

NZDSN 23 February 2016 Newsletter ISSUE 46

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Update from the CE

Dr Garth Bennie



Kia ora and welcome to 2016!

The year has got off to a very busy start with multiple projects competing for attention. I know that many of you are wondering where we are up to with the equal pay negotiations so I will start with these.

Equal Pay Negotiations

Let's remind ourselves of the background and how these negotiations came about:

The Service and Food Workers Union (SFWU), now called E Tu, took a case with a member against her employer (Terra Nova – an aged care provider) on the basis that she was being paid less because she is a woman working in a female dominated industry. The case was taken to the Employment Court because of the implications for the wider care industry – where the workforce is largely female dominated.

The court agreed that there was a case, this was appealed by Terra Nova (unsuccessfully) and so a date was scheduled in late March for the court to decide how the case should be settled – unless the parties can reach a settlement in the meantime – hence the current negotiations. The parties are the Government (Ministry of Health) employer groups (providers) and the Unions.

It is clear that it will take longer than the end of March to reach a settlement, but the union is being flexible about the deadline while negotiations are progressing. The Government, through the Ministry of Health, decided that the negotiation will include the aged care, home help and disability support sector which is why NZDSN was invited to be part of the negotiations. We have tabled on a regular basis that the exclusion of MSD and some mental health funded services from the negotiations has the potential to create a significant additional level of relativity issues for providers.

The negotiations have progressed to the a point where we need to agree on a minimum pay rate which no one working across the sector should be paid less than. As you can imagine getting agreement on what this minimum rate should be is less than straight forward. It needs to be high enough to address the matters raised by the court case, it needs to be affordable for Government, but it also needs to translate into an average pricing regime for providers that make it affordable for providers. This is because provides/employers need to be able to meet their obligations in terms of pay levels for tenure, qualifications and to deal with internal relativities, e.g. the gap between support worker wages and those of the staff supervising/managing them.

We are absolutely committed to higher wages for support workers, but within a framework that enables a settlement for providers that is affordable, recognises the growing complexity of the work and the need for relevant qualifications. We do not want a settlement where providers are having to pick up the immediate flow on costs of increased wages within existing funding, a compromised ability to recognise progression through tenure and qualifications, and distorted internal relativities.

In the near future we will hopefully be in a position to consult with members about a proposed settlement that enables providers to assess whether the wage increases and funding framework being offered is workable and does not leave providers with funding shortfalls to pick up (from who knows where!). The response from the sector will determine if we have a mandate to proceed with agreeing to a settlement.

The negotiating team for NZDSN is Garth Bennie (CE) John Taylor (Community Connections) and Ralph Jones (IHC).

We will continue to provide updates, especially when there are significant developments to report or consult about.

Minimum Wage Increase

As many of you will be aware the minimum wage is set to go up to \$15.25 in April. We have contacted the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development to seek their response to this, particularly in the context of current 0% increases in contract pricing. The minimum rate of pay for some staff is below \$15.25 so providers will have no choice about increasing pay rates.

MSD Proposals

NZDSN, Platform and Inclusive NZ have had a series of discussions with MSD on the final shape of the proposed changes to Employment Support contracts. While we have made progress on some aspects we may well have lingering concerns about other aspects, particularly the possibility of “cherry picking” due to the Governments need to meet targets around reducing numbers of people on benefits – and the impact on employment opportunities and outcomes for those working fewer hours.

We are not able to comment any further until the final version of the proposals is released to providers in the form of new contracts near the end of March. It is

important to note that the funding and payment structure does not change in the first year, but the reporting requirements will reflect proposed changes to be implemented the following year. This enables the impact of proposed changes to be assessed before they are implemented and what modifications might be needed. MSD have agreed to a working group to monitor outcomes and the emergence of any unintended consequences along with the collection of baseline data about wages earned, taxes paid and benefits abated.

2016 Sector Briefing Consultation

We are using the first round of regional network meetings this year as an opportunity to engage people in discussion about what the focus of this year's Sector Briefing should be. We have some ideas and thoughts we would like to offer and we are really interested in your response to these, but also your sense of what the key messages are that we should be focusing on with Government and NZDSN priorities for action.

We are also happy to receive written or organise verbal submissions/contributions. The deadline for these submissions is 30 May 2016. In the meantime, come along to regional provider meetings and get involved in the discussion. A schedule of regional meetings can be found [here](#)

Leadership Forum: Leading in Times of Change, Thursday 7 and Friday 8 April in Auckland - Not to be missed!

This opportunity is specifically for those in leadership and management roles. There will be a key note address from John Allen (previously head of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and prior to this at NZ Post).

Peter Cammock (Leadership Consultant) will facilitate a workshop on leadership and resilience and there will also be an opportunity to workshop content for this year's NZDSN sector briefing document. Further information and registrations [click here](#)

Provider Development Programme Fee Changes

To ensure that we can focus on quality events and to cover costs associated with hosting these events we are introducing a revised fee structure for workshops from 1 March 2016 this year. For one day workshops:

NZDSN Members: \$65 plus GST
Non Members: \$150 plus GST

These rates will be pro-rated for workshops of shorter or longer duration.

Please note this fee will not apply to the Choices in Community Living Workshop on 17 March 2016.

People First

On a final note, People First are undertaking a “crowd funding” programme to be part of this year’s IASSID World Congress, being held in Melbourne. If you’re interested in helping get some of their people to this exceptionally important event, then [click here](#) for further information.

Dr Garth Bennie
Chief Executive

Surveys and Discussions

Sara Georgeson
Policy Analyst

NZDSN Disability Workforce Survey

NZDSN conducted the 2015 Disability Workforce Survey at the end of last year. The survey was sent to 123 organisations and we received 47 responses which was a great result. The analysis of the data is now well underway. A full report from the survey will be produced and will be available by April this year. We have been able to use some of the initial high-level results to inform the equal pay negotiations.

Taking Action on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) discussion document NZDSN is making a submission to the proposals for a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Plan that has been outlined by the Ministry of Health. It is pleasing that there is consideration for an overarching plan to respond to the needs of people with FASD and their families. Submissions close on 26 February. The MOH discussion document is available at <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/taking-action-fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-fasd-discussion-document>.

NZDSN Provider Development Programme 2016

Phil Smith
Training and Development Coordinator

The Provider Development programme for 2016 has begun. The first workshops, “Engaging Pasifika” hosted jointly with NZDSN and Le Va have been popular and well attended.

March

March sees a series of half day, Health and Safety Workshops focused on the new “Health and Safety at Work Act” being held across the country. NZDSN member organisations are strongly encouraged to register for these workshops to ensure your organisation is ready for the new Act which takes effect in early April.

Check the [NZDSN website](#) for dates, venues and speakers. The workshops have speakers from Worksafe, Unions and the Disability sector and are designed to be very much focused on assisting the sector to prepare for the new Act.

April

The Effective Employer Engagement and Supervising Employer Engagement workshops being co-hosted with GIVEN Australia in April are proving very popular. Members are strongly encouraged to attend both days if you can, but if you find the EEE workshops are full, please register for the SEE workshops.

We are hosting a CEO's forum in Auckland with keynotes from John Allen and Peter Cammock. Information re this forum can be found [here](#) and registrations are now open.

Qualifications

For those members wanting information on new qualifications as they apply to the Sector are encouraged to contact Penny Barrett at Careerforce. She is happy to talk to employers and employees on what's involved in these new qualifications.

Registrations

Members are reminded that workshop registrations close 10 working days prior to the workshop dates and that it is important to register early to ensure your place.

We run a waiting list for all workshops after the close off date, so if you need to cancel your registration for any reason, please let us know early so that you avoid being charged a cancellation fee.

As you can see the first few months of the year are very full with a variety of events being held, so I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at these events. If you have a good idea for an event, talk to me and we will see if we can turn your idea into a valuable workshop for the sector.

[Click here for details](#) for our upcoming Provider Development workshops.

News from NZDSN Auckland Regional Network

Mireille Vreeburg

Engaging Pasifika Workshops

As part of the 2016 Service providers Leadership programme NZDSN has started the year very well with the Engaging Pasifika Workshop on 16 February in the Harakeke house in Auckland facilitated by Le Va. With over 40 registrations for this workshop in Auckland alone, this topic obviously catered for a large demand. As research results provided by Le Va have proven that Pacific people with disabilities are historically low users of disability support services, access service late

and present high support needs, this cultural competency training aimed especially to lift the services for non-Pacific disability providers for Pacific clients. This course will help every staff member to feel more confident around dealing with Pacifica people which will directly contribute towards a more inclusive New Zealand.

If you weren't able to register for the Engaging Pasifika workshops organised by NZDSN, have a look yourself at available resources around engaging with Pasifika at [Le Va's](#) website

Auckland Council Disability Action Plan

We have previously referred to the work of the Disability Advisory Panel from Auckland Council. This panel represents a variety of disability perspectives and has been working with the council for over five years now. This has led to a Disability Action Plan for Auckland Council which is a very exciting development in itself. With this Action Plan the council has committed herself to make sure that policies and objectives will turn into concrete actions. The Action Plan will make council services more accessible and will lead to a more inclusive council and more inclusive Auckland. Minutes of the meetings from the Auckland Disability Advisory panel are published on the Auckland Council website. [Click here](#) for the minutes and or to get in contact with the Disability Advisory Panel from Auckland Council.

2016 NZDSN Sector Briefing

On Wednesday 2 March, NZDSN will host its first Auckland Regional Networking meeting of the year at Framework in Otahuhu. This meeting aims to give our Auckland member and disability community an opportunity to give their input around the upcoming 2016 NZDSN Sector Briefing led by Garth Bennie, NZDSN CEO. This meeting will also provide updates around:

- ***NZDSN's activities in general.*** Including progress on the equal pay negotiations and workforce development activities.
- ***Employment Support Services:*** Provide some specific details and answer questions about the proposed changes to MSD funded Employment Support Services and the implications for providers

Get In Touch

As Auckland's executive facilitator from NZDSN, I am always looking for opportunities to connect with our members and the wider Auckland Disability community. So please contact me if you would like to schedule a meeting. I am always happy to visit you at your location to hear what more NZDSN can do to support our members and how we can show leadership towards an inclusive New Zealand.

I am also liaising with existing networks. Currently I am attending meetings from: Disability Advisory Panel Auckland Council, Small Providers Network, Health & Wellness committee, Transition coordinators meeting, ASENZ practitioners meetings Auckland. If you know of any other existing networks or committees in the Auckland

region where NZDSN's representation could be of value, please feel free to contact me as well.

I am looking forward to continuing working together with all of you this year.

Warm wishes,
Mireille Vreeburg
Auckland Executive Facilitator NZDSN
021 025 93 418, mireille@nzdsn.org.nz

Upcoming NZDSN events in Auckland region

Care Matters, "Enhancing the wellbeing of Carers and disabled people through providing current, relevant and practical information and skills"

Workshop West Auckland, 16 Venue Kelston, Community Centre
Monday 29 February, 9.30am -2.30 pm, [Click here](#) for flyer

The New Health and Safety at Work Act

A half day workshop targeted at Chief Executives / Area Managers in the disability sector focused on the Health and Safety at Work act. The workshop will present a number of perspectives to enable attendees to assess their organisational readiness for the new Act with speakers from Worksafe, IHC, HHL, PSA, ETU and Manawanui. [Click here](#) for flyer

- North Auckland, 23 March, Venue Yes Disability, Albany
- South Auckland, 24 March, Venue Framework Otahuhu

'Effective Employers Engagement

A full-day workshop focused on practical steps to engage fully with employers to encourage them to employ people with disabilities. These workshops are for those employment consultants, managers and supervisors that are working in the supported employment space to assist people with disabilities into the workforce to enable them to live good lives.

South Auckland, Venue Framework, Otahuhu, 4 April, Registrations closed!

Still places available in Palmerston North & Christchurch. [Click here](#) for flyer

Supervising Employer Engagement

This workshop is about getting the people who manage, support and supervise your staff aligned with the organisation's intention of creating a more pro-active and conscientious approach to Employer Engagement.

South Auckland, Venue Framework Otahuhu, 5 April, registrations close 22 March, [Click here](#) for the flyer

Please block your calendar for the second **NZDSN Auckland Regional Networking meeting on 29 June 2016**. More details will follow closer to the date!

Upcoming Auckland regional events organised by other organisations

- Manawanui, My Life My Way event, [8 March](#). Three individuals who use IF will share how they developed their Good Life.
- Mapura Studios [programmes time table 2016](#)
- Dan's therapy NZ [group programmes 2016](#)
- [Circability workshops](#), Rhys Miller learn from a professional circus performer Friday 18 March, Jay Gilligan Juggling Launch pad, 31 March.
- Children's Autism Foundation, [upcoming events World autism awareness day 2 April 2016](#)
- Child matters , [Child Protection Studies Programme](#)
- Disability Connect, [overview upcoming support seminars & workshops](#)
- National Housing Summit 16 April 2016, Western Springs Community Hall, Great North Road, Auckland
- Consultation Auckland Civil Defence and emergency plan, [online submission form](#). For more information <http://www.shapeauckland.co.nz>
- Waitemata DHB is currently undertaking a review of the Healthpoint website (www.healthpoint.co.nz). The purpose is to understand how easy it is to use the website and how useful the information is. Completing the survey will only take a few minutes <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CC56GXB>

Newsletters from other organisations

- [IHC Hot Issues January 2016](#)
- Disability connect [E- Bulletin](#)