

DISABILITY WORKING GROUP

Key Messages December 2021

Members: John Marrable (Chair), Jasmin Taylor, Simon Fogarty, George Kerr

Standing members: Mel Warhurst, William Robertson, Kathryn Harkin, Jack Devereux

The Disability Working Group members met on Friday 10 December 2021

- Members discussed the need to eliminate discrimination in recruitment at the job description stage by ensuring managers are carefully and accurately wording tasks of the role. Concern was raised that there exists a general unconscious bias towards those with disabilities, particularly mental health.
- Accessibility Week reviewed, went well in all locations (was run in Dunedin, Invercargill and Lakes Hospitals). Group expressed enthusiasm for more awareness weeks – a calendar will be developed however discussed the need to be selective in this regard as resources required to run these are high.
- Concern expressed over front desk not always being manned, crucial to ensure there is a point of contact for queries. This will be re-iterated with the team.
- The Vaccination Team presented some data on the numbers of disabled people who have been vaccinated, both nationally and locally. Difficult to identify all disabled people locally so data limited to those engaged with a service or on ACC. Southern in top 3 DHB's for performance in disabled sector. Autism uptake lower – meeting planned with Altogether Autism in the new year to try and mitigate this. Booster campaign planned and will also hold clinics with disability services.
- Also discussed the planned roll-out to 5-11 year olds commencing in early 2022. Advised the group of a Disability Call Centre which is specifically focused around vaccinations for people with disabilities. Further accessibility information has been added to the website for specific vaccination sites to aid planning. Feedback was sought from members around anything they had heard within their networks in particular that might need to be addressed.
- Concern was raised that Telehealth letters are not printing appointment times, resulting in people waiting several hours for a phone call. The group expressed keen-ness to hear from Telehealth manager so he will be invited to the next meeting.
- Query raised from Community Health Council around the Mosgiel Pool potentially not being deep enough to provide full range of hydrotherapy but agreed it was too late in development to impact this now. Consumer had raised issue of physiotherapy pool but agreed this was not in remit of DWG.