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Update from the CE

Dr Garth Bennie

Kia ora

Our last newsletter for 2017 provides you with an update on a range of projects and outlines some of our plans for 2018.

But first I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the participation and the contribution of so many of our members to the work of NZDSN throughout the past year.

Coordinating our regional networks, participating in various working groups, attending our forums and training events, providing valuable information and data, offering feedback (solicited and unsolicited!) and generally supporting the work we do on your behalf. NZDSN is a “network” of people and organisations and our membership is who we are, and who we are accountable to. A huge thank you for your efforts and it is a privilege to serve you all.

The NZDSN Board and team would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas, a relaxing break and all the very best for 2018

DSS Funding, Pricing and Equal Pay

A working group was established to analyse, understand and provide feedback on the latest version of the Ministry's Transparent Pricing Model (now referred to as a "Residential Pricing Model) and how the impact of the equal pay settlement can be included. This is the first piece of work as part of a joint Ministry and NZDSN Strategic Work Programme. This has been a very challenging exercise, particularly because the pricing tool is predicated on a fixed funding envelope rather than the actual costs of service provision. We provided feedback for members on the work done to date through a presentation at the NZDSN Leadership Forum on December 6th. We have shared our presentation with the Ministry and will be meeting for further discussions prior to Christmas. If members would like a copy of the presentation, please contact the NZDSN office.

The issues involved are complex and even those who attended the forum were clear that they needed time to mull over the information. For this reason, we are keen to meet further with individual or small groups of providers to discuss the information, its implications and get further feedback (whether or not you attended the December forum). Please contact the NZDSN office to schedule a time.

MSD Contracts and related matters

We have been getting a number of queries from providers that indicated they had been told that people could not use more than one of the MSD funded service lines at a time. We sought clarification from MSD and the response from Kelvin Moffatt is:

"We are happy for a client in a business enterprise to enroll with a supported employment service to seek employment. What our contracts don't allow for is employment services to place people in business enterprises in minimum wage exemption jobs. Likewise, we are happy for clients in community participation services to enroll with a supported employment service to seek employment."

However, a significant barrier that remains unresolved is the ability of employment services without transition contracts to begin working with individuals before they leave school. We will keep pursuing this.

We have also tabled with MSD final draft versions of the SLI Indicators and a Template for supporting a request for Ongoing Support funding. MSD are considering these and will provide further feedback – any proposed final versions will be circulated to providers again for comment prior to implementation. MSD are keen to make it a requirement to use both these tools, but not to submit the background detail i.e. only the SLI rating itself and the Ongoing Support level (including a brief descriptor) would be routinely supplied. The templates are for auditing and evaluation purposes – evidence to support the SLI rating and the Ongoing

Support level. Using the templates that have been developed would not be compulsory, but if a provider chose not to use them they would need to supply alternatives to MSD for approval.

Employment Support Practice Guidelines

A final version has been signed off by the Governance group overseeing the project and these are now being readied for printing. We are looking to a stand-alone launch function in March with the involvement of relevant Ministers. Like any successful collaboration this project has taken some time, but the outcome is a set of practice guidelines aimed at lifting and sustaining quality employment support services across the disability and mental health sectors. Project partners have included NZDSN, Inclusive NZ, Platform, DPA, People First, SAMS, ACC and MSD. We are also meeting early next year with MSD to look at how the guidelines can be incorporated into contracts and how they might be used by Work and Income to develop practice.

System Transformation

Some of you will have and are still to be involved in one or more of the 20 or so working groups looking at the more detailed design features around system transformation. As this is very much an initial work in progress it is difficult to get a sense of the bigger picture and it will not be until after the February cabinet paper is released that we will get a sense of what the outcome of all this work has been and the decisions made.

At this stage the best source of information is the EGL website: www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz and we urge you to visit this site on a regular basis. It is important to remember that the first stage of implementation in Mid Central is a “prototype” – an opportunity to see what might work, what might not and make changes accordingly, before any further implementation begins elsewhere. The other observation is that the importance of more “choice and control” works both ways – the opportunity to engage in a process that has the potential to make fundamental changes to ones’ services and supports – or not! Or maybe just some small changes to start with. There is a lot of work to do in supporting all participants in a transformed system to understand and engage with the ideas and their implications. NZDSN hopes to continue this work through its EGL workshops series and subsequent Communities of Practice programme in 2018 once we have confirmed funding to do so.

Provider Development Programme

This will continue in 2018 with the introduction of our [Leadership Exchange Programme](#), workshops focused on [innovation and training for Boards](#). We also intend Leadership Forums to focus on areas like workforce development, HR, pricing and finance and quality/health and Safety. Our intention is to include concurrent sessions that allow the focus topics to be considered in more depth from the perspective of residential, supported living and employment providers. First up is the Leadership Forum on Workforce Development with Careerforce on January 31st – more information to come on this – keep an eye out on our website.

Briefing for Incoming Ministers (BIM)

[This document](#) is on our website and outlines NZDSNs view on priorities for the new Government in relation to the disability sector and how we can contribute. There is also a [State of the Nation](#) presentation on the website providing an overview of NZDSNs role, relationships with the sector and our priorities going forward.

Both these documents provide a strategic context for the environment in which we operate and would be useful background for those on Boards and other governance roles. We are also available to meet with Boards to discuss and answer questions related to this aspect of governance.

Workforce Development and Qualifications

NZDSN has a high level of engagement with Careerforce as the sector ITO and with the Open Polytechnic with regard to the Health and Wellbeing qualifications. Our involvement is focused on contributing to the development of New Zealand qualifications that are nationally recognised, relevant, fit for purpose, and add value by anticipating the future workforce needs of our sector. This not only relates to the support worker role, but also some of the more specialist roles such as employment support, behavior support and the connector role envisaged as a pivotal part of system transformation. We have a real opportunity in front of us to engage in the review and design of these qualifications so that the workforce has the capacity and capability to provide effective support and leadership into the future. Please take advantage of the opportunities ahead to become engaged with this process and contribute your thoughts and ideas.

Fire Regulations and Group Homes

We are still chasing where things have got to with MBIE following the consultation process on the proposed design guide. We are particularly interested in whether our suggested changes regarding the definitions of “household unit” and the requirement for buildings to be subject to a Building Warrant of Fitness have been taken up. We are getting impatient and from an NZDSN perspective we are now close to raising our concerns and the delays being experienced directly with the relevant Minister. We will make a call on this by the end of January, depending what unfolds between now and then.

NZDSN Annual Conference 2018

Early bird registrations are now open for the NZDSN Annual Conference being held in Wellington on Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 April 2018. Whilst we have not finalized the full agenda for the conference, as Calls for Papers do not close until 23 February, we can assure you we have an exciting line up of keynote speakers already confirmed.

We are also in discussions with various Ministers and Government agencies to present at our conference. As you can imagine, with the change of Government, the settling in period for new Ministers and Cabinet positions has created some delays in our being able to announce the speakers for the conference.

For the conference, we have negotiated exclusive rates for accommodation with two hotels – both located close to the hotel and with (limited numbers) accessible rooms.

We are also hosting a Speaker Breakfast (with our speaker yet to be announced, but it will be well worth attending) and offering our delegates the opportunity to mix and mingle at the pre-conference drinks on the Tuesday evening and over dinner on the Wednesday evening. Details of this are on the website.

In previous years, we have noticed a drop off in attendance from 3.00pm with delegates preferring to catch early flights home or complete work in Wellington city. For the 2018 conference, our timetable will start at 8.30am on Wednesday 11 April and close at 3.30pm on Thursday 12 April. We respectfully ask that all our delegates remain for the entirety of the conference.

We also endeavor to accommodate for any special requirements including dietary, access, interpreters, etc. That said, it is difficult to cater for these requirements unless we are informed at the time of registration. Please ensure you complete all necessary details if you have any special requirements. We note that support people attend the conference for free – these people **MUST** be registered (names can be changed at a later date if required).

There will be a Leadership Forum held on Friday 13 April (immediately after the conference) in Wellington – details to be announced. If you are staying on for this event, please ensure you book your hotel at the time of registering for the NZDSN Conference.

If you are interested in a sponsorship package or exhibition space, please contact our Event Manager, Libby Carson by [email](#) or phone – 027 2693939

We are really excited about next year's conference and want to make it our best yet!

To register, please [click here](#).



Phil Smith
Training & Development Coordinator

Provider Development Programme

The NZDSN Provider Development programme for 2017 has seen us organise and run some 30 events across the country and host some 724 people in total across all events. A big thank you to all of you who have attended and given us valuable feedback. The programme only works if people continue to attend so thank you for your support throughout the year.

Events coming up in the New Year include:

- A leadership event in late January with a focus on workforce development and Qualifications. This event will be run in conjunction with Careerforce
- A repeat of the Effective Employer Engagement workshops facilitated by John Fitzgerald and Rex Eagle of Given Australia. These popular workshops are focused on developing the skills of people working in the supported employment space. As numbers are limited for the workshops it pays to register early. The workshops will run in both Auckland and Christchurch. The events are currently up on the NZDSN website and open for registration
- A Board training event in Wellington late February aimed at providing induction to the Governance role for people new to a Board role. This event is currently up on the website for registration so if you are new to the board role make sure you secure your place on this event now
- Expressions of Interest for the NSDSN supported domestic exchange programme close on February 23. Make sure you register your interest by the closing date if you wish to participate in this new development for our sector

- A series of Level 2 Person Centered Thinking workshops most likely in March. These workshops will be run across the country with the first workshop having just been held in Nelson
- Continuation of the EGL workshop series. These events will be held monthly and a schedule of dates / venues for 2018 is being worked on. Once these are finalised they will be posted on the NZDSN website.

As with all our workshops, details of offerings will be sent to NZDSN members, posted on our website and advertised through local provider networks. When registering online it is important that any special requirements you may have in terms of diet, access issues in terms of venues and or materials are clearly indicated so that we make sure these are provided for.

NZDSN gratefully acknowledges the continued support of Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui in making it possible for us to provide a varied programme of development and discussion for the sector.



Mireille Vreeburg
Auckland Executive Facilitator

Auckland Regional Update

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