**DISABILITY WORKING GROUP**

**Key Messages March 2024**

**Easy Read Version**

**Members**: John Marrable, Kirsten Dixon, Jaime Randhawa, Paula Waby, Philippa Henderson, Adam Hall,

**Standing members**: Kathryn Harkin, Jack Devereux, Ruth Zeinert,

**Apologies**: Jaime Randhawa

**Guests**: Andrew Sise, Anna Williams

The Disability Working Group members met on Friday 17 May 2024.

* **Andrew Sise, Public Health Medicine Registrar at WellSouth**.

WellSouth looking at a Disability Action Plan.

Their role is to support primary healthcare to over 300,000 people in Southern Region, some direct services, work to improve population inequities.

Looking at their action plan in reference to the “Draft Health of Disabled People Strategy”, and the “Southern Disability Strategy”.

Want to identify how their action plan can use existing strategies, within the primary health setting.

Want to be guided by the community and also combine their Maori and Pasifika connections.

Opportunities to work more closely with Southern.

Short time frame - 4 months.

Focus to be on getting WellSouth set up well to achieve this.

They want to set up a steering group to oversee the process.

Importance on need to involve especially with Maori and Pasifika, and to ensure that documents are available in plain language. Also educating GPs on communication.

Suggestion that linking with current data work with Te Whatu Ora would be helpful.

* **Anna Williams, researcher at University of Otago**. Collaboration between University and WellSouth. Using data from GPs to lead into research projects.

Wanting to find out from the community what research projects they should focus on.

Key areas health equity, research needs and use of data.

Comment that research in differences of those who fall under Ministry of Health as against ACC funding can be quite sizable.

* **Actions Update**:
* Accessibility Audit,

physical inspection completed for Southland recently - report almost finalised.

* Pou Manaaki - survey completed recently to identify barriers for consumers accessing outpatient appointments
* 3 monthly forum held on 30th April, positive feedback received, next one will be at end of July
* Disability training session rolled out on 4th floor, three sessions so far.
* **Revised Regional Health and Wellbeing Plan**.

Feedback by 22nd May required. John covered the highlights of the plan and it sounds like some of the ideas made by the group to the plan development team had been considered.

Comment that it is a very long document and is not in Easy Read.

It was raised that disability not said much at all (only 16 times in 68 pages) - two members intend to make a submission to question this. Possibly that equity is intended to be key. Suggestion of a non-iwi based Maori approach.

* **Sunflower Scheme.**

Kathryn outlined a scheme for starting the “Hidden Disabilities Sunflower” throughout Southern.

Members highlighted that they thought this would be very helpful in primary health as well and Ruth from WellSouth said they would be interested in connecting with us.

Members agreed the project preparation and felt that the planned project, particularly “Phase 1”, was ideal.

* **Round Table:**
* Public meeting with St John about health shuttle. Looks as though it will be at least 2 years away, St John are running a “feasibility study”. Many also going to Timaru so may need two shuttles. Also concern that some toilet seats are too low in the hospital - can “toilet raisers” be provided? Outpatients areas.
* Good news story, link with eye specialist locally, had surgery in Dunedin, just one trip.
* “Stronger Waitaki” pulling together from Human Rights Commission what groups in the local area are not receiving equal treatment and find people to get together to meet.
* Deafblind person going for surgery - had been linked to Kathryn and plans put in place to help with communication needs especially before and after surgery.
* Attended “Whaikaha Pasifika” strategic plan, felt like “lip service” and was badly run.

This meant a lot of parents had to leave and older people had very different needs to families with children.

“Your Way / Kia Roha” Southland have a training job being rolled out soon for a young person to have a job within Te Whatu Ora. Enabling Good Lives workshop being done soon.

* Meeting with New Dunedin Hospital, not happy with the view of lead architect with regards to disability.