# Developmental Evaluation Report Summary

Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) contracted disability support providers are independently evaluated to ensure they are meeting their contractual requirements to deliver quality supports and improve outcomes for disabled people.

This document summarises a report for a developmental evaluation of a DSS contracted provider. It provides information about the quality and effectiveness of the service, and its progress towards making its services more accessible and inclusive, and giving disabled people more choice and control.

Summary reports are published on the DSS website. Identifiable and personal information is removed to protect individuals’ privacy. If you require the full report, please email OIA\_Request@msd.govt.nz and request it under the Official Information Act (OIA).

## General information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Information** | **Description** |
| Name of the service provider | Community Connections Supported Living Charitable Trust  |
| Date evaluation completed | 18 June 2025 |
| Type of evaluation  | Routine  |
| Service type | Community Residential |
| Region or city  | Rotorua |
| Brief description of the organisation providing the service being evaluated and their vision and approach to disability support | Community Connections is a charitable Trust providing support to individuals in homes within the community. The service specialises in providing for people with complex behaviour support needs. The service has a strong focus on personal choice and self-determination and there is a careful process to tailor supports to the person through a unique matching policy.  |
| Number of services/houses visited as part of this evaluation  | Two (this report is for one of those two houses) |
| The evaluation was done by | Whakanui: Elevate Learn Transform Ltd  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of people interviewed** |  |
| Disabled people  | Families/Whānau | Staff  | Management  |
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 4\* |

## \* Including the Service Delivery Manager, General Manager of Operations, Quality Coordinator, and Behaviour Support Specialist.

1. **Outcomes for disabled people**

This evaluation is based on the findings and information provided by disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, their families/whānau, staff and management, review of documentation and through observations made by the Evaluation team. The outcomes evaluated below are based on the outcomes identified in the Outcome-Focused Evaluation Tool.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcomes for disabled people** | **Rating\*** |
| My identity / Tuakiri |  |  |  |
| My authority / Te Rangatiratanga |  |  |
| My connections / Te Ao Hurihuri |  |
| My wellbeing / Hauora |  |
| My contribution / Tāpaetanga |  |
| My support / Taupua |  |
| My resources / Nga Tūhonohono |  |
| Organisational health |  |
| Value for money |  |
| Equity (including service responsiveness to te ao Māori) |  |
| Enabling Good Lives |  |
| **Overall rating**  |  |  |  |

\* Rating guidance:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Best/Good practice evident | Best practice or many examples of Good practice evident |
| Development desirable / recommended | some examples of Good practice evident; development is desirable or recommended |
| Action required | Immediate or significant action is required for at least one component |

1. **Is this service certified under** [**Ngā Paerewa**](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/regulation-health-and-disability-system/certification-health-care-services/services-standard/resources-nga-paerewa-health-and-disability-services-standard) **(Health and Disability Services Standard NZS 8134:2021)?**

Select one option: ~~Yes~~ / **No**

**Recommendations and requirements**

* 1. **Recommendations for areas of development**
* Explore ways to offer a choice of snacks throughout the day.

|  |
| --- |
| *The Service has indicated they have begun actioning this.* |

* The service provides a ledger to track cash money coming in for personal spending and reconciling cash out with receipts.

|  |
| --- |
| *The Service has indicated this has been actioned.* |

* Continuing to encourage ways to bring warmth/colour, comfort and belonging to the living areas.
	1. **Requirements (contractually required)**

The requirements listed in the table below are actions that need to be done by the provider to ensure their services meet their obligations under their contract with DSS:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome Area number | Risk rating | Requirement | Required evidence for verification of compliance | Due date |
| 1.4 | Moderate | Provide an environmental restraint protocol for access to food. | Restraint protocol | 31 Jan 2026 |

|  |
| --- |
| *Documentation around this requirement has since been sighted.*  *We appreciate the immediate response from the service. This can now be signed off.*  |

**Evaluator reflection on the provider’s strengths**

Community Connections Supported Living is a Charitable Trust that has been supporting disabled people of varied support needs for 18 years to live in their home and within their communities. They cover mid to lower North Island from Midland across both coasts down to Wellington. This Trust often supports people who have been declined by similar organisations and there is a waiting list for their specialised service.The Enabling Good Lives (EGL) principle of Person-Centredness is clearly evident through the tailored supports offered and the high respect for personal choice. Another EGL principle, ‘Ordinary Life Outcomes’, is a daily focus and milestones for both the people supported in the service and staff are celebrated.

The person living in this home has made remarkable progress since being supported by this service. After coming from a place where they had no community engagement and could rarely connect with family, relationships with family and the general community have improved immensely through the efforts of an impressive wraparound support network provided by the service. A dedicated in-house Behaviour Specialist and Service Delivery Leader and team have been integral to this progress. The person is well understood by a staff team sensitive to their communications through sign and body language and pictorial systems.

Family members are very appreciative of the service and feel their relative is ‘blossoming’ within it. Visits are weekly and contact is welcomed by the service. Any celebrations are enjoyed together and a weekly barbecue is held at the person’s home encouraging new cooking skills.

The staff team are enthusiastic, creative and supportive of one another. There is an impressive Matching Policy the service uses for those they support, allowing the person choice over who is in the staff team. This unique effort by an organisation to match a person each member of their staff team is not often seen within the sector. Emergency preparedness is excellent, communication between staff is immediate and relevant documentation for this person is thorough with any health needs well supported.

This person enjoys bus and scooter rides, swimming, ten-pin bowling, and visits the local night markets. If staying home is the choice, there is a projector to watch, or a treadmill for wet days. Through detailed safety and risk management strategies, and careful planning the person is progressing to experience ordinary life outcomes and engagement with their local community.