Employment Support Available to Disabled People in New Zealand

Prepared for the Japanese Young Core Leaders Programme
October 2017
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MSD’s purpose

• We help New Zealanders to help themselves to be safe, strong and independent.

• Ko ta mātou he whakamana tangata kia tū haumaru, kia tū kaha, kia tū motuhake.
New benefit structure - Income protection

• **Jobseeker Support**
  – people available and looking for full-time work
  – temporary deferral for sickness

• **Sole Parent Support**
  – sole parents with dependent children under 14

• **Supported Living Payment**
  – people with serious health conditions or disability unable to work 15 hours or more a week
  – caregivers looking after people requiring high levels of care
The numbers are people too!

Total number on benefit (09 Dec 2016)- 294,464

Disability related benefit
Job seeker -  59,678
Supported Living payment -  93,433

Represents 52% of those on benefit
Drivers of change
Improving Labour Market Participation

• 49% of disabled people of working age are in the labour force

• Most people want to work, and can, with appropriate assistance, move into employment

• Twin track approach
  – Making mainstream services inclusive
  – Specialised services
Drivers of change

• Repeal of the Disabled Peoples Employment Promotion Act -1960 on the 30 November 2007
  – same employment conditions, rights, and entitlements as other New Zealanders.

• Disability Confident campaign
  – Greater engagement with employers
  – Commissioned research
What are disabled people saying?

• Attitudes a major factor

• Accommodations are not special treatment

• Rigidity of workplaces

• Occupational Health and Safety used
What do employers need?

- 97% felt disabled people deserved a fair go
- Barriers
  - Lower productivity
  - Hassle
  - Higher absentee rates
  - Additional costs
  - Comfort of customers and staff
Increasing employment opportunities

• **Mainstream opportunities**
  – All Work and Income services are available to everyone

• **Specialised support**
  – Supported employment agencies and Support funds
  – Specific services to fill identified gaps
  – Trialling new ways of working based on social investment approach
Government taking a lead

- Article 27 of the UNCRPD expects the State to take a lead in increasing the employment of disabled people
  - Makes good business sense
    * Tapping into a talent pool
    * Reflective of the customer base and NZ society
  - Welfare Reform – greater part time work obligations and work planning obligations for people on the Supported Living Payment
Pathway to Inclusion

- There should be a pathway to citizenship – not a special pathway and not no pathway.
- A sense of belonging
- Valuing all individuals
- Equal access and opportunity
Government Lead

- Developed a Lead Toolkit:
  - Endorsement by Leadership Teams
    - Part of Government Agencies Diversity and Inclusions Plans
  - Tools and resources to enable HR practices and tools to be inclusive.
  - Tools and resources for people managers
  - Focus on encouraging young disabled people to enter the Public sector
And finally…

• Good managers do this automatically

• Lead Toolkit
  
  www.ssc.govt.nz/lead