

NGO Council Update from Chair – June 2015



Kia ora NGO Health and Disability Network members

I'm just back at my desk after a few days away at our latest NGO Council meeting and then participating in the second workshop on the review of the [NZ Health Strategy](#).

NZ Health Strategy review

I was pleased to be amongst a strong representation of approximately 40 NGO providers in the two Health Strategy workshops, which included around 200 health sector attendees. Of course, there are inevitably limitations on the numbers who can participate in these events, but overall I have found the process really satisfying, as it is clear that the review team had made every effort to involve a broad cross section of attendees.

Although timeframes are tight, the review team developed well-framed questions that really got participants thinking and talking with each other. There was a real consistency of messages from these diverse groups – and I think the key themes (in the attached summaries from the two workshops) are a great starting point for revising the Strategy. These included issues such as fragmented governance – with too many organisations controlling funding and power – and an undervaluing of the unregulated workforce.

There are some challenging mixed messages and contradictions in some of the ideas, but overall I, and others from the NGO sector, felt a genuine opportunity to contribute and make our mark in the forum and influence the roadmap, which will identify clear priority areas for the health sector to focus on over the next 3-5 years.

You can continue to stay informed about the NZ Health Strategy review, the funding mechanisms review and the health system capability and capacity review on the [Ministry's website](#).

NGO National Forum

One thing that the review discussions haven't got to yet is talk about measurement – but that is something your NGO Council was discussing at our meeting last week as we started to plan for our next [National NGO Forum](#) later this year. The theme will be '*Measurement, Evaluation & Outcomes: Ways to gauge your effectiveness*' and we will be inviting speakers who can help us collectively explore ways to show our impact to funders, stakeholders, clients and ourselves.

This theme coincides with the [International Year of Evaluation](#) and also ties in with the government's shift towards a focus on outcomes in contracting and increased use of [Results Based Accountability Framework](#). If you have recent experience in changing how you show results, [please contact our Secretariat](#) to discuss a possible case study. We hope to announce a confirmed date soon, but in the meantime, if you are keen to learn more about evaluation, you might choose to attend the [ANZEA Conference in Auckland](#) on 6-9 July.

Worker Safety Checks – Vulnerable Children

The rubber is about to hit the road on 1 July when [The Vulnerable Children \(Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers\) Regulations 2015](#) take effect. Fortunately, changes are being phased in, so this year only new core children's workers have to be checked under the new regime. From 1 July 2016, new non-core children's workers will need to be checked. For existing core children's workers, checks must be completed by 1 July 2018 and for existing non-core

children's workers, by 1 July 2019 – so there are generous timeframes for our sector to meet the requirements.

The government has produced various guidance material to help providers. An official guidelines document is online at www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz/childrens-workforce/safety-checking-and-the-workforce-restriction/. If you'd like to order a free hard copy of these guidelines, e-mail your postal address details to Yvonne_Bruorton@moh.govt.nz. We also hope to share a one-page fact sheet for NGOs with you shortly, and will send this to you all when it is available.

DHBs, IT & Privacy

At our meeting, your NGO Council also met with the National Health Board's John Hazeldine to talk about the challenges of engaging with DHBs and with Graeme Osborne of the National Health IT Board. Graeme's work extends across a broad range of IT projects and issues, and we discussed the challenges NGOs face considering the privacy issues related to IT and sharing information. A key factor is that the focus should be about getting a good outcome for a client – not about collecting or sharing data for the sake of it. Of course, consent is another important component. Graeme suggested that one of his specialist privacy staff may be able to offer advice on this topic, so if you have a query related to this, you can send it via the Ministry's NGO Desk and they will try and address it – e-mail: ngo@moh.govt.nz.

Until next time, Mauri Ora.

Donna Matahaere-Atariki

Chair, NGO Health & Disability Council

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