



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

**Disability  
Support Services**



# **Summary of consultation findings – October and November 2024**

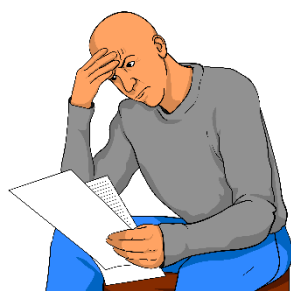


**Published: April 2025**

# Before you start



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



# What you will find in here

## Page number:



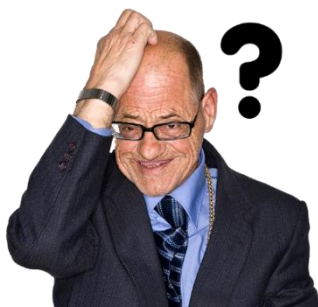
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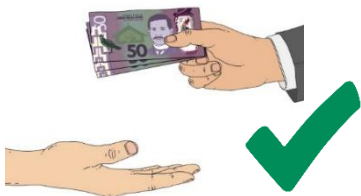


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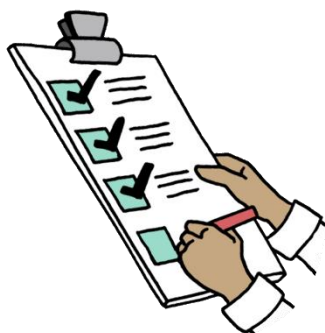
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# About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is from **Disability Support Services**.



**Disability Support Services** is:

- part of Ministry of Social Development
- gives support to disabled people like:
  - money
  - services
  - equipment.



## Disability Support Services

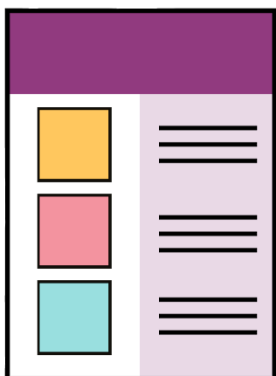


In this document Disability Support Services will be called **DSS**.

Where it says **we / us** this means DSS.



This document is a **summary** of **consultation findings**.

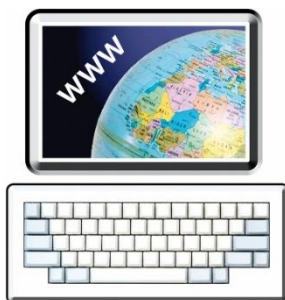


A **summary**:

- is shorter than the main document
- tells you the main ideas.



Here **consultation findings** are the information DSS learned from people about what they thought of disability support services.



You can read the full report about the consultation findings at this **website**:

**<https://tinyurl.com/mhn4w5x3>**



This website is **not** in Easy Read.



The information in the report is about the opinions of the people who we talked to for the consultation.



The information in the report is not about the opinions of DSS.



# What was the consultation about?



The consultation was about issues / problems people had using DSS.



The consultation happened in:

- October 2024

and

- November 2024.



We did the consultation using:

- **online surveys**
- **written submissions**
- hui / meetings.





An **online survey** is when you answer questions at a website.



Here a **written submission** is when you:

- write down what you think about something

**and**

- give it to the people who need to know the information.



# Different outcomes from disability support services



The consultation found that disabled people got different **outcomes** from disability support services.



**Outcomes** are how things end up for people.

An outcome might be a person living a good life after they get the care they need.



Some people told us they liked the support they got from services like **Enabling Good Lives**.



**Enabling Good Lives** is a different way of thinking about disability support.

Enabling Good Lives is about having:

- choice
- control
- support
- a good life.



When trying to use different parts of DSS other people said they:

- felt blamed
- were treated unfairly.

They said the bad treatment made them:



- get **burnout**
- feel frustrated
- have bad mental health.



**Burnout** means getting very tired from working:

- too hard
- for a long time.



Some people said **carers**:

- did not feel like people cared about the work they did
- were upset by things people said about them in public.





Here a **carer** is a person who looks after a disabled person like:

- a family member
- a support worker.



Some people said there needs to be better **respite** options including:

- **flexible** funding
- more respite providers.



**Respite** is when someone else takes over caring for a disabled person for a while.

This is so the usual carer can have some time off.



**Flexible** means being able to change:

- easily
- quickly
- to suit what people need.

## Some services and support are not meeting needs



Some people said there was not enough money for what they need.

This was because support was not flexible.



Almost half of the people who did the consultation said support should:

- be made to fit what they need
- treat everyone as an individual
- work with all the different types of disability.



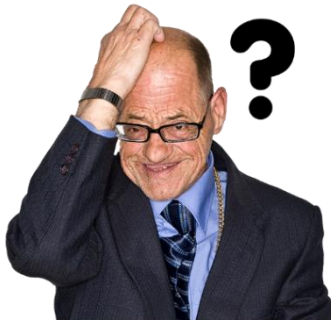


# Inconsistency across the country



People talked about **inconsistent**:

- practices / things being done
- access to services.



**Inconsistent** means things:

- being different in different places
- changing without warning
- not always making sense.

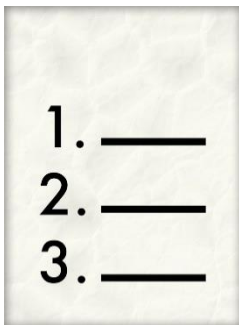


People said rules were not always used the same way every time.



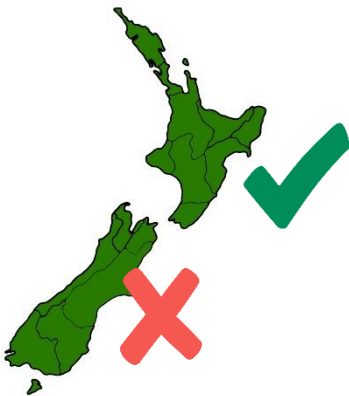
This meant people got outcomes that were not equal between:

- services
- regions / parts of the country
- impairments.



People said there were **barriers** to services like:

- waitlists
- services not being available in all regions
- the service being wrong for the **culture** of a person.



A **barrier** is something that can stop you from doing something.



**Culture** is a way of:

- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.



People also said a barrier to services was providers not changing what they do when things change for the:

- disabled person
- whānau / family.

## The system is hard to use

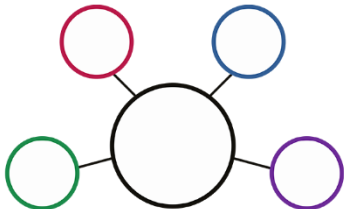


People said there needs to be better communication.



The communication needs to:

- be accessible
- change easily
- be available in different ways.





People said staff need to do better at understanding:

- disability support services
- disability
- the **rights** of:
  - tāngata whaikaha Māori / Māori disabled people
  - Māori.

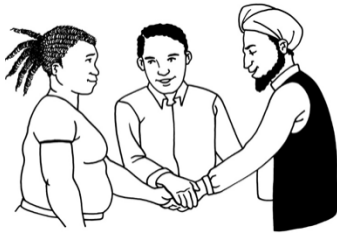


**Rights** are things that everyone should:

- have
- be able to do.



An example of a human right is being treated fairly no matter who they are.



Some people said more disabled people need to work in all parts of the disability support system.



People said they want:

- simple policies / rules
- things to work the same across the disability system.



People said they want services to do better at:

- working together
- sharing information.



## Changes were hard to understand

Changes were made in March 2024 to disability support:



- rules
- funding.



Many people said they did not:

- understand the new rules
- know where to go to find out about the changes.



Almost half of the people who did the consultation did not understand what flexible funding could be used for.



People said that there should have been consultation about the changes before they happened.



They want more disabled people to be part of making decisions for DSS.



People said it was important the rules for disability support services:

- were clear
- made sense
- were simple
- worked for the everyday needs of people.

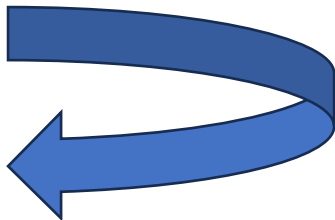
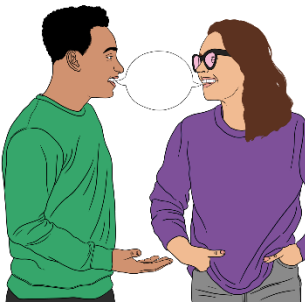






People said the rules need to:

- fit in with the diversity / differences of disabled people
- give support that works well
- be done the same everywhere
- be communicated properly.



Many people said they want the changes made in March 2024 to be put back to the way they used to be.

## Assessors should understand needs

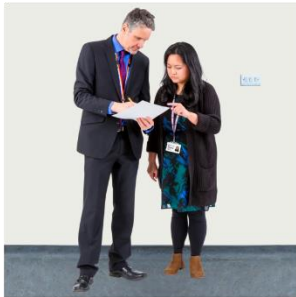


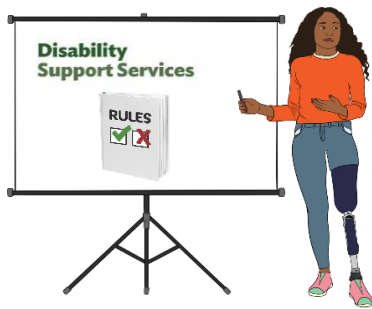
People said **assessors** understanding their needs had a big impact on what services they got.



Here an **assessor** is a person who:

- looks at what a disabled person needs
- tells DSS about the needs of a disabled person.





People said they want assessors to have:

- more education / school
- more experience doing that type of job
- a bigger understanding of disabilities
- empathy / kindness
- **cultural understanding**
- training to understand **unconscious bias**.



**Cultural understanding** is knowing how people do things differently in their culture.



**Unconscious bias** is all the ways a person has learned to think about another person.

This includes how someone thinks about things like:

- disability
- race.



People said they need to be:

- listened to
- treated with respect
- told their complaints / problems are understood.





People said there need to be:

- more people working in disability support services including more disabled people
- more **connectors**
- better wages / money for the jobs.



A **connector** is a person who finds the right disability service for a:

- disabled person
- whānau / family.



People said they liked the Enabling Good Lives:

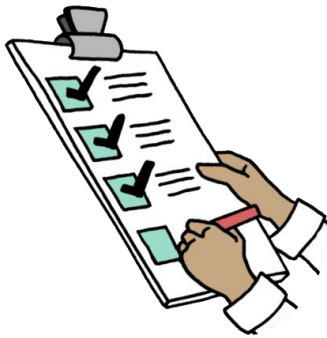


- system
- connectors.

## Assessments could be done better

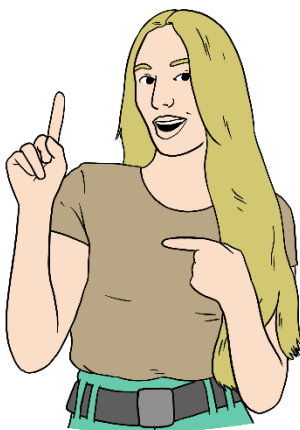


People wanted **assessments** that were more **person-centred**.



Here **assessment** means someone from DSS finding out what a disabled person needs like:

- funding
- equipment
- support.



Here **person-centred** means doing what is best for the:

- disabled person
- whānau / family.



People said during assessments they need to be:

- listened to
- given choices
- given time to:
  - understand the information
  - decide what is best for them.



Over 1 third of people said:

- getting assessed is very important
- there needs to be flexibility in:
  - where the assessment is done
  - how the assessment is done.





People said there needs to be better communication about the assessment:

- before
- during
- **and**
- after.



People said that assessment rules:

- were not clear
- were strict
- should be made easier to understand.







People said there was a long time between getting:

- an assessment

**and**

- support.



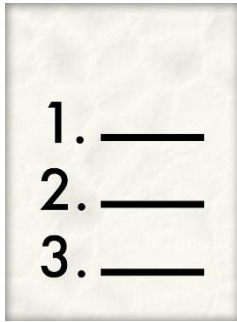
People talked about the places during assessment where:

- too much information was given

**and**

- they needed more time to think about the information.





1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

People talked about the number of times they had to be assessed.

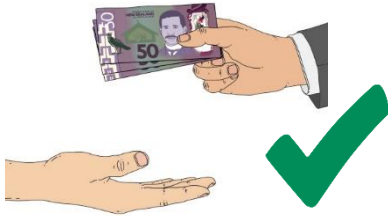


Some people said they wanted to be assessed more times because things changed in their lives.



Other people said they wanted fewer assessments because their disabilities were permanent / would not go away.

## Flexible funding could make things easier



Many people said flexible funding could be a good way to support disability needs that are not:

- understood well by disability support services
- provided for.



Over half the people who took part in the consultation said flexible funding was the only way they could get some of the things they need.



People said that needs assessments:

- did not look at the whole life of a disabled person
- were not accessible.

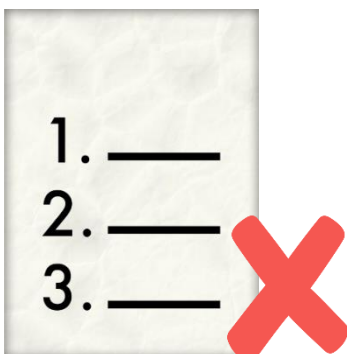


This meant that all the services they needed could not work together properly.



People said flexible funding could be used instead of funded services when those services were:

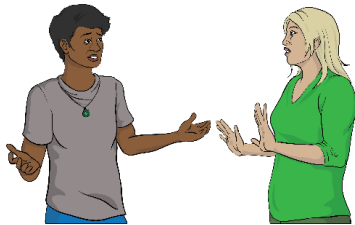
- not available
- had long waitlists
- did not meet the needs of a person.





Flexible funding could also be used instead of funded services when:

- the staff could not always be depended on
- the service was not a good fit for reasons that were:



- personal
- cultural



- the service did not have the expertise / skills that were needed
- the service cost too much.



People said it would be good if they could choose the staff they wanted to work with.



Being able to choose staff meant they could:

- trust the staff
- have better control of when things got done.



People said being able to choose staff was very important when getting respite care.



People said they were frustrated with the rules that stop them from getting the kinds of respite they need.

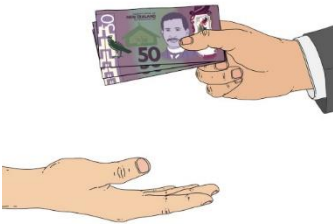


People said there needs to be flexible funding when the usual kinds of respite care are not:

- available

**or**

- the cheapest.



People said they used flexible funding when they thought they could not get funding anywhere else for:

- goods for example like medical supplies

**and**

- services.





People said they used flexible funding for:

- things that made them feel happier
- taking part in community activities
- supports that let them live their life how they want.



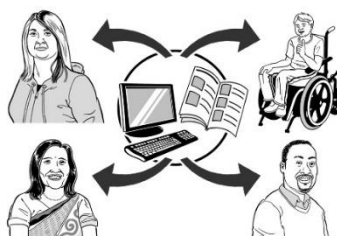


# Accountability and trust in flexible funding

People said they want flexible funding with better:



- **accountability**
- compliance / making sure rules are followed.



**Accountability** means doing things in a responsible way including:

- doing what was promised
- fixing problems as soon as possible
- making sure people have all the information they need.



People suggested these improvements could be done by:

- **auditing**
- **peer support.**



**Auditing** means doing an official check of:

- how something is being done
- if something is working as it should.



Here **peer support** means getting support from people who do the same type of job.

The support might include:

- having meetings
- getting training.



This is to make sure you:

- have what you need to do your job well
- are happy at your job.





People asked:

- to be trusted to look after the money given to them
- to be trusted to spend the money how they need to
- for support to follow the funding rules.



Over 1 third of people who took part in the consultation said they wanted the funding rules to give them better:

- choice
- control.

## What DSS does is not explained well



People who did the consultation had lots of different ideas about what DSS:

- does
- should do.



Some people said DSS should:

- be the ones running the disability system
- put in place Enabling Good Lives
- use the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities / UNCRPD.**



The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities / UNCRPD** is a law lots of countries have agreed to.

It says what governments must do to make sure disabled people get the same rights as everybody else.

Some people said DSS do:

- safeguarding of disabled people
- good communication to people on how to use the disability services
- assessments of what people need.

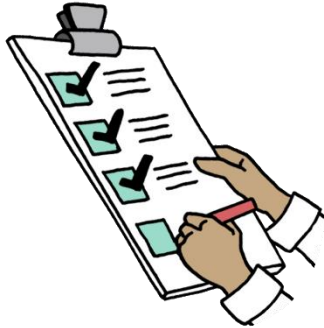
## **Disability Support Services**



People who took part in the consultation had different ideas about what DSS should do to provide support services to:

- disabled people
- carers.

## DSS needs better planning and investment



Some people who took part in the consultation said DSS needs changes made to how it works.

**Disability  
Support Services**



Some people said looking after DSS should be given back to Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.

**Disability  
Support Services**



Other people said DSS should be looked after by:

- Manatū Hauora – Ministry of Health

or



Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whara

- ACC.





Some people said DSS needs:

- more **investment**
- their money looked after better.



Here **investment** means giving a good amount of money to a service so it can:

- work better
- do the things it wants to
- give the people it serves the things they need.





Some people talked about how the number of people living in Aotearoa New Zealand is getting bigger which means:



- there will be more disabled people
- the Government will need to plan for disability services to look after more people in the **future**.



The **future** is a time that is still to happen.



People said they:

- were frustrated with the choices the Government had made about funding
- want disability support services to be given more funding.

## DSS must talk with and value the disability community



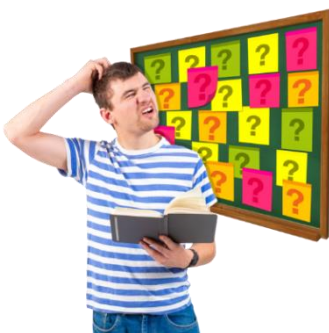
Some people said it was very important that DSS did good consultations with:

- disabled people
- whānau / family
- service providers.



People said they were frustrated with the Government:

- doing bad consultations in the past
- not working to fix problems with disability support services that had been around for a long time.





People said that disabled people need to be leaders when changes are made to disability support services.

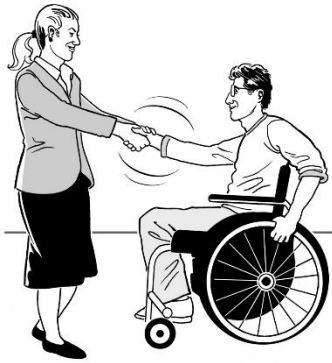


This is to make sure disability support services work well for everyone.



People said that disabled people were not **valued** by:

- society / many people
- some agencies in the disability system.



To **value** someone means to:

- respect / take care of their:
  - feelings
  - rights
- treat them as being important.

People said when disabled people are not valued they do not get equal treatment.

People said they want a disability system that gives people:

- empathy / kindness
- respect
- the ability to do the things they want in a way that is good for their cultural needs.



People also said that Enabling Good Lives was good at supporting them to use different parts of the Government.

# What happens next?



Information will be taken from:

- this consultation

and

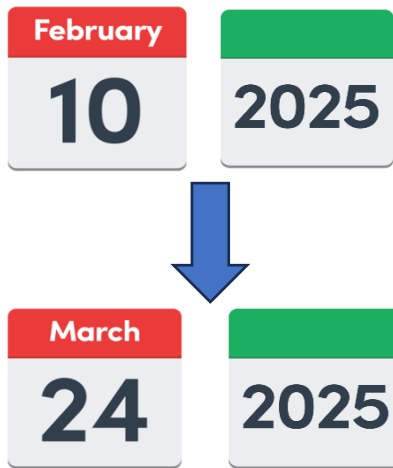
- another consultation being done in 2025.



The information will be used by the Government to think about ways to make disability support services:

- fair for everyone
- work the same everywhere
- clear
- continue in the future.





Our next consultation happens from:

- 10 February 2025
- to
- 24 March 2025.



We will make questions for the next consultation using information from this consultation.





**Disability  
Support Services**



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