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Level 4, 56 The Terrace  
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New Zealand

22 August 2024

To our NASC colleagues

## **Outcomes of the Independent Review – operational guidance**

The [Independent Review](#), commissioned by the Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Louise Upston, made recommendations to stabilise the Disability Support System (DSS) and keep expenditure within the Budget appropriation.

In response to the review, the [Minister for Disability Issues](#), Hon Louise Upston, announced the immediate reinstatement of budgets and monitoring and reporting for NASC and EGL sites.

Additionally, the Minister announced current funding levels for residential care and service providers will be maintained at 2023/24 levels while a rapid review of pricing is conducted.

The Minister also announced the set-up of an interagency Taskforce within MSD to manage the transition of Disability Support Services and to urgently implement the recommendations of the independent review.

The Ministry of Disabled People, Whaikaha, is working closely with the interim members of the Taskforce on the implementation of these immediate steps. Once the Taskforce is fully up and running it will be reaching out to all sections of the community, including providers, about how you will be engaged in the work around the other Review recommendations.

### **Role of NASCs and EGL sites**

As NASCs and EGL sites you have a critical role in managing DSS expenditure.

You allocate supports for disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and family/whānau that account for the majority (85%) of funding administered by the Ministry of Disabled People, Whaikaha, with approximately 79% of costs arising from allocations made to NASCs and 6% of costs from allocations made to EGL sites.



## **Operation Policy and Guidelines**

Attached to this letter are the new operational policy and guidelines, '*Operational Policy and Guidelines 2024/25 – Freeze on residential care funding and management of NASC indicative budgets and EGL site fixed budgets.*'

Please note this guidance is being provided ahead of budgets being advised to support the immediate response to the Minister's independent review announcements on 15 August 24. This document may be updated during the implementation process and in response to questions and issues.

This guidance, in accordance with the existing services specifications, is to support you to provide a nationally consistent approach, to keep spending within your indicative budgets (NASCs) and fixed budgets (EGL sites).

It also sets out the circumstances when decisions on support packages must be referred to a Review Panel.

## **Online meeting for NASC and EGL sites on Monday 26 August**

You will receive an invitation to an online meeting for NASC/EGL sites for Monday 26 August, to give you an opportunity to clarify your understanding of the content of the guidelines.

We are also happy to plan additional question-and-answer session about the guidelines but will be guided by you as to what is most helpful at this point.

## **Budgets for NASCs and EGL sites**

We expect to send out the budgets to NASC and EGL sites on Wednesday 28 August 2024. You will be invited to online workshops regarding the budgets on Thursday 29 August 2024.

There will be opportunities to discuss each of your budgets in more detail, in the coming weeks. As we have previously discussed, we are open to holding regular check in sessions from next week but would like your guidance as to what will be most useful for you all.

## **Training for NASC and EGL sites**

We are currently working on developing training material to support you all and will share that over the coming weeks. This will be an iterative process, and we will continue to refine the tools and guidance as we receive your feedback.

## **Expenditure Reporting**

Ensuring we have regular reporting against spend for each NASC is crucial for having oversight of the management of budgets. Regular portfolio management meetings and monthly spend reporting will be required to support these practices.

We anticipate discussing this with you in more detail once budgets are confirmed, with a view to the first round of reporting taking place in October once September data is available.

## **Next Steps**

We will work with you all closely to ensure you are supported through this change process, and we can discuss any specific needs at our meeting on Monday 26 August 2024.

Noho ora mai

Amanda Bleckmann

Deputy Chief Executive – Commissioning, Design and Delivery

**Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People**