

# Canterbury Health, Disability Issues Update - June 2017

## Introducing the Canterbury Health System Disability Steering Group

The Group guides and informs how the goals of the Trans-Alpine Health, Disability Action Plan are reached.

The main purpose of the Group is to ensure people who experience disability in the Canterbury and West Coast DH areas have the health services they need. And that they feel included in decisions that will affect the quality of their healthcare.

[Disability Steering Group members](#)



"As Chairperson, I will be looking to share our



achievements so far and gain insight into other priority areas through liaising with key stakeholders, including Disabled Person Organisations, family networks and provider peak bodies over the next couple of months."

**Gordon Boxall, Chair**

**The DSG has identified three main priorities for improving how the health system supports disabled people in Canterbury. They are:**

## **Access to services**



Access to the main Christchurch hospital site is a major concern to the Group who will be encouraging the Canterbury Health System to make a statement on this issue.

Disabled people, their families, whānau and relevant organisations need to be informed about what is being done to ensure safe access to hospital facilities and how they can keep up to date with any changes. We will then need to evaluate how

effectively this information has been circulated and received.

A second important access issue relates to the way disabled people, families and whānau are referred, received and engaged with when they attend Canterbury health facilities and services. The Canterbury Health System is committed to ensuring its staff and contractors receive effective training in disability awareness and the DSG will oversee and inform how this is implemented, reviewed and improved.

Following a presentation by Barrier Free NZ and Earthquake Disability Leadership Group, the Steering Group will be making recommendations on the significance of signing up to the Accessibility Charter which is seeking to make Christchurch one of the most accessible cities in the world.

Canterbury and West Coast DHBs have each committed to rebuilding their websites and making them more accessible to disabled people.

## **Employing disabled people**



The Canterbury Health System is committed to employing more disabled people and we are exploring ways that this can be achieved to everyone's advantage.

We are also looking to ensure that disabled staff currently employed in the Canterbury Health System are encouraged to identify any barriers to their wellbeing

at work or development of their chosen careers so these can be removed. They will also provide valuable insight into barriers that may put disabled people off becoming a Canterbury Health System employee.

## Health of disabled Māori

Following a presentation from Hei Whakapiki Mauri at the last meeting we will consider the recommendations they left with us and how these can best complement the objectives of the Māori Health Action Plan as it applies to disabled people.

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