**DISABILITY WORKING GROUP**

**Key Messages March 2024**

Members: John Marrable, Kirsten Dixon, Jaime Randhawa, Paula Waby, Philippa Henderson, Adam Hall,

Standing members: Kathryn Harkin, Jack Devereux, Ruth Zeinert,

Apologies: Jaime Randhawa

Guests: Andrew Sise, Anna Williams

The Disability Working Group members met on Friday 17 May 2024.

* Andrew Sise, Public Health Medicine Registrar at Well South. Speaking about WellSouth proposal to develop a Disability Action Plan. Their role is to support primary healthcare to over 300,000 people in Southern Region, some direct services, work to improve population inequities. Looking at their action plan in reference to the Draft Health of Disabled People Strategy, and the Southern Disability Strategy. Want to identify how their action plan can implement existing strategies, within the primary health context. Want to be guided by community and also incorporate their Maori and Pasifika connections. Opportunities to work more closely with Southern. Short time frame - 4 months. Focus to be on getting WellSouth set up well to achieve. Want to set up a steering group to oversee the process. Emphasis on need to engage particularly with Maori and Pasifika, and to ensure that documents are available in plain language. Also educating GPs on communication. Suggestion that linking with current data work with Te Whatu Ora would be helpful.
* Anna Williams, researcher at University of Otago. Collaboration between University and WellSouth. Using data from GPs to lead into research projects. Wanting to find out from the community what research projects they should focus on. Key areas health equity, research needs and use of data. Comment that research in inequities of those who fall under MoH versus ACC funding can be quite significant.
* Actions Update:
* Accessibility Audit completed for Southland recently - report almost finalised.
* Pou Manaaki - survey completed recently to identify barriers for consumers accessing outpatient appointments
* Quarterly Forum held on 30th April, positive feedback received, next one will be at end of July
* Disability training session rolled out recently on 4th floor, three sessions so far.
* Revised Regional Health and Wellbeing Plan. Feedback by 22nd May required. John covered the highlights of the plan and it sounds as though some of the suggestions made by the group to the plan development team had been considered. Comment that it is a very long document and is not in Easy Read. Concern raised that disability not mentioned much at all (16 references in 68 pages) - two members intend to make a submission to query this. Possibly though that equity is intended to be overarching. Suggestion of a non-iwi based Maori approach.
* Sunflower proposal. Kathryn outlined a proposal for launching the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower throughout Southern. Members highlighted that they thought this would be particularly helpful in primary health as well and Ruth indicated they would be interested in engaging with us. Members approved the project brief and felt that proposed structure, particularly Phase 1, was ideal.
* Round Table:
* Public meeting with St John about health shuttle. Looks as though it will be at least 2 years away, St John are running a feasibility study. Many also going to Timaru so may need two shuttles. Also concern that some toilet seats are too low in the hospital - wondering if toilet raisers are possible? Outpatients areas.
* Good news story, link with optometrist locally, had surgery in Dunedin, just one trip.
* Stronger Waitaki pulling together from Human Rights Commission what marginalised communities exist locally and find representatives to get together.
* Deafblind person going for surgery - had been connected to Kathryn and plans put in place to accommodate communication needs particularly immediately prior to and after surgery.
* Attended Whaikaha Pasifika strategic plan, felt like lip service and was badly run. Meant a lot of parents had to leave and older population had very different needs to families with children. Kia Roha Southland have an internship being rolled out soon for a rangatahi to have a job within Te Whatu Ora. Enabling Good Lives workshop being done soon.
* Meeting with New Dunedin Hospital, disappointed in attitude of lead architect with consideration of disability.