

Factsheet - services for disabled people

The current health system has two related, but distinct, areas to consider in terms of disabled people and disability. Support services which are designed specifically for disabled people – called Disability Support Services (DSS) – and providing health services to people with disability.

Our health and disability system has not performed consistently in providing either Disability Support Services or equitable health outcomes for the disabled community.

Addressing Disability Support Services

Work on the Disability System Transformation has been underway for more than a decade. The Government has announced the establishment of the new Ministry for Disabled People that will deliver and transform Disability Support Services and progress work on the broader Disability System Transformation.

The Ministry for Disabled People will be hosted by the Ministry of Social Development, recognising the broader and whole-of-life approach.

The wider health reform – What’s changing, and why?

The shift from 20 District Health Boards to a single nationwide health system managed by Health NZ will improve the quality and consistency of care for disabled people. A national coordinated network will also help ensure best practice care is shared amongst all disabled communities, and that care does not vary depending on where you live. The Disability Strategy will remain a cornerstone of our health system, and direct the Ministry of Health, Māori Health Authority and Health New Zealand in delivering improved health outcomes for disabled communities.

What will it look like in future?

A wider range of primary and community care services will be available across New Zealand, developed to be more inclusive of disabled people. A stronger consumer voice in the design of locality services and planning will give disabled people opportunities to shape services that better suit their needs and help them stay well in the community.

The networking and integration of primary and community services will also make care more coordinated, minimising repetition, and ensuring carers have a better understanding of users’ needs. Health NZ will create avenues to advocate nationally to ensure best practice and service design reflect the diverse interests and needs of disabled people. When more specialised care is needed, disabled people will have access to high quality hospital and specialist care regardless of where they live in New Zealand.

What’s next?

Over coming months there will be opportunities to influence the details of how our future health system will work, including how we can ensure that Health NZ acts to continuously improve the quality and consistency of care for disabled people, across our health system.

Want to know more?

Further information about the work and progress of the health reforms is available on the Future of Health website: <https://www.futureofhealth.govt.nz/>