

Summary of Discussion Document

February 2025

This document is a summary of the Discussion Document.

It is part of work to stabilise the Disability Support System (DSS). Later work will focus on strengthening DSS.

The full Discussion Document as well as all the consultation details are available on www.disabilitysupport.govt.nz

This summary document includes consultation topics and questions .

You can choose which questions you want to answer as part of your submission.

Topic 1: Improving the way the needs of disabled people are assessed, and how support is allocated

This covers proposed changes to the way peoples' needs are assessed and how decisions are made about what supports they receive.

It includes assessments through a Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination (NASC). Enabling Good Lives (EGL) assessments are not included.

Make sure there is a consistent approach to needs assessment

Question 1: What changes can you suggest that would ensure the assessment tool and process is fair, consistent, and transparent? You might for instance wish to suggest it is: done in a different place; in person, or not; that it be supported differently; or that you receive different information about it before or after the assessment occurs.

Improve how the assessment tool reflects the diversity of disability

Question 2: What information does the assessment tool need to gather about you and your circumstances to ensure it can identify the support you need?

Assess the needs of family/whānau and carers

Question 3: Do you support the needs of carers being specifically assessed alongside those of the disabled person? Why/Why not?

Question 4: What considerations in respect to a carer's situation should be taken into account in order to link them to, or provide, the support needed?

Make sure the services and support a person receives continues to meet their needs

Question 5: How often have your needs and services / supports been reviewed or reassessed?

Question 6: What changes to your circumstances do you think should mean a review or reassessment of your services / supports would be needed?

Question 7: How often do you think your services / supports need to be reviewed or reassessed? (For instance, every year, every two years, every three years, or every five years.)

Helping you access support that isn't available through DSS

We propose that NASCs identify supports that are available through other agencies and provide guidance on how these can be accessed.

This will help ensure that DSS is only used for the supports that are not provided elsewhere.

Question 8: What information or support might NASCs provide that will help you access the services, beyond DSS, that you might be eligible for?

Topic 2: Accessing flexible funding, and how it can be used

There are two options for changing how flexible funding can be used:

Option 1 – Link flexible funding to the person's plan, with oversight of how it is used

Option 2 – Adjust current lists of what can and can't be funded using flexible funding

Question 9: Do you prefer Option 1 (link flexible funding to the person's plan, with oversight of how it is used) or Option 2 (adjust

current lists of what can and can't be funded using flexible funding)?
Why?

Question 10: Do you have any suggestions on how flexible funding can be used to allow disabled people and carers as much choice, control and flexibility as possible, while still providing transparency and assurance the funding is being used effectively, and is supporting outcomes?

Introduce criteria to access flexible funding

Question 11: Do you support the introduction of criteria for receiving flexible funding? Please let us know why, or why not?

Question 12: Which of the following criteria for receiving flexible funding do you agree or disagree should be included and why? (Choose all that you think should apply.)

12a. Use of flexible funding is part of an agreed plan and linked to a specific need.

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

12b. Disabled people and/or their family / whānau / carers are able to manage the responsibilities of flexible funding.

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

12c. Flexible funding will be used to purchase a service or support that DSS provides through its contracted services/supports, that will address a person's disability-related support, and there is an advantage to using flexible funding to purchase it (such as greater flexibility for scheduling, it is closer to where the person lives etc).

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

12d. Flexible funding will address a service gap, where the service is not otherwise available, or suitable for the individual.

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

12e. The cost of the support or service that will be funded is not more expensive than other ways to get that support.

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

12f. The flexible funding will enable the person to purchase or access a service that is expected to reduce a person's future support needs.

Agree/Disagree

Why/Why not?

Question 13: Can you suggest other criteria for accessing flexible funding in addition to, or instead of, those above? If you have suggestions, please explain why you think they will be helpful for those who are accessing flexible funding.

Making a submission

The consultation is open from Monday, 10 February until 5pm Monday 24 March 2025.

You can make a submission by:

- completing the submission form and emailing it to:
DSS_submissions@msd.govt.nz
- completing an online survey at:
[Ministry of Social Development Consultation Hub - Citizen Space \(msd.govt.nz\)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/consultation/citizen-space)
- mailing your submission to:

c/o Disability Support Services
Ministry of Social Development
PO Box 1556
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

- Contact NZSL_submissions@msd.govt.nz for more details if you wish to send us an audio or video response.