

Complaints Process

1. Making a complaint about the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool, i.e. funding not being available for equipment or modifications

If a client is not happy with or does not accept the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool i.e. funding is not available for equipment or modifications and they wish to take this further, they should be advised to contact:

The Ministry of Health's Disability Support Services

- Freephone: 0800 373 664
- Website: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services>
- Email: dsscomplaints@moh.govt.nz

If they need support and information to do this they can contact the Health and Disability Advocacy Service on:

- Freephone: **0800 555 050**
- Website: <http://advocacy.hdc.org.nz/>
- Email: advocacy@hdc.org.nz

Important information for EMS Assessors regarding the prioritisation process

The Ministry of Health funds equipment and modification services that are assessed as meeting the essential needs of a person with a disability and that support their independence and safety in the most cost-effective way.

The reality is that the demand for health and disability services far outweighs available resources. Therefore, the Ministry's funding is targeted to people with disabilities who are considered to have the greatest needs and the ability to benefit from the proposed equipment or modifications. This ensures that more people with disabilities have access to funding that will assist them in their daily life.

EMS Assessors need to take ownership of the prioritisation process and assure clients that the assessment is about clarity and fairness, and that all disabled people are prioritised using the same national EMS Prioritisation Tool. Disabled people from all disability groups were involved during the design of the Prioritisation Tool and the criteria against which all disabled people will be measured are what disabled people identified as being important to them. These criteria are the five areas of life outlined in the Impact on Life questionnaire.

While a complaints process is available for people not satisfied with the outcome of the Prioritisation Tool, it should be made clear that the Prioritisation Tool is a fair, transparent and equitable way to determine the greatest need and ability to benefit from the equipment and modification services, and that complaining may not change the outcome.

Importance of the EMS Assessor explaining the prioritisation process to the client

Should a complaint be made regarding the Prioritisation Tool outcome it is important that the EMS Assessor feels confident that they have followed correct process.

All EMS Assessors must complete the online training before they are able to use the EMS Prioritisation Tool so will have gained an understanding of the process to be followed at the time of assessment.

- The EMS Assessor should give the client the printed information sheet and also fully explain the prioritisation process and the Impact on Life questionnaire to the client. They should then check to see if the client and/or their family/whānau have understood the explanation.
- The information sheet given to the client provides the following information:
 - The Ministry of Health has a set amount of money to pay for all the equipment and modifications that could assist disabled people.
 - The Ministry has to be fair and equitable when deciding who gets funding for equipment and/or modification services, and therefore a priority rating system is necessary. Priority is determined using the same national Prioritisation Tool that takes into account a person's need, risk and ability to benefit from the services.
 - The outcome of the assessment is either 'funding available' or 'funding not available'.
 - If the person's needs change, they can ask to have another assessment and complete another Impact on Life questionnaire.
 - The EMS Assessor will explore other support options with the client if the Prioritisation outcome is 'Funding not available'.

It is important to set expectations around the availability of funding at the time of assessment and before the Prioritisation Tool is used.