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### Update from the CE Dr Garth Bennie

Kia ora

Suddenly it's October and people are talking about end of year functions – where did the year go?!

Since the last newsletter the pay equity legislation has landed, we have hosted our National Employment Symposium and we have a new Government – the exact shape of which is a work in progress. We are also approaching the release of several pieces of work that have been under development for some time: Employment Support Practice Guidelines, a Fire Design Guide for Community Housing and Employer Guidelines for providers.

### Transparent Pricing, Pay Equity Implementation and Contracts

Long standing issues with pricing, approaches to contracting and the implementation of the pay equity legislation have all morphed into the development of a Joint Strategic Work Programme with the Ministry of Health. The initial focus has been on understanding the latest version of a transparent pricing tool (for residential services). A focus group of providers and NZDSN Board members has been established to provide the technical and strategic expertise needed to evaluate and analyse the tool, how pay equity would be

accommodated along with how issues related to sleepovers and high and complex needs would also be addressed. We are also wanting to look at a strategy that gets us from the current fixed or pre-determined funding envelope to a situation where pricing is indexed to actual costs – and not just for residential services, but for other service lines as well. We have offered some principles and acceptance criteria for discussion as a way of measuring the outcomes of this work with the Ministry.

Two work streams have been established to undertake the analysis and build understanding from a provider perspective. It is our intention to arrive at a point where we can engage with the wider sector in an informed way and have a level of confidence about any views or conclusions that we arrive at. The goal is for providers to develop a shared understanding of the model, the implications for their organisation and to build some consensus on a way forward.

NZDSN is still looking to commission its own piece of independent work to analyse and assess the Ministry's approach, however we have delayed this until we can gauge how much progress we make with current discussions and, as a consequence, what this work will need to focus on.

The Provider Focus Group is made up of:

- Sharon Saxton
- Mike Brummitt
- Donna Mitchell
- Vicki Stewart
- Richard Williams
- Stuart Spackman
- Tina Cronshaw
- Peter Bell
- Laurie Hilsgen
- Garth Bennie

Further expertise may be co-opted as necessary.

A separate update was distributed to members on Friday 29 September as a joint communication from the Ministry and NZDSN. Click [here](#) to look at this communication.

### Qualifications and Workforce Development

With the Health and Wellbeing qualifications being linked to pay rates in the pay equity legislation there is now a great deal of focus on the relevance and fit for purpose of these qualifications. After several discussions with NZDSN, Careerforce have agreed to a comprehensive engagement and consultation with the sector on a review of the qualifications and a co-design approach (with providers, family networks and disabled people) to profiling the knowledge, skills and competencies needed if these qualifications are to reflect and anticipate future workforce needs. The process will start soon with an employer survey and we urge you all to complete this. Careerforce will also be facilitating a full session

at our December Leadership Forum as part of this consultation process. To register click [here](#).

### MSD, Employment and Community Participation Services

We are meeting with MSD officials in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October to discuss a range of issues, as well as providing an update on progress with our work on the employment practice guidelines, SLI indicators and a process for ongoing support funding. We are keen to see how things are progressing with the implementation of pay equity as well as where things are at with regard to Minimum Wage Exemptions.

We are also keen to have attention turned to the appalling funding levels for Community Participation Services and their complete absence or availability in many communities. A copy of our letter requesting the meeting can be found [here](#).

### Enabling Good Lives and System Transformation

NZDSN has members participating in a number of the working groups looking at detailed design and involvement with the Leadership Group in Mid Central. We are continuing with our partnership with the National Enabling Good Lives Leadership Group in delivering a series of EGL workshops and the establishment of Communities of Practice following these. These are an opportunity to engage with the ideas and concepts underpinning EGL and system transformation and to support each other with implementation. We also strongly urge you to visit the Enabling Good Lives website to keep up with developments and join the conversations, click [here](#).

NZDSN is strongly supportive of EGL as well as the intent and aspirations of system transformation. However change on this scale is not without its risks and there are some “head winds” to bear in mind:

- A transformed system that relies on personal budgets as a funding mechanism will be a struggle if those budgets do not deliver the “purchasing power” or flexibility that disabled people and families need to access the supports they require – and at prices that enable providers to respond with the quality and innovation that we all want to see;
- It is difficult to envisage that a system based on highly personalised and “bespoke” support options will cost less;
- A change in Government could mean a period of “pause and reflect” as those with new or re-aligned responsibilities “take stock” with regard to this important change programme;
- The planned staged implementation of system transformation is a long term proposition and while a manageable pace of change has benefits there is a risk that momentum could be lost;
- The long standing call for a single Crown entity that has policy and funding responsibility for disability and where accountability/leadership sits with a Minister inside cabinet should not be lost sight of. This is essential for a long term view of,

and solution to funding, as well as sustained implementation of a transformed system.

### Provider Development Programme

This programme continues to evolve in response to feedback and is likely to have an increasing focus on organisational and leadership development. Further Communities of Practice, an Exchange Programme to spread and embed innovation more effectively, training for Boards and Leadership Forums will all be features of the 2018 programme.

### Fire Regulations in Community Housing

Submissions have now closed. For the NZDSN submission click [here](#). We will be looking to work with a small number of providers to assemble a tool kit of resources to assist organisations to develop management practices that can have a moderating effect on the extent and cost of design features. The design guide requires providers to sign off that management practices meet relevant health, safety and quality standards so it is important that these can be verified. The overall intent is an approach where providers can find a balance between design and management solutions and that are reflective of the actual support needs of people currently residing in a home.

### Employment Support Practice Guidelines

This sector wide collaboration, led by NZDSN, launched a draft document at the National Employment Symposium in August. Submissions have now closed and the Governance Group overseeing the project will soon be meeting to consider the feedback and look towards the launching of a final document. The Governance group have committed to ensuring that the guidelines become an ongoing reference point for the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence based best practice when it comes to supporting disabled people to find and keep the job they want.

### Delegation of Disability Leaders from Japan

NZDSN and ODI are jointly hosting a delegation of leaders from Japan during the second week of October. A comprehensive programme has been developed and we would like to acknowledge the organisations who have generously agreed to participate by sharing information about their services and programmes, including some site visits.

### NZDSN Annual General Meeting

This was held in Auckland on September 21<sup>st</sup>. As a result of Board elections we are able to welcome the return of Janine Stewart from IHC and two new Board members: Sean Stowers from Spectrum Care and Arnah Trelease from Hohepa in Christchurch. Congratulations! Our 2017 Annual Report can be accessed [here](#).

## CSC Buying Group

As a member of NZDSN, staff members of your organisation are eligible for discounts for a wide number of retailers through our relationship with the CSC Buying Group. Existing cards expire in October 2017 and replacement ones can be purchased for \$1.50. Please contact our office by email [admin@nzdsn.org.nz](mailto:admin@nzdsn.org.nz) should you require a new or replacement card.

## Briefing for Incoming Ministers (BIM)

This will be a priority over the next two weeks and a copy (once approved by the NZDSN Board) will be posted on our website following its distribution to relevant Ministers. This document will summarise what we see as the current situation, challenges and opportunities and how we would like to work with Government.

## Open Polytechnic offering a new qualification – the Bachelor of Social Health and Wellbeing

The Open Polytechnic have developed a new qualification, the Bachelor of Social Health and Wellbeing. The degree, with strands in Mental Health and Addictions and Disability, has been developed in consultation with the NZDSN, Platform Trust, and Te Pou o te Whakaaro Nui. Enrolments for the degree programme are now open.

Note that the Open Polytechnic also offers the Certificate in Social Health and Wellbeing (levels 3 and 4). For further information click [here](#).

## Disability Pride Week : 30 November – 5 December 2017

Disability Pride Week 2017 is happening around New Zealand this year from November 30 to December 5 2017.

The organisers are calling for disabled people, organisations and community groups to register their events. Disability Pride Week is about bringing disabled people together to celebrate their common humanity through a variety of activities, sharing their stories and their creativity. Disability Pride Week incorporates the UN International Day for Disabled People on December 3.

For further information click [here](#).

## Key Dates:

- **5 and 6 December 2017** NZDSN Leadership Forum in Wellington at the Copthorne Oriental Bay. To register click [here](#).
- **11 and 12 April 2018** NZDSN National Conference at Te Papa in Wellington. Check our website for updates.



**Phil Smith**  
Training & Development Coordinator

### Provider Development Programme

Events coming up under the Provider Development Programme for October include the second Quality Employment Services workshop where People First and the Depression Support Network share the voices of disabled people about what really works for them in terms of providers working in the supported employment area. These workshops are the result of research commissioned by NZDSN and as such provide valuable insight from people using employment services. The Christchurch workshop on October 5 has nine places available so make sure you register to hear the results of this important research. On October 25 we will be hosting a Building Community Circles workshop in Palmerston North, where Cath Barton, a Community Connector with Helen Sanderson Associates in the UK, will share her knowledge about how to establish and maintain this important initiative. There 18 places still available so make sure to register and hear about how to develop this initiative in your community.

As well as these two workshops, we will be running another Enabling Good Lives workshop facilitated by members of the EGL leadership group, in Tauranga on October 25<sup>th</sup>. These workshops which have been held throughout the country have been well received by those attending, providing valuable information and insight into this important sector initiative. Keep an eye on the NZDSN website for details of the Tauranga workshop.

The final set of workshops we will be running for 2017, will be a set of Person Centred Planning Level Two workshops and a one and a half day leadership event in Wellington. The Person Centred workshops build on the information provided in the Level one workshops held earlier in the year and in order to attend level two, you need to have completed a level one workshop. Details of dates and venues will be on the NSDSN website very soon. The final Leadership workshop for the year is already up on the events section of the NZDSN website and places are filling fast, so make sure you register to ensure your place.

As with all our workshops, details of offerings will be sent to NZDSN members, posted on our website and advertised through local provider networks. We gratefully acknowledges the

continued support of Te Pou in making it possible for NZDSN to provide a varied programme of development and discussion for the sector.



Mireille Vreeburg  
Auckland Executive Facilitator

Auckland Regional Update

Please click [here](#) to read all the latest news from the Auckland Region