

15 July 2021

Kia ora koutou

Well the first two weeks have been completed and you all now know who I will be handing over the reins to in the week beginning August 16 – So welcome thrice welcome to Peter Reynolds and I look forward to our transition week in August.

On Tuesday, I gave a brief update to the Otago Regional group and thought it might be useful to share this across the network. So here goes:

1. A reminder of the MSD Training Fund – information is on our website and if you want more information, please contact Sara by email on [sarag@nzdsn.org.nz](mailto:sarag@nzdsn.org.nz)
2. We have just signed an agreement with the Open Polytechnic for them to provide **50 free places for people working in organisations that are NZDSN members** onto the Graduate Diploma in Disability Sector Leadership. This arrangement will be available in 2022. Once the 50 places have been filled, subsequent enrolments to the diploma get a 50% reduction on their course fees. When Peter has started, discussions can start regarding what the process for enrolments will look like. The Diploma is aimed at middle managers - our view is that this qualification will address a gap in the professional development needs of many of your senior staff. Details about the enrolment process will be sent out in the next few weeks.
3. Membership renewals will be sent out soon – please use this as an opportunity to check your membership level etc – if you need further clarification please contact Sue by email [admin@nzdsn.org.nz](mailto:admin@nzdsn.org.nz)
4. Careerforce are interested in connecting with regional groups to discuss the future structure of sector and tertiary training as well as their role going forward in an ever changing world. If you would like to make contact with them, Sara can act as a liaison person for you.
5. The Workforce Development programme which will deliver 5 development initiatives, will be launched soon with a meeting of a Steering Committee on July 29. Garth will be facilitating this project which is primarily funded by the Ministry of Health with support from MSD, and Careerforce.
6. A series of workshops focusing on Flexible Disability Support (FDS) pricing and planning tools have been held and are now at the “technical stage” with two further meetings scheduled for July 15 and 22. More information will be provided as further details emerge.
7. The “Machinery of Government” review which is focused on the re-structure of the health and disability sectors is actively engaged with preparing a paper for the Ministers of Health and Social Development on the options for the delivery of the future functions of the current MoH Disability Support Services. Ministers Little and Sepuloni have asked for this report by September. This work follows on from the publishing of the Simpson Report last year.

8. The Covid-19 vaccination process continues with mixed reviews around the country - despite an agreed national plan, many DHBs appear to be struggling. We are hearing some positive comments from providers but there also seems to be several challenges for disabled and older people who are not connected directly to providers. These concerns are being fed back to the appropriate authorities – if there are any specific issues in your region, please let us know.
9. On behalf of the COVID-19 Group within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet I would like to share with you a link to our Disabled People community page on the Unite Against COVID-19 website (<https://covid19.govt.nz/iwi-and-communities/information-for-disabled-people/>). This is a new initiative from our Web Team to create a page where people can find information easily that is directly relevant to them and their communities. Any feedback on this page would be most welcomed – this is a page for your communities so any involvement in the information that we can provide is essential to its usefulness.  
The Ministry of Health is also currently preparing for announcements on Group 3 this week including the announcement of a nationwide 0800 number for vaccination bookings. If you would like to know more, please feel free to get in touch with Paola Trujillo-Bell ([Paola.Trujillo-Bell@health.govt.nz](mailto:Paola.Trujillo-Bell@health.govt.nz))

I think that covers the key issues and developments for now – as you can see NZDSN is in action on many fronts and your interim CE is working hard to keep up with them all.

**Ngā mihi**

**David Matthews**  
**Interim CE**  
**NZDSN**