

NGO Council Chair's Update – March 2014



Have you booked for the [National Forum](#) yet? It's less than two weeks away, so be quick if you want a free place at this Friday 14 March event in Wellington. As a member of the Network, your organisation should be represented – and it is a great opportunity to engage with Ministry of Health staff too. Several of your NGO colleagues are presenting and we're covering topical subjects in the afternoon discussions.

[See the programme on our website](#) or you can [book here](#).

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children is one of the topics being covered at the Forum, but there is increasing information out there and opportunities to get involved in this work. If you want to:

- read the Children's Action Plan team's draft *Principles and Values* document
- see a summary of discussions about principles (*Overview of Principles Themes from Workshop*) from the cross-sector two-day workshop in January
- join the online dialogue about vulnerable children issues

send an e-mail to [the Children's Action Plan team \(click here\)](#) and they will send you a registration email for Chatter (the online site where all this is happening).

Also watch for news over the next few months as the Select Committee considers submissions on the Vulnerable Children Bill and the Bill progresses through parliament. Once passed, it will affect many of our NGO services.

Good Governance workshops

Our five regional *Good Governance* workshops for small/medium non-profit NGOs were well-received. More than 150 board members from approx 85 NGOs attended these and left buzzing with ideas and resources. You can access the [key resources on our website](#), including two self-assessment tools. If your NGO board members missed out this time, but would like to attend a free governance workshop in the future, [flick us an e-mail](#) – if there is sufficient demand, we may schedule more at a later date.

Input to DHB planning

At our recent February NGO Council meeting in foggy Wellington, Jacob White, the National Health Board's project manager for DHB planning returned to learn more about sector's experiences trying to have input to DHB plans. He said all DHBs should have at least one 'alliance leadership team' (most likely focused on primary care), which is expected to "consult widely", "involve appropriate stakeholders" (i.e: us) and follow "principles of partnership".

Jacob is keen to hear examples of NGOs' experiences engaging with these teams or DHBs generally, so please direct these comments through our [NGO Secretariat](#) in the first instance. Also check out the planning toolkit and DHB planning guidelines on the [Nationwide Service Framework Library](#) – these are useful tools for us to use when talking with DHBs. DHBs are due to submit their draft annual plans to the National Health Board by 14 March, with final versions due 26 May, so be quick if you want to influence these. Check out the [NSFL website](#) for more details.

Sector voices views on wide range of issues

I know some of you were busy last week finalising submissions on the [National Drug Policy](#) – the NGO Council also made a submission on this. A significant number of other NGOs are working together to

make a submission on the [Building \(Earthquake-prone Buildings\) Amendment Bill](#), with the aim of ensuring accessibility is also improved during any strengthening processes. Meanwhile others are watching to see what decisions government makes as it introduces a [regulatory framework for community housing providers](#).

NGOs – we're everywhere – including at Westpac Stadium in Wellington on Friday 14 March!

Kathryn Jones

Chair, NGO Health & Disability Council

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