youth so they can leave home.
9. Provide and evaluate educational initiatives about sexuality, safety and relationships for Disabled children and youth.

Action 14: Improve quality of life for Disabled women

Improve the quality of life, opportunities and choices for Disabled women.

Key steps:

1. Promote women's rights and provide opportunities for Disabled women to achieve the same level of economic well-being/financial independence and educational attainment as men in general. This includes focusing on:
 - ?? equitable allocation of resources
 - ?? equitable access to support and equipment whether in or out of the workforce
 - ?? opening up education and employment opportunities for women. For example, women often need back-to-work and upskilling opportunities.
2. Provide equitable, appropriate and welcoming access to women's and other services (including women's health services, women's groups and crisis services such as refuges).
3. Support Disabled women to live independent and secure lives in the environment and with the people of their choosing.
4. Ensure that criteria and considerations for the health and reproduction-related treatment of Disabled women are the same as for non-disabled women.

5. Inform and provide support for the choices made by Disabled women, especially decisions around parenting and caring, sexual health and sterilisation.
6. Include the perspectives of Disabled women in the development of other population group strategies, particularly strategies for youth, older people, Māori and Pacific people.
7. The Ministry of Women's Affairs should manage and lead (in collaboration with other departments and within the scope of its role) the implementation of Action 14. The Ministry of Women's Affairs should include Disabled women in its policy work and consultation in the same way as other groups of women and should consider establishing a position to advise on disability issues for women.

Action 15: Value families, whānau and people providing ongoing support

Acknowledge and support the roles, responsibilities and issues facing family, whānau and those who support Disabled people.

Key steps:

1. Needs assessment processes should be holistic and take account of the needs of families/whānau as well as the Disabled person. When required, long-term support should be provided to give families more certainty for the future.
2. Improve the support and choices provided to those who support Disabled people (particularly Disabled children and older people) in order to: minimise loss of employment and income, the impact on families and siblings, social isolation and pressures on women to remain at home in a caring role; and compensate for the extra costs of disability.
3. Provide education and information for families with Disabled family members. Disabled people and their families need training and information about the issues they will face and the support available.
4. Ensure that, where appropriate, the family, whānau and those who support Disabled people are given a legitimate voice in issues that affect them or their loved ones. It is appropriate for them to be involved where the issue is about or impacts on the family or the issue relates to a child or youth. In this case, families should be involved to the same extent as they would if the child or youth were not disabled. It is also appropriate for the family to help interpret their Disabled family member's needs when that person is not able to communicate independently.
5. Develop a resource kit for professionals on when and how to interact with families/whānau of Disabled people.

6. Work actively to ensure that the families, whānau and those who support Disabled people can be involved in policy and service development and delivery, and in monitoring and evaluation processes where appropriate.
7. Encourage debate around responsibility for caring, payment for caring and how to further recognise and value the caring role.

Monitoring and evaluation

The New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act requires the Minister for Disability Issues to develop a New Zealand Disability Strategy and report to Parliament annually on progress in implementing the Strategy.

Important principles for monitoring the Strategy include:

- ?? monitoring following a formal cycle, based around the annual report-back to Parliament
- ?? clear measures must be set out in the implementation proposal and individual departmental plans. However, it is also important to survey Disabled people about how inclusive they believe society is
- ?? an independent agency led by Disabled people should monitor the implementation of the Strategy in Government and the wider community
- ?? the results of the monitoring must be used by Government agencies to improve their performance
- ?? the annual report to Parliament should be distributed widely and made available in accessible formats.