

# NGO Council Update from Chair – December 2015



Kia ora NGO Health and Disability Network members.

Our final NGO Council meeting earlier this month was the first for our three newly-elected members:

- Barbara Disley, Chief Executive of Emerge Aotearoa (as Mental Health and Addiction representative)
- Pesio Ah-Honi Siitia, National Public Health Manager/Pacific Manager, Mapu Maia from the Problem Gambling Foundation of NZ (as a Pacific Health representative)
- and Catherine Marshall, Deputy Chair of Takapau Community Health in Hawkes Bay (representing Personal Health providers).

It was good to have their fresh perspectives contributing to various discussion items on our agenda. Thank-you to all who participated in our recent election process – especially those of you who put your names forward as candidates. Our Council meeting also confirmed the Vice-Chair and Chair roles, and the status quo was endorsed with Jackie Edmond from Family Planning and I continuing in these roles for another year.

## **NZ Health Strategy**

A key focus for our meeting was discussion with Keriana Brooking (Chief Advisor Service improvement & Change at the Ministry of Health) about [the review of the NZ Health Strategy](#) – prior to completing our submission on this (*see attached document*).

There was consensus around the table that the Ministry has conducted a good consultation process so far, with realistic timeframes and various opportunities for people to contribute face-to-face, in writing and [online](#). The genuine efforts to engage and incorporate feedback received so far were reflected in the language and content of the draft document that was out for consultation over the past weeks. We hope the latest submissions received during the recent second phase of consultation will also be evident in the final Strategy.

## **IT systems**

Our NZ Health Strategy discussions extended to talking about outcomes and the importance of having good systems for collecting and analysing rich information and data that can inform our work practices. As we look ahead in our organisations and consider our future IT needs and potential changes, we were reminded of our discussions with [Graeme Osborne of the National Health IT Board](#) earlier this year. Graeme's work extends across a broad range of IT projects and issues and he expressed willingness to discuss IT matters with sector organisations that are considering change. (You can direct initial queries via e-mail to [ngo@moh.govt.nz](mailto:ngo@moh.govt.nz).)

## **Influencing public policy**

Influencing public policy and participating in various public consultation processes are important ways for our communities to have input to government decision-making processes. To support our non-profit sector with this, we have recently added some [tips and useful links to our website](#).

We have also just allocated project funding to deliver some workshops to provide guidance on influencing policy and making submissions. These will be held in the first half of 2016 and we will circulate information about how to enrol once further details have been finalised. (If you have recommendations of what to include or know an expert presenter on this topic, please contact our Secretariat on [secretariatngo@gmail.com](mailto:secretariatngo@gmail.com).) We will also explore options to make some of the workshop content available for those who are unable to attend the workshops in person if we can.

When making submissions, it is always useful to share ideas with other like-minded individuals and groups and it can be effective to collaborate on your response – not only does this share the workload, but it adds weight to your position by demonstrating the numbers you represent.

### **Sector strength**

Speaking of numbers, our own NGO Network now has 508 non-government organisations (NGOs) as voting members and 114 affiliate members. Together, we receive \$1.54 billion in combined annual government funding to provide services to New Zealand communities. Network members employ 18,830 full-time staff and 15,695 part-time staff who, in an average week, work a total of 1.25 million hours, while 124,196 hours of activity are provided by over 28,000 unpaid volunteers. The Network's membership represents about half of those not-for-profit NGOs that receive Vote Health funding to provide services in New Zealand communities.

These figures show the strength of our sector and the size of our contributions – while some of our organisations may be small and we may feel a lack of power individually – together we have vast experience, knowledge and community connections to draw on.

### **Get creative**

Our members range from small providers with one FTE employee, to large multi-million dollar agencies with more than 2,400 paid staff, and they deliver a broad range of services and benefits to their communities.

While this diversity is a strength, it also makes it challenging for people (in government and even within our own sector) to understand and appreciate what non-profit, health and disability community organisations do, so we've decided to crowdsource some video clips to help illustrate the unique services and benefits our community organisations deliver.

We are looking for 2-3 minutes of enthusiastic, high-energy examples from you all. We'll edit together parts of the best clips to use in presentations, at events and on the internet to show the diversity of our sector, and also load some of your complete videos to [our YouTube channel](#). We'll send out a few more details next week on what we need from you and where to send your video clips. We are giving you until 31 January to submit your clip – so it could be a fun way to start 2016 when your teams arrive back at work refreshed and ready to make a difference to your communities.

In the meantime, on behalf of the NGO Council, I wish you a relaxing and rejuvenating break over the holiday season.

Mauri Ora.

*Donna Matahaere-Atariki*

*Chair, NGO Health & Disability Council*

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