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### **Update from the CE** Dr Garth Bennie

Kia ora Tatou

Suddenly the end of the year is upon us and Christmas is right around the corner! The last quarter of 2016 has seen an acceleration in both the volume and scope of activities that NZDSN ...

is becoming involved in. Without a corresponding increase in funding we are having to be increasingly strategic about how we prioritise our work as well as imaginative about how we get the job done. As a result our approach is often based on partnerships and collaborations where we are able to bring together knowledge, skills and resources from across the sector to focus on particular projects. Examples include the employment practice guidelines project, fire regulations in supported housing project, The EGL roadshow and a good number of the workshop offerings in our Provider Development Programme.

## Equal Pay Negotiations

We had hoped to bring you some indication of progress prior to Christmas. Although we're expecting the possibility of an announcement the political upheavals of the last week have meant that this will now be unlikely. We will communicate any developments as soon as we can. The speed of negotiations in recent weeks and a possible settlement prior to Christmas has also meant that a formal consultation process with our membership has not been possible. We have managed to influence and contribute an employer's perspective to the process and outcome.

On the matters of qualification recognition, the cost of employer on-costs and relativity issues (and hopefully including those related to MSD funded services) we have no doubt contributed positively, but possibly not to the extent we would have liked. The Mental Health Care Assistant role served as the role comparator that has helped inform negotiations around pay rates. We do not want to stand in the way of significant and long overdue pay increases for support staff in our sector. We remain concerned that the result of the settlement may be an exacerbation of pricing and funding issues that are already critical for provider sustainability – and that we are already pursuing with government, and we will work hard to ensure that the contracting mechanism will be fit for purpose. The settlement outcome may, ironically, strengthen our case to get these pricing and funding issues sorted, because the settlement may have made them even more glaringly obvious. We shall see.

### Next Steps for System Transformation

The Disability Action Plan 4a) Working Group on transforming the disability service system has finished its deliberations and offered its recommendations. These will be considered for inclusion in a cabinet paper which was to be tabled last week – although the political developments of the last week have altered the timetable and this paper will now not be tabled until early February. The working group reached consensus around a number of critical aspects which, I'm pleased to report, did not differ significantly from our observations and recommendations in this year's [NZDSN Sector Briefing – "Transformation, Inclusion and Citizenship"](#).

We hope that the Working Groups recommendations largely survive the process of writing the cabinet paper.

### Ministry of Health Funding Issues

We are continuing our work in this area which includes the engagement of local MPs by providers (**have you contacted your local MP yet!**) an upcoming survey on the financial health of the sector and some legal work on financial and Health & Safety risks being faced by providers. As already indicated the outcome of the equal pay settlement may well exacerbate funding issues.

### MSD Contracts

We are due to meet with MSD on December 20<sup>th</sup> to continue our discussions about unintended consequences of the proposed new contracts. High on our list of concerns are: issues around the reporting spreadsheet; the impact of wage subsidies on payments; ongoing support payments (adequacy and access); referral pathways with Work and Income; development of indicators for SLI ratings; re-enrolment issues; interrupted employment; and first quarter payments/reconciliation. We will report on the outcomes of the meeting in the New Year.

We are very pleased though, that there will be a workshop in February looking at referral pathways between providers and Work and Income – this was an issue that we highlighted in this year's [Sector Briefing – page 20-21](#)

### NZDSN Annual Conference

We have decided not to have an annual conference during 2017, but to push forward the next event to April 2018. The August to November period has become quite a crowded space for national events related to our sector so we have opted to change the timing. **The next conference dates are 11 and 12 April and 2018** – Mark your calendars (and your budgets! – being mindful that it is the last financial quarter for many).

During mid 2017 we are planning an employment focused event and also an opportunity (with the general election in mind) for leading politicians to engage with our sector on their intentions and policies regarding the disability sector.

### Community of Practice and Leadership Mentoring Programmes

Many thanks to those who submitted applications for these initiatives. We will be looking to establish a number of Communities of Practice in the New Year in addition to those planned to follow each of the EGL roadshow workshops. We are still interested in hearing from people who are interested in being facilitators. We are looking to a slightly different approach around leadership development with a possible domestic link to the IIDL (International Initiative for Disability Leadership). More on this in the New Year.

### Fire Regulations in Supported Housing

A draft design guide and code of practice is in its final stages. There will be a wide consultation process on this document early next year. The design guide and code is intended to be used in a way that enables providers to make informed decisions about building design and management practices that are based on the support needs of the actual residents in a particular residence. NZDSN will be part of a Governance Group that will oversee implementation and moderate any disputes.

### Employment Practice Guidelines Project

A literature review has been completed along with some draft values and principles. A consultation document is being developed with sector engagement planned for February and March.

### Supporting Money Management

We have had a number of inquiries from providers running into problems with banks that are no longer accepting longstanding arrangements that support people to manage their financial affairs without Enduring Power of Attorney or Guardianship under the PPP&R Act. They are referencing recent legislative changes on fraud and money laundering for the changes. This is starting to make life quite problematic for both providers and the people they are supporting. We have some legal guidance from Auckland Disability Law Centre and feedback from the Banking Association (via People First). This appears to be a good example where some kind of legal status or protocol that recognised the role of Supported Decision Making would be very helpful.

Our next step is to have discussions with the Banking Ombudsman. **We are keen to hear from providers who have run into these problems, how they have responded, and the impacts on the people they support.**

*On behalf of NZDSN I would like to thank you for your support throughout 2016 and wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and the very best wishes for 2017*

Garth Bennie



Phil Smith  
Training & Development Coordinator

### Provider Development Programme 2016

682 people have attended the 42 events held under the banner of the NZDSN Provider Development programme for 2016. Workshops have ranged from working with Pasifika peoples, bicultural journeys, working more effectively with employers in the supported employment space, youth transitions, through to reframing day programmes and getting to grips with the new Health and Safety at Work Act. A series of successful workshops involving Michael Kendrick as the lead presenter were also held. We have also offered specific forums for CE's and senior managers and will continue with this aspect of the Programme in 2017 with a series of workshops targeted at Board effectiveness.

At the start of 2017, there is an opportunity for people to be involved in an intensive Deep Quality course facilitated by Michael Kendrick. A limited number of spaces are available for this two week event in February and March so you are encouraged to register early if you are interested in attending. We will also be running workshops in late March around Person Centered planning and a series on EGL, so keep your eyes on the events section of the NZDSN website for up and coming events you may be interested in.

Speaking of the website - our new design has made providing information about the content of events we are holding and registering for them much easier than previously. The detail on the event notice gives a clear idea of how many places are still available for specific events and in addition if the event is full, a waiting list process is triggered. Once registered for any event, our system sends an email confirming registration plus details of the event venue - including a map!

NZDSN would like to thank all those people who attended our workshops this year. Your involvement and valuable feedback, ensures we are able to continue to offer relevant and interesting workshops to the sector.

Remember to register for any NZDSN event go to [www.nzdsn.org.nz/events](http://www.nzdsn.org.nz/events)

*Have a pleasant summer break and we will see you at our events in 2017.*



Mireille Vreeburg  
Auckland Executive Facilitator

## Auckland Regional Update

Please [click here](#) to read all the latest news from the Auckland Region



## CSC Buying Group – NZDSN Member Offer

Through CSC Buying Group, the New Zealand Disability Support network is participating in a group power procurement programme with the intention of saving money on our power members. Nice1, a supplier company to CSC, are managing the process. Attached is a flyer that explains the process which is very simple.

The Nice1 approach is unique in that Nice1 will tender your account to the main selected retailers and present you with the best deal. And even better, it's free even if you switch your power!

The benefits for you are:

- You will save money on your power
- The process will cost you nothing
- You will be part of a much bigger group of clients to secure the best price.
- Provision of the information does not commit you to changing
- Forget about your power costs as every year Nice1 will go back to market with your account to make sure you are paying the best price

There are two simple steps you need to do to participate:

1. Complete the survey [online](#) and send it in with a full copy(s) of your latest power account(s).
2. Nice1 will come back to you within 3-4 weeks with your power offer.

For more information on CSC Buying Group offers – [click here](#)