## Top left logo: Whaikaha | Ministry of Disabled People Top right logo: Office for Disability Isssues | Te Tari Mo Nga Take Hautanga In Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People

# New Zealand Disability Action Plan 2019 – 2023: Executive Summary for the fourth progress report July to December 2021.

The Disability Action Plan 2019–2023 (the DAP), was launched in November 2019, it aims to improve the wellbeing of disabled people through establishing work programmes that align with the eight outcomes of the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026. There are 29 work programmes, 28 that are overseen by distinct ministries and one that takes a cross government approach to improving disability data and evidence. In total 12 agencies are represented. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) manages the six-monthly reporting as the key monitoring mechanism of the DAP. This is the fourth progress report to be produced.

Progress on the 29 work programmes isrecorded as follows:

**Table One – Progress Rating for the 4th Round of the Disability Action Plan**.

**Report Status**

* On track or ahead – number of reports 10
* On track with minimal risks – number of reports 11
* Off track with low risks – number of reports 2
* Off track with significant risks – number of reports 5
* Complete – number of reports 1

**Total number of reports: 29**

This is very significant progress with over 70% of work programmes being on track and just over 40% either having been completed or ahead of their targets.

However, it is concerning that five reports are significantly off track. Off Track refers to a work programme that is not meeting the targets set down for the six-month period of the report. One of the reasons for work not running to schedule has been the continued effects of the COVID~~-~~19 pandemic. Several Ministries, in particular the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development, have put in a vast amount of energy over the last fifteen months into responding to the pandemic. Asa result, resources were diverted away from the Disability Action Plan projects. It is unfortunate that once these areas of work started to go off track that resources were not redirected so that progress could be maintained.

Kāianga Ora’s work is also off track. Recent information suggests that they will shift their focus from accessible home modifications towards supporting homeless people. This will invariably focus on the issues experienced by some disabled people, but this is likely to be only a small number of disabled people.

The quality of the reports has markedly increased since this process began in 2019. Reports are more succinct and keep to the guidelines on what should be reported. However, there are still one or two agencies that need to focus their reporting on the actions set out in their action plan and others who need to pay closer attention to following the reporting template. It is notable in this report that at least two action plans, as set out in the original DAP were marked as ‘complete’ adding to the one plan that was completed in the previous period. Moving forward, the agencies concerned, the Office for Disability Issues and representatives of the Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) coalition will need to meet to agree on additional actions for these agencies to incorporate into the remainder of their 2019 to 2023 Disability Action Plan cycle.

Below is a summary of some of the key actions from the eight outcome areas of the DAP. For each outcome, the major projects will be listed and one or two key outcomes from each project mentioned.

## Outcome One – Education

There are two agencies involved in the work of this outcome namely, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

The MoE has six major pieces of work as part of their DAP work programme.

* The Learning Support Action Plan, 2019-2025.
* The Early Learning Action Plan.
* Tomorrow’s Schools.
* The NCEA Review.
* The Reform of Vocational Education.
* Curriculum, Progress and Achievement.

The work under the Early Learning Action Plan, has been delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the timelines around the review of the Curriculum have also been reset as a result of COVID~~-~~19. However, a bi-cultural and inclusive working group has been established to ensure that the voices of Māori, family/whanau and disabled ākonga are part of the curriculum re-design. A draft set of design standards for the new curriculum has been written up and a teacher resource for the new, New Zealand Histories has been written. This new curriculum particularly highlights the history of disabled people in New Zealand.

New NCEA Level One achievement standards have been written and they are accessible by design. New literacy and numeracy standards have been designed and disabled ākonga have been involved in the pilot stages of the design process. Under the Learning Support Action Plan, a literature review of Neurodiversity has been completed and training implemented to help teaching staff understand the needs of these students. In terms of vocational education, the six Workforce Development Councils have been stood up and Cabinet has agreed to the Unified Funding System model, for disabled students.

There is a great deal of work being undertaken to improve educational outcomes for disabled people in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

The Tertiary Education Commission has had two major achievements in the past six months. Namely, the launch of the updated Kia Orite Toolkit, this toolkit is a national framework for Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) to support disabled learners. The second major achievement is the requirement that all TEOs receiving more than five million dollars in funding, will need to produce a Disability Action Plan, starting in early 2022. The impact of the DAPs on TEOs will be reported on in the July to December 2022 progress report.

## Outcome Two – Employment and Economic Security

There are four projects underway under the Employment and Economic Security Work Programme, all of which are led by various sections of the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

* Under the Working Matters, Disability Employment Action Plan, the Training Incentive Allowance has been reinstated for disabled students studying at levels IV to VII of the national curriculums.
* Under the Lead toolkit strand, a toolkit for all employers was published during the period of the last action plan.
* The national information and regional hubs project are severely off track as a result of the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
* Finally, under the removal of the Minimum Wage Exemption Project, the first phase of testing has been undertaken.

## Outcome Three - Health and Wellbeing

The outcomes under Health and Wellbeing have been particularly affected by the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and many of the reports are off track. However, work has progressed in the following areas:

* Understanding about Disability Data has greatly increased.Officials now have the information they need to complete phase one of their data gathering exercise.
* The Funded Family Care policy change work is complete and further discussions with the DPO Coalition are required to determine if further work should be undertaken for the remaining eighteen months of this DAP cycle.
* The Ministry of Health has commenced a project to revise the use of seclusion under the Mental Health (CompulsoryAssessment and Treatment) Act 1992 guidelines.
* The Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Amendment Bill received royal assent on 29 October 2021 and came into effect on 30 October 2021. Further guidance about indefinite treatment orders will come into effect in two years.
* The Ministry of Health continues to work with Te Pou to produce education and training materials around the new legislation.
* Sport New Zealand has the only report in outcome three that has the status of on track or ahead. Sport NZ continues to work with its partners to promote the value of play, active recreation, and sport for disabled people.
* Furthermore, in relation to sport the Contestable Disability Inclusion Fund was launched in September 2021 and the first round of applications have come in. Sport NZ has invested in Parafed’s sport programme. Sport NZ presented at the Metro Local Authority hui about the Disability Action Plan. Unfortunately, the Disability Hui that Sport NZ was due to host has been postponed due to COVID-19.

## Outcome Four – Rights Protection and Justice

Under this outcome, the Ministry of Justice oversees several work programmes that are all combined under the title Improving Access to Justice. Some of the key outcomes in the previous six months were:

* Under the Communication Assistance Scheme, a new complaints mechanism has been set up for disabled people to raise concerns about the scheme, two communication agencies have been appointed and some training modules for communication assistants established.
* In November 2021, the fourth cycle of the New Zealand crime and victim survey had been completed and this will be reported on in a future report.
* The National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence, Sexual Violence continues to be implemented, Furthermore, the Sexual Violence legislation Act, 2021 received royal assent in December 2021.
* The Family Court (Supporting Children in Court) Legislation Act received Royal Assent in August 2021. In the next DAP progress report the Ministry of Justice should be able to report on appropriate models of child participation.

## Outcome Five - Accessibility

Work under the Accessibility section is undertaken by several agencies including the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for Housing and Urban Development, Kainga Ora, the Ministry of Transport, Waka Kotahi and the Office for Seniors.

* Under the MSD Accelerating Accessibility work programme the government announced in October 2021 that a new legislative framework would be developed that would focus on the progressive prevention and removal of barriers experienced by disabled people to enable them to participate equitably in society and access the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers.
* The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was off track with major risks/issues with their work programme to improve the accessibility of housing across New Zealand. One of HUD’s actions to explore the possibility of incentivising accessible housing across the rental sector was started. However, HUD now feels that their focus should be on supporting young homeless people, which will include members of the disability community.

Kāinga Ora’s work programme has three main facets, increasing the number of new builds that use Universal Design standards, retrofitting existing builds to make them accessible and collating information about accessible housing stock. To this end, Kāinga Ora continues to liaise with disability stakeholders about the work programme. Work continues improving services to customers. Kāinga Ora have developed a new placement service called ‘Suitable Home, with the Right Support’ which they hope will support the needs of disabled people accessing their services~~.~~ By July 2021, 4,500 disabled people had received adaptations to their homes. Lastly, Accessible Design standards have been written and agreed upon.

* The Better Later Life plan produced by the Office for Seniors has been published. This plan focuses on improving employment, housing and digital inclusion for elderly people.
* Age Friendly Aotearoa is another project being run by the Office for Seniors. During the current reporting period, eight funding applications for age friendly communities have been approved. The age friendly urban places resource has been released. Lastly, terms of reference for an Age Friendly Aotearoa network have been approved and an action plan developed.
* The Accessibility Charter is about driving forward the provision of accessible information in the public sector. Monthly training workshops continue to run regarding creating accessible formats. The accessibility guide has been reviewed and published and more agencies are being encouraged to sign up to the Accessibility Charter.
* The Ministry of Transport commissioned a review into the Total Mobility Scheme and this report was released in December. Waka Kotahi has launched its’ own Disability Action Plan. One of their key goals was to ratify the requirements for urban buses which has now been done. The pedestrian planning and design guide and the public transport design guidance have also been published.

## Outcome Six – Attitudes

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

## Outcome Seven – Choice and Control

Under Outcome Seven Supported Decision Making is one of the key work programmes. Unfortunately, this work is off track with minimal risks. A literature review has been compiled on the topic, but not yet signed off.

The other major piece of work was the Disability Support System Transformation programme, run by the Ministry of Health. This programme is on track. The three Enabling Good Lives (EGL) pilots have continued and in October 2021, it was announced that EGL would undergo a national rollout. Ongoing positive relationships between officials and the Disability Community have meant that work continues in planning for the national rollout of this scheme. Furthermore, WHAIKAHA, the Ministry of Disabled People was announced in October 2021 and an Establishment Unit was formed to oversee the set-up of the new Ministry.

## Outcome Eight – Leadership

Outcome Eight is about encouraging and enabling more disabled people to take up positions of leadership within the New Zealand Government Sector, through promoting opportunities on crown boards and advisory committees. Most of the work in this outcome is concerned with continuing to advertise opportunities to those on the database and planning to make changes to how the database will be managed in future. Decisions about offering training to those people on the nominations database was also being considered. The new Senior Adviser responsible for the nominations database took on the role in November 2021, which meant there was little time to progress the work in this reportingperiod.

## Cross Cutting Project – Disability Data

‘If we are not counted, then we don’t count’. For disabled people to be included in government policies there needs to be reliable disability data available. Therefore, MSD leadsthe Cross Agency Disability Data and Evidence Working Group. An agreement on the questions to ask about disability and the information that goes under these questions is underway, as is development of the New Zealand Disability Outcomes Framework.

## Conclusion

There is a large amount of Mahi being undertaken in relation to the eight outcomes associated with the New Zealand Disability Strategy and Action Plan. This is despite the ongoing difficulties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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