**Workforce Concurrent sessions – Vocational**

* Should employment policy be taken out of WINZ? To MBIE?
* Centre Right (National) view
* Take MSD back to governance role
* Reduce prescriptive contracts
* Capped MSD funding for Vocational / activities services has become an issue, due to providing more person centred goals.
* Disabled people can no longer be grouped to do Colour Ins or puzzles.
* The Disability Support required is becoming more complex (this is not one size fits all)
* Day Activity Programmes
  + Can offer day work not shifts / weekends / nights therefore easier to attract staff – but getting a lot harder due to less applicants to sector
* Supported Employment (outcome focus contracts)
  + Not funded to compete with other HR fields to attract quality applications
  + Individual targets on staff is not team focused
* MSD Contracts
  + Need consultations with sector because outcome based model – competes directly with MSD Department
* Video marketing of clients in supported employment
* Why do L5 qualification when pay equity goes to L4?
* Need support from NZDSN with potential marketing campaign and linking providers on employment support
* Lack of engagement from MSD (from contract mangers – high turnover)
* Providers need support to advocate for the better MSD contracts
  + (ending in June 2024)
  + Need update on timeframe / process (looks like news around this will come out in September / October
  + MSD is talking about 5 years contract
* Importance of training
* Challenges: finding meaningful training / need more opportunities to develop workforce and maintain skills
* Employment specialists
  + HR knowledge
  + Support employers with legal requirements they should know about
* Need MSD contracts to be looked at – outcomes focus makes it difficult - removing targets and look at holistic approach.
* Gap between public and private sector in terms of wages
* Supported employment only providers
  + More challenging for them than the providers with more than one contract
* Question: Is it time to remove employment policy from Work & Income? (Welfare)
  + Maybe could go to MBIE or Whaikaha?
* Make the definition between – vocational unpaid and paid employment
* Would all employment not be needed to MBIE as opposed be split away
* Individualised placement and support programmes (mental health) working in the community
* What will impact of EGL be on employment support
* Doing videos about clients / disabled people – their story to promote them re jobs / opportunities for potential employers out there
* As a Not for Profit Trust we were unable to pay more but looked at other options. We / the Trust have given staff an extra weeks leave at Christmas, called Trust Leave (HLC)
* Higher education outcomes need to be included in contracts
* Funding not matching wages / salaries
* Competing with other organisations
* No cross funding
* Qualifications
* Education
* Training
* Contracts – too much impact and dictation – needs advocacy
* Barriers – others limiting expectations
* Mentors – mentoring those with similar disabilities
* Welfare employment – push this somewhere else rather than Work & Income
* Employment – how do we educate employers and ensure they have a different outlook on the role and are open to adapt the role for that person with a disability
* Code of education / awareness is in the community to promote enabling good lives e.g.: mainstream first
* More education needed
* More understanding
* Look at positives rather than negatives e.g.: it is (health & safety issues)
* Who will pay for it
* Impact on teachers and teacher aids?
* Are we going to include levels above Level 5? – e.g. Level 5 – SE Diploma and others
* Equivalence, who determines the list? Will it be reviewed?
* When will vocational / SE services be included?
* Front line Manager Claim cover vocational manager (probably not!)
* Are vocational services going to be able to be added to the current claim? Or will there be a separate claim?
* When questioning MSD around higher education outcomes and providing work related needs on the supported employment programme, the answer was that it is a national programme and not regional? Really!
* Give the control to people first. Instance: Tell us what do you want / need? Your in control this is your place in the world, we are contracted to you!
* Leave the S/E to the experts, we are providers not experts in all things to all people
* MSD bulk funded limits number
* Vocational wait list – people needing services for their loved ones once they have left school
* Staffing – growing our own
* SE funding model – SUX
* VHN funded services (Vocational) limited
* ORS basked eligibility is wrong, needs can change
* Growing the local workforce – included in their community, so they can help others do the same
* Pay equity definitions don’t value local knowledge and related skills
* Raise income thresholds for benefits so it doesn’t disincentivize higher hours of employment

Three different Umbrellas

* Vocational (Sheltered, someone standing helping me work)
* Employment – self advocacy
* Volunteer
* Employer Education – liability (employer worried about taking on staff)
* Ask for forgiveness, not permission
* Contracts usually 3 years etc.
* Providers having to reapply – uncertainty
* We are price takers
* Funding model
* Where is the collective voice of providers?
* New Ministry has a great opportunity to change the narrative of commission
* Determining what the contract will be now
* Bulk funding? Individual Funding? What is more realistic?
* Measurable outcomes
* Consumer voice to be heard more
* We know of the post story but not the after story

Ideas

* Collaboration on collecting national data (from the consumer voice the moment an individual decides they want to work to the day they are employed)
* Collaboration with government on updating / improving SORT
* Better networking, sharing best practice – regionally and internationally
* Officer supported employment support to high school students