

Choice in Community Living

A guide for people moving to a new life



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Introduction

Congratulations on your decision to take up Choice in Community Living (CiCL).

CiCL gives you more choice and control over how you live, where you live and whom you live with. It is available in Auckland, Waikato, the Hutt Valley and Otago/Southland for people with significant support needs who wish to explore alternatives to residential care.

Your journey to CiCL starts with your local Needs Assessment and Service Coordination (NASC) organisation. They will check that you are eligible for CiCL and advise you on the funding available from the Ministry of Health.

Taikura Trust (Auckland) Email: info@taikura.org.nz Phone: 0800 824 5872	Disability Support Link (Waikato) Email: dslooffice@waikatodhb.health.nz Phone: 0800 55 33 99
Life Unlimited (Hutt Valley) Email: info@lifeunlimited.net.nz Phone: 0800 008 0011	Access Ability (Otago/Southland) Email: otago@accessability.org.nz Phone: 0800 758 700

This booklet raises some of the important things you might like to talk about with your CiCL provider. Your CiCL provider will have more information about these topics.

For more information about CiCL, go to health.govt.nz and search for 'Choice in Community Living'.

Getting started with Choice in Community Living

Your NASC organisation works with you and your family/whānau to help you learn what resources and funding are available to support your disability.

CiCL funding is based on what you would receive if you were living in a residential service. It is managed by you and your whānau, in partnership with your chosen CiCL provider.

The Ministry of Health has guidelines that outline how people can use their funding. To read the guidelines, go to health.govt.nz and search for 'Purchasing Guidelines'.

Planning

If you have agreed to help from a Local Area Coordinator or Navigator in your community, you may want to consider working with them to make a life plan.

Step one – Talk about what is important to you in having a good life

What would a good life look like to you? What barriers, if any, need to be overcome? What strengths and opportunities do you have?

Step two – Discuss how you will achieve your good life

Your goals need to be specific and achievable. It helps to break things down into steps that you can work on in the short term (for example, one week or one month) as well as the long term.

Step three – Regularly check on the progress you are making

Take some time to work out how successful your life plan has been. Celebrate achievements. If you have not reached where you want to be, set new goals or try smaller steps.

For more information, visit:

- helensandersonassociates.co.uk and search for 'Person Centred Planning'
- pcp.sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu
- mindmapping.com
- inclusion.com/planningtools.html

Selecting the right provider

Your NASC organisation will discuss with you the different CiCL providers that are available to you in your region. You will need to choose the provider that suits you best.

There are a number of things you may wish to think about when selecting a provider. Some of the things to consider are listed below.

- Do they have the right experience to support me?
- Do they respect me?

- Do I like them?
- Do they communicate well with me?
- Can I trust them to do a good job?
- Will they listen to me and understand what I want?
- Does the way they operate suit me? That is, are they formal or informal enough to match the way I like to do things?
- Is the way they will charge me for their support the best value for money for me?

There may be other things you want to check that are important to you. It's a good idea to make a list of these that you can refer to when you meet providers so you remember to ask about all the important things.

Once you have chosen a CiCL provider, you can start planning for the changes you want to make in your life. Your plan will include what is important to you and the support you need.

Your provider will keep working with you once you're in your own home to make sure everything is working well for you.

Building trusting relationships

Under CiCL, you may need to take on new responsibilities that you wouldn't have in a residential service. People often want to involve their whānau or friends in deciding, with their provider, what options might work best for them. This requires strong and trusting relationships so that the decision-making can be effective.

The first thing to do is to discuss with your provider what working in partnership looks like. You may like to consider the following factors.

- What is important for each person?
- How will decisions be made?
- What is each person responsible for doing?
- How will you communicate and how often?
- How will you deal with conflict and differences?
- What are your provider's key tasks, what will these tasks cost and what kind of result are you looking for, when will you review your plan and what opportunities will you have to check on progress and make changes?

The benefits of a written support agreement

It is necessary to develop and sign a written support agreement with your CiCL provider. This records how you will be supported and how the partnership will work. It outlines how you will communicate with each other, how decisions will be made, what you will do and what your provider agrees to do. Anything you think is important can go in this plan.

A support agreement is not a legal document. It is simply a record of what you have agreed so that everyone involved understands what is expected for each other. It can be amended as people learn more and the situation changes.

Develop a support agreement with your provider so there is a good understanding between everyone involved.

Getting the right staff

It is very important that the people you pay to support you are right for you. You may spend quite a bit of time with them and you may look to them for guidance on some things, so you have to have people who you trust, like and know will be working to do the best for you.

With CiCL, your provider usually employs your staff, but you will still want to make sure you are involved in choosing who is working with you. You might decide instead to employ some or all of your staff yourself and have your provider just do the administration or perhaps purchase some supports on your behalf.

Below is a list of some characteristics you may want from a staff person. The right person:

- works creatively and flexibly
- respects your values
- is able to help you to solve any problems
- is well connected to your community.

Think about what you want the staff person to be, for example:

- outgoing or quiet
- younger or older than you
- male or female.

Choosing how you want to live

CiCL means you have the flexibility to think about how you want to live, not just where you want to live.

So what is important to you? The following are some important things to consider.

- Do I want to live on my own or with others?
- If 'with others' – what do I want them to be like?
- Do I want a busy or quiet place?
- Do I need to be near transport?
- What sort of living environment is important to me?

You and your whānau can use questions like these to make decisions about your living arrangements with guidance from your provider.

There is no need to rush: take things at your own pace.

Circle of support

Creating a 'circle of support' map is a really good way to figure out whom you currently have in your life. It is a good idea to do this as early as possible so that these people can help you as you plan and then move into your new home.

A circle of support map lists all the people you would like to support you in having a good life. The map can include family/whānau, friends, peers, volunteers, work colleagues, club members or acquaintances. If you find that you don't know that many people, it's a great time to think about how you can meet more people, if that is what you want to do.

Once you have created your map, you can ask people to join the circle. You might invite the circle to get together to discuss your goals and the best ways of achieving them. The circle may also help you to meet other people, check that you are safe, make sure your provider is doing what you want and help you solve any problems.

Choosing the right home

Ask your CiCL provider or your Local Area Coordinator for ideas on where to start in finding your new home. Helping you to plan for your new way of life is part of their role.

Someone in your circle may already know of a place that could work well for you, so remember to ask around.

The private rental market offers more choice, but prices may be higher. The Accommodation Supplement may be able to help you with your accommodation costs (see page 10).

Talk to your provider about whether social housing, including a Housing New Zealand home, is an option for you. If it is, your first step is talk to the Ministry of Social Development about your housing needs. They'll discuss your situation with you and look at the best way to help.

Then, if you are eligible for social housing, they'll arrange an assessment interview for you.

To get started, call Work and Income on 0800 559 009 or email: OnlineSupport@WorkandIncome.govt.nz

Choosing the right neighbourhood

Think about the public places and services you would like to have in your neighbourhood, such as libraries, medical centres, supermarkets, post offices and places of work and study.

You will also need to think about your budget and how much you can afford to pay. Some areas are more expensive than others.

As you start looking for somewhere suitable, with the help of your provider, ask yourself what you want from your new home. This will most likely include somewhere safe, accessible and secure, but there may be other things that matter to you too, such as having a nice view or being in a quiet street.

If your family lives in the same town/city, you may want a home that is not too far away so that you can catch up with each other regularly.

What's in my community?

It is a good idea to look at what is in your local community and what is happening in the areas that interest you. One way you can do this is by making a 'community map'. This involves finding out what places, people, groups and activities exist in your neighbourhood. You could do this by walking around your neighbourhood and identifying all the people, activities, jobs (volunteer and paid), places, spaces and events that might interest you.

If there is a Local Area Coordinator in your community, they might be able to help you with this.

Moving into your own home

Going flatting – the basics

As a tenant, you must pay the rent, keep the place reasonably clean, tell your landlord if something needs to be fixed and be a good neighbour. Keep in touch with your landlord and sort out any problems as soon as they happen.

It is also a good idea to decide at the start what will happen if things don't work out with your flatmates before you move in. Issues to consider include: how will you resolve differences, are you equal tenants or is one person the named tenant, who will move out if it comes to that?

Think about having some house rules about things like privacy and having visitors.

Make sure all the flatmates know each other or have had a chance to meet and that you can all live together before you start.

It helps if you can make a weekly schedule of household chores that are shared between the flatmates. The schedule should fit around everyone's commitments.

Check rubbish and recycling collection days with your local council and have a roster so everyone knows who is responsible for putting it out each week.

It is a good idea for each flatmate to have their own personal bank account and pay into a separate bank account for the house bills. You will need to agree on how any extra bills are going to be paid.

Planning menus for your meals helps to keep spending on groceries within budget.

Have a message book so you can keep up to date with the comings and goings of flatmates and staff. Emergency telephone numbers can be written on the message book's cover, added to mobile phones and put on a sheet on the wall next to the landline.

Make a weekly schedule of chores that need doing around the house.

Home safety

- When someone knocks on your door, check who they are before opening the door.
- Make sure all locks and deadbolts are working.
- Make sure any outdoor lights are working.
- Know how to turn off the water toby (the valve that allows the mains water to be closed off) and where it is.
- Know where the fuse box is and how to reset the trip switch.
- If your home uses portable gas, know where the gas bottle is and how to turn it off.
- Make sure all smoke alarms are working.
- Keep important documents in a safe place.
- Have an emergency survival kit.

Personal safety

- Consider having your phone number unlisted.
- Hitchhiking is not a safe activity – never accept a ride from or give a ride to a stranger.
- If you feel uncomfortable or worried or concerned about something, talk to a trusted person about it.

Online safety

- Be careful about giving out personal details.
- Never arrange to meet someone in person who you have been talking to online, without first discussing this with someone you trust.
- Don't give out your passwords.

Emergency phone numbers

In an emergency, phone 111. This connects you to the police, ambulance and fire service. You can call 111 free from mobile phones, landlines and phone boxes. You can still call 111 on your mobile phone even if you've run out of credit.

Total Mobility

Talk to your provider about whether you are eligible for the Total Mobility (TM) scheme. The scheme offers disabled people a discount on door-to-door transport services wherever TM providers (usually taxis) operate.

Mobility parking

If you wish to use mobility parks, you need to have a Mobility Parking Permit. For information on the Mobility Parking Scheme and to find out how to apply, go to: mobilityparking.org.nz

Health costs

Talk to your provider about whether you are eligible for a Community Services Card. The card is available to low or middle-income earners to help them and their families access subsidised health services. The card can help with the costs of visiting your doctor, home help, some dental treatment and prescriptions.

If you don't qualify for the Community Services Card, you may be able to get the High Use Health Card if you visit the doctor often for an ongoing medical condition. Ask your doctor about this card.

You may also qualify for the Prescription Subsidy Card if you or your children need a lot of prescriptions each year. To find out more about this card, ask your pharmacist.

Talk to your provider about the Community Services Card.

Finances

Talk to your provider about how you want to manage your money. Think about the following questions.

- Can I do it myself?
- If I need support, who is the best person to help?
- Are there any legal considerations such as guardianship or power of attorney?

Make sure you know about:

- setting up automatic payments
- memorising PIN numbers and keeping them safe/secret
- using ATMs
- using credit, debit or cash cards
- using Work and Income direct payments
- using internet banking
- accessing budget advice services if you need them
- creating a good relationship with a personal banker.

Generally, it is recommended that the staff you employ to help you **do not** directly handle your money or use your PIN number, unless it is absolutely necessary.

Work and Income

Talk to your provider about whether Work and Income can help you with your living costs.

Please note: The information on the following pages is a general guide. What individuals are entitled to is determined on a case-by-case basis and depends on eligibility and other factors. However, you can use this information to help you maximise your payments and to ensure the details of your situation are considered.

Possible weekly supplements (on top of the base payment/benefit)

Supplement	Eligibility	Examples of what may be covered
Supported Living Payment (SLP)	Paid to people who are permanently and severely restricted in how much work they can do because of sickness, injury or disability.	This is a base payment/benefit to which other payments are added.
Accommodation Supplement	A weekly payment, that helps people with their rent, board or the cost of owning a home.	Helps to pay rent, board or mortgage in locations where the base payment does not cover the cost of accommodation.
Disability Allowance (DA)	Paid to people who have regular, ongoing costs because of their disability that are not fully covered by another agency. Each person is assessed individually based on the expenses they can prove.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor/specialist/hospital fees • Prescription costs • Travel to medical appointments • Heating/electrical bills • Medical alarm rental and monitoring.
Temporary Additional Support (TAS)	A weekly payment that helps meet essential living costs. TAS payments may become ongoing in some cases. As with DA above, each person is assessed on the costs they can prove.	Non-repayable supplement (in most cases) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent payment over and above what's covered by the Accommodation Supplement • Hire purchase (fridge, TV, etc) • Vehicle payments • Credit card repayment • Fines.

Special Needs Grants

These are only available if there is no other way to pay for something.

Grant	Eligibility	Examples of what may be covered
Re-establishment Grant	If you have lived in a residential home for six months or more, you may be able to receive rent and bond in advance and other assistance for furniture, appliances, connection of utilities and other personal requirements.	Repayable grant (in most cases) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent in advance • Bond. Non-repayable grant (in most cases) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture • Appliances • Bedding and towels • Toiletries • Clothing.
Additional Special Needs Grants	Funding may also be available to help pay for costs that cannot be met at a particular time.	Repayable grant (in most cases) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whiteware • Medical and dental costs. Non-repayable grant (in most cases) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power (up to three monthly bills per annum) • Food (including the initial stocking of cupboards) • Landline phone rental allowance (if you live alone).

