

**Support pack for
Minister for Social Development and Employment**

2020/21 Annual Review Debate for Social Services and Community Sector:

5.00pm-6.00pm, Wednesday 13 April 2022

Supporting Official

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A3's Included: Week ending 1 April 2022, March 2022 monthly dashboard, Mana in Mahi and Flexi Wage for Feb 2022

Hot Topics – Key points

Income support increases

- The increases to main benefits implemented by the Government on 1 April 2022 have brought benefit rates in line with the levels recommended by the WEAG (recommendation 20).
- Compared to 1 April 2021, main benefit rates have increased by between \$39.74 and \$62.35 per adult per week – or between 13 and 30 percent. This compares to growth in inflation (the CPI) of 5.95% over the previous year.
- As a result of increases to financial assistance since 2018, MSD estimates that compared to 2017 policy settings, around 364,000 beneficiaries will be better off by on average \$109 per week, increasing to \$133 per week during the 2022 winter period.
- From **1 April 2020**:
 - indexing of benefits to average wage increases
 - main benefit increase of \$25 per week
 - temporary doubling of the Winter Energy Payment in 2020 (May to October)
- From **1 April 2021**:
 - income abatement thresholds of main benefits increased to \$160 and \$250 per week
- From **1 July 2021**:
 - increased all main benefit rates by \$20 per week per person, and
 - introduced changes to Temporary Additional Support disability exception amount, and changes to exclude supplementary assistance from chargeable income from Childcare Assistance
 - **360,000 individuals and families** were estimated to be better off from the 1 July 2021 changes
 - Around **100 individuals or families receiving a main benefit, that appeared to not be better off from the change, were granted Transitional Assistance Payment** to ensure their benefit payments were not reduced
 - Around 1,000 sole parent students also received a Transitional Assistance Payment to ensure that they were not worse off between 1 July 2021 and 1 April 2022.
- From **1 April 2022**:

Indexation

- **Main benefit rates have increased by 4.71 percent** in line with the increase in net average wage
- **NZS rates have increased by 5.95 percent** which will set the net married couple rate at 66.81 percent of the net average wage –
- **rates and thresholds of other assistance have increased by 5.95 percent**, in line with movement in the CPI for all groups

Additional increases

- Adult main benefit rates have further increased to the rates recommended by the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG), with an additional \$15 per week, per adult for families with children.
- Youth rates of main benefits have received the same dollar increase as the indexed adult rates of the equivalent benefits.
- Childcare Assistance income thresholds have begun to be indexed annually by net average wage growth from 1 April 2022.

- Student Allowance and Living Cost rates have increased a further \$25 per week, per adult.
- Including a Budget 2022 pre-commitment being progressed on 1 April 2022, Orphan's Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit OB/UCB rates have increased by \$39.84 per week for children aged 0-4 years and by \$15 for children aged 5 years and over.
- The Family Tax Credit and Best Start Tax Credit have been increased by the growth in the CPI since their last adjustment (8.57%) with the Family Tax Credit increasing by a further \$5 per week. The abatement rate for the Family Tax Credit and In-work Tax Credit has also been increased from 25% to 27%.

Impacts of 1 April 2022 changes ***1.2 million individuals are expected to receive increased financial assistance as a result of the 2022 Annual General Adjustment of benefit rates and thresholds.***

- 364,000 individuals and families receiving a main benefit are estimated to have gained an average of \$40 per week, compared to 31 March 2022
 - 109,000 individuals and families with children receiving a main benefit gained an average of \$62 per week, compared to 31 March 2022
 - 255,000 individuals and families without children receiving a main benefit gained an average of \$31 per week, compared to 31 March 2022.
- The Childcare Assistance income threshold changes are estimated to impact around 1,000 families with children.
- **Student Support changes** will impact **63,000 students receiving Student Allowance** and 86,000 Student Loan Living Cost borrowers (note 23,000 of borrowers are also receiving an allowance – not a distinct count of students).
- The Working for Families tax credit changes are estimated to impact 346,000 families who will be better off by an average of \$20 per week.

The welfare overhaul work programme, including the review of working for families, is on-going

The Government is committed to continuing the welfare overhaul to achieve their vision of a welfare system that ensures people have an adequate income and standard of living, are treated with and can live in dignity and are able to participate meaningfully in their communities.

Further work on the Working for Families Review

- The Review is on-going and will consider fundamental changes to Working for Families in the coming years.
- The Review will consider changes to the structure and design of WFF payments, with a focus on support for additional in-work costs, particularly childcare costs, and administrative, operational and client experience improvements.

Better off analysis

Overall impacts

- The increases to financial assistance since 2018 are estimated to have the following impacts on 1 April 2022, compared to 2017 policy settings:
 - 364,000 beneficiaries will be better off by on average \$109 per week**, increasing to \$133 per week during the 2022 winter period.
 - 109,000 beneficiary families with children** will be better off by on average \$175 per week, increasing to \$207 per week during the 2022 winter period.
 - 255,000 beneficiaries without children are estimated to be better off by on average \$81 per week, increasing to \$101 per week during the 2022 winter period.

Gender

- Of the 364,000 individuals and families receiving a main benefit, there are 222,000 females and 172,000 males.
- Females are estimated to be an average \$125 per week better off, with males an average of \$89 per week better off, as a result of the policy changes since 2017.
- Women gained more on average than men as a result of changes to Working for Families, which benefited families with children.

Beneficiaries with Health Conditions or Disability

MSD estimates that compared to 2017 policy settings:

- 171,000 individuals and families receiving Jobseeker HCD or SLP will be better off by on average \$87 per week
- 193,000 individuals and families receiving other main benefits (JS-WR, SPS, YP/YPP) will be better off by on average \$129 per week
- 18,000 individuals and families receiving Jobseeker HCD or SLP with children will be better off by on average \$165 per week
- 91,000 individuals and families receiving other main benefits (JS-WR, SPS, YP/YPP) with children will be better off by on average \$177 per week
- 153,000 individuals and families receiving Jobseeker HCD or SLP without children will be better off by on average \$78 per week
- 102,000 individuals and families receiving other main benefits (JS-WR, SPS, YP/YPP) without children will be better off by on average \$85 per week

Ethnicity

MSD estimates that compared to 2017 policy settings:

- **131,000 Māori individuals and families** will be on average \$115 better off per week, increasing to \$139 better off per week in the 2022 winter period.
 - 49,000 Māori families with children will be \$173 better off per week
 - 83,000 Māori individuals and families without children will be \$80 better off per week
- **40,000 Pacific individuals and families** will be on average \$122 better off per week, increasing to \$147 better off per week in the winter period.
 - 16,000 Pacific families with children will be \$182 better off per week
 - 23,000 Pacific individuals and families without children will be \$80 better off per week

Number of clients with reported earnings

As at end of February 2022:

For SPS

- over 10,000 clients (or 14 percent) receiving SPS have reported earnings
 - this is slightly down in terms of proportion of those receiving SPS compared to Feb 2017 where 18 percent or 11,130 clients had reported earnings
- the number of SPS clients with no income reported has increased from 82 to 86 percent when comparing to the same time in 2017
- there has been an increase in the number of SPS clients who have earnings of more than \$300 – in 2017 this was around 2,600 clients and has increased to around 4,300

For JS

- 183,354 people receiving a JS-related benefit
 - more than half (56 percent or 103,431 clients) receive JS-WR and of this group, over 10,000 clients have reported earnings
 - around 80,000 clients were receiving JS – Health Condition and Disability and while they don't have work obligations, over 6,000 clients in this group have earnings reported.

Benefit numbers

Jobseeker numbers vs HLFS – how is unemployment falling yet there are more people on benefit and spend on jobseeker is also increasing?

- Benefit numbers have been falling at near record rates, and at a similar rate to falling unemployment, reflecting a strong economy and MSD's focus on employment. Jobseeker Support – Work Ready has not dropped as far because the profile of people looks different.
- Some people on benefit have lower resilience to economic shocks, so may stay on benefit for a longer period of time.
- Wage adjustments and recent one-off increases to benefit rates mean that spending for Jobseeker Support will rise.
- The reported **unemployment rate remained low, down to 3.2 per cent** from 3.3 per cent (revised) last quarter. This is the lowest unemployment rate recorded since the series began in 1986, remaining 5th equal lowest in the OCED rankings.
 - **For Māori, the reported unemployment rate fell to 7.0 per cent** (down from 9.1 per cent a year ago)
 - **For Pacific Peoples, the reported unemployment rate fell to 5.4 per cent** (down from 9.6 per cent in December 2021) Note: Stats NZ indicated that COVID-19 restrictions made data collection in South Auckland and Northland more difficult than other regions, and recommend users focus on longer-term trends for Pacific Peoples

Unemployment Rate – HLFS December 2021	
Unemployment Rate (15+ years)	3.2%
Youth Unemployment Rate (15 – 24 years)	8.9%

Comparison: post-Global Financial Crisis

- In December 2010, two years after the Global Financial Crisis 13.1% of New Zealand's working age population was receiving a Main Benefit. In December 2021, 18 months after the initial economic shock caused by COVID-19, that figure was 11.7%.

Headlines –week ending 1 April 2022 (Latest weekly Dashboard)

- **348,336 people were receiving a main benefit** or 11.1 percent of the working-age population (down 0.2 percent from the previous week – around 650 fewer people)
 - **177,642 people receiving Jobseeker Support** (5.6 percent of the working-age population)
 - 100,851 people receiving JS – Work Ready (57 percent of JS recipients)
 - 76,791 people receiving JS – Health Condition or Disability (43 percent of JS recipients)

JS Grants and cancels

- There were 2,628 Jobseeker Support grants during the week ending 1 April, down 6.9 percent from the previous week (2,823).
- There were **3,561 Jobseeker Support cancellations** during the week ending 1 April, up 0.8 percent from the previous week (3,534).
 - Of these, **2,505 were cancels into work**, 20.7 percent higher than the previous week (2,076).

Headlines –March 2022 (Latest monthly Dashboard)

- **11.1 percent** of the working-age population received a main benefit
- Compared to the previous month (Feb 2022) there has been a:
 - **decrease of around 9,200** benefit recipients
 - **increase of around 1,100** main benefit cancellations
 - **drop in people receiving JS – Work Ready** of around 2,500 people

Headlines –December 2021 (Latest quarterly Dashboard)

- **368,172** working-age people received a main benefit as at the end of December 2021
- **367,557** working-age people received a main benefit as 7 January 2022
- **363,636** working-age people received a main benefit as 4 February 2022
- **351,084** working-age people received a main benefit as 4 March 2022
- **348,336** working-age people received a main benefit as at 1 April 2022

Key Benefit Numbers – as at December

Benefit Type	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021
All main benefits	289,788	299,343	314,409	389,499	368,172
Jobseeker Support (JS)	123,039	134,046	147,465	212,466	187,989
Work Ready (JS – WR)	65,613	74,106	83,103	134,829	106,362
Health Condition or Disability (JS – HCD)	57,429	59,940	64,362	77,637	81,627
Sole Parent Support	60,678	59,871	61,188	67,563	73,263
Supported Living Payment	93,021	92,688	93,594	94,419	93,918
Health Condition or Disability	84,273	84,060	84,753	85,299	84,819
Carers	8,748	8,628	8,844	9,120	9,099
Youth Payment/Young Parent Payment	1,896	1,680	1,611	1,560	1,446
Youth Payment	321	270	261	273	231
Young Parent Payment	1575	1410	1350	1284	1212
Other main benefits (includes EB, EMA, JSSH)	13,047	12,738	12,162	15,048	13,002
Estimated proportion work-age resident population receiving main benefits	9.7%	9.9%	10.2%	12.4 %	11.7%

Benefit durations

- We have seen **rapid recovery in employment outcomes for people who entered the benefit system throughout 2020**, with this group generally returning to the labour market quickly. This partially reflects the characteristics of this group; who were younger, closer to the labour market, and had little to no recent benefit history; along with our focus on supporting people into work.
- In contrast, **people who were already accessing a benefit prior to March 2020 are exiting at lower rates** than usual and are more likely to stay on benefit longer.
- People with longer durations on benefit may be outcompeted for jobs by more recent entrants, who are closer to the labour market.
- Having a longer duration on benefit is associated with increased difficulty in re-entering the workforce, so this group will continue to require targeted support.

An increase in long term benefit recipients – what action is being taken?

- An increase of \$359.1m or 45 percent in the Employment MCA (total allocation \$1,159.8m for 2020/21)
- 263 new frontline staff in Budget 2019 to help people into work.
- Invested \$150m in Budget 2020 to help people into work.
- Invested a further \$99m in work focused case management and services in Budget 2021.
- Invested \$86m to sustain the additional frontline work focused staff we employed through COVID-19.

Why are people on a Benefit for longer?

- People who have been on a benefit for a longer period tend to face greater barriers to work. MSD has invested in employment programmes such as Mana in Mahi, Flexi-wage, Apprenticeship Boost and He Poutama Rangatahi.
- 50 percent of people receiving a Main Benefit are Disabled, sick or caring for someone who is sick or disabled, a further 20 percent are sole parents.
- In 2017 the percentage of people receiving a Main Benefit for longer than a year was 70.6 percent. At the end of 2021, after the COVID-19 pandemic it had only risen slightly and was at 72.4 percent.
- The number of people on a benefit for 1-2 years who went into work in the last quarter increased by 96.9 percent. Those on a benefit for 2-4 years saw the year-on-year exit into work rise by 129.8 per cent.
- This is alongside low unemployment which has fallen to 3.2 percent. The total number of people in work is now 117,300 above where it was in the December 2019 quarter before COVID.

How many people left a main benefit for work in the December 2017 quarter compared to the December 2021 quarter?

- December 2017 quarter – over 19,000 exits into work
- December 2021 quarter – over 27,000 exits into work

How long have people been continuously receiving JS-Work Ready?

Continuous Duration	JS-Work Ready benefit numbers as at March (Proportions for each year in brackets. Trend symbol compares against 2017)		
	2017	2021	2022
< 3 months	10,943 (17.1%)	16,981	17,606 (17.5%)
3-6 months	10,505 (16.4%)	17,187	14,304 (14.2%)
6-12 months	12,313 (19.3%)	27,288	17,045 (16.9%)
1-2 years	11,453 (17.9%)	28,096	18,262 (18.1%)
2-4 years	8,508 (13.3%)	17,127	18,473 (18.3%)
4 years plus	10,194 (15.9%)	16,184	15,159 (15.0%)
Total JS-Work Ready (JS-WR as a %age of Working-age benefit population)	63,916 (23.0 percent)	122,863 (33.6 percent)	100,849 (29 percent)
<i>Total Working-age Benefit population</i>	278,236	365,934	348,338

- As at the end of March 2022, the number of people on JS-Work Ready and the proportion of the working-age benefit population receiving JS-Work Ready is still higher than 2017, but lower than levels recorded at the same time last year.
 - March 2022:** 29 percent or around 100,800 people
 - March 2021:** 33.6 percent or around 122,800 people
 - March 2017:** 23.0 percent or around 63,900 people
- Compared to 2017, we're seeing decreases in the proportion of people receiving JS-Work Ready in the following duration categories:
 - 3-6 months:** down from 16.4 to 14.2 percent
 - 6-12 months:** down from 19.3 to 16.9 percent
 - 4 years plus:** down from 15.9 to 15.0 percent

Why are some people on JS-HCD long-term (3-5 years)?

- Jobseeker support is there for New Zealanders who need it and qualify.
- SLP-HCD and JS-HCD are two types of benefits available to people whose capacity to work is impacted by a health condition, injury, illness or disability.
- To be eligible for JS-HCD, someone must:
 - be limited in their capacity or unable to work full-time due to a health condition, injury or disability, or
 - be in employment, but because of a health condition, injury or disability cannot work or can only work at a reduced level.
- The **current eligibility settings for SLP-HCD** requires someone to be unable to work more than 15 hours per week because they are **both permanently and severely restricted** because of a health condition, injury, illness or disability or they are totally blind, or caring for a person who requires full-time care and attention.
- It is possible that someone may receive JS-HCD for many years due to a severe health condition, injury or disability, but their condition may not be considered 'permanent' or 'severe' as defined by the eligibility settings for SLP-HCD.
- Ongoing work considers the possibility of expanding the SLP-HCD eligibility settings** to capture JS-HCD clients who cannot work due to their disability and subsequently remain on benefit.

Why have numbers on JS-HCD increased year on year?

- JS-HCD has experienced higher than normal growth since April 2020, mostly due to the deferral of medical certificate process
- Process restarted in January 2022, and we expect numbers to fall as people move from JS-HCD to JS-WR or SLP over the coming year
- Overall, we expect fewer people on JS-HCD than we did at Budget 2021.

Characteristics of working-age recipients for JS – last five years as of December

Recipient characteristic		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Benefit Subgroup	Jobseeker - Work Ready	65,613	74,106	83,103	134,829	106,362
	Jobseeker - Health Condition or Disability	57,429	59,940	64,362	77,637	81,627
Incapacity Group Jobseeker Support	1. Psychological or psychiatric conditions	27,513	29,439	32,757	39,156	40,671
	2. Musculo-skeletal system disorders	9,411	9,402	9,579	10,866	11,235
	3. Accidents	3,309	3,288	3,543	4,758	5,478
	4. Cardio-vascular disorders	2,544	2,643	2,706	3,408	3,678
	5. Pregnancy-related conditions	630	567	558	723	615
	6. Other disorders and conditions	14,019	14,601	15,219	18,729	19,953
Continuous Duration	One year or less	53,955	60,207	65,145	101,562	71,358
	More than one year	69,087	73,839	82,317	110,904	116,634

Children and benefit dependent homes

- As of 30 June 2021: 3.6% increase or 7,134 more children living in benefit dependent homes compared to same point last year
- Biggest percentage increase was 2020, which saw an increase of 11.9% or 20,961 more children living in benefit dependent homes compared to 2019

Welfare Overhaul implementation

What recommendations from the Welfare Expert Advisory Group have been implemented?

The Government is continuing to progress the welfare overhaul in alignment with the WEAG recommendations. A **total of 41 recommendations out of the 42 either have work underway or have been partially implemented.**

Implemented recommendations include:

- The increases to main benefits on 1 April 2022 will bring benefit rates in line with the levels recommended by the WEAG (recommendation 20).
- Abatement thresholds of main benefits increased to \$160 and \$250 per week on 1 April 2021 (addressing part two of recommendation 20).
- From 2021, the Training Incentive Allowance was reinstated to allow eligible cohorts to receive assistance with study costs at levels 7 and below on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Eligibility for the Training Incentive Allowance has also been expanded to include sole parents receiving Jobseeker Support (recommendation 35).

Progress to date against other recommendations includes, for example:

- implementation of the Families package
- repealing section 192 of the Social Security Act 2018, which previously sanctioned sole parent beneficiaries who did not name the other parent of their child and apply for child support (recommendations 10 and 11)
- removal of the subsequent child policy (recommendations 10 and 11)
- indexation of main benefits to increases in average wages (recommendation 21)
- from 31 January 2022, introduction of a new flexi medical certificate process. Mandatory review periods for medical certificates removed (recommendations 11 and 40)
- funding for an additional 263 FTEs to deliver frontline services over four years (recommendation 35)
- the expansion of employment services, such as:
 - Mana in Mahi
 - Oranga Mahi
 - expanding the Flexi-wage scheme
 - the introduction of initiatives such as the Rapid Return to Work Service and the Apprenticeship Boost Scheme, which have collectively contributed to the highest work exit rates since 1996 (recommendations 35, 36 and 37), and
- announcement of the delivery of 8,000 new public and transitional homes through Budget 2020 (recommendation 29)
- removal of the hours test for the In-Work Tax Credit and the introduction of grace periods (recommendation 23).

Other initiatives progressed by MSD include:

- developing its Pacific Strategy and Action plan (recommendation 8)
- developing and releasing its Strategic Direction: Te Pae Tawhiti and Māori Strategy and Action Plan—Te Pae Tata (recommendations 5 and 9), and
- reporting on a range of data (recommendation 5).

For some of WEAG's recommendations, the Government has chosen to address them in a manner that is slightly different to how they are specified in the WEAG report. For example, recommendation 3 focuses on establishing a cross-Ministerial approach, which has been addressed through the use of the existing Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee.

Child Poverty

Stats released

- All nine child poverty measures have reduced** from the baseline year of 2017-18 through to 2020-21.
- The size of the reductions has meant that two of the three three-year targets have been met. The relative low-income measure using a threshold of 50% of the median produced a reduction, but not enough to meet the target.
- The survey was completed before the recent rapid rise in inflation was observed, so the numbers do not capture any impact from this.
- The table below gives the poverty rates on the nine available CPRA measures for the last four years, and the actual numbers for 2020-21 (latest available):

Rates (%) and numbers for the nine available CPRA child poverty measures (Stats NZ figures for 2017-18 to 2020-21 HES)

	Measure	% poor				# poor
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
P	BHC 50% relative	16.5	13.5	13.2	13.6	157,000
S	BHC 60% relative	25.3	22.1	21.8	21.7	250,000
S	AHC 40% relative	15.7	13.8	13.2	13.1	150,000
S	AHC 50% relative	22.8	20.1	19.5	20.6	230,000
S	AHC 60% relative	30.6	27.7	27.8	28.1	320,000
P	AHC 50% anchored line (2017/18 ref)	22.8	18.3	17.8	16.3	187,000
P	Material hardship (DEP-17, 6+/17)	13.3	13.2	11.5	11.0	126,000
S	Severe material hardship (9+/17)	5.8	5.7	4.6	4.9	55,000
S	Both material hardship and low-income (less than 60% AHC)		8.8	7.7	6.9	6.6
						75,000

Notes for Table:

- BHC is short for 'household income before deducting housing costs' and AHC means 'household income after deducting housing costs'.
- P = primary measure (required by the CPRA to have targets). S= supplementary measure (no targets required).

There are more children in benefit dependent homes, but less children in poverty? How do those two facts work together?

Not all children in poverty come from beneficiary families. Around half of children in poverty are in homes where there is benefit receipt. The other half are in households that get most of their income from employment – the 'working poor'.

- Beneficiary income has increased significantly, so this reduces the child poverty rates for beneficiary families.
- Low-income working families are doing a bit better (e.g., minimum wage rise, more hours per week in total). This reduces the child poverty rate.

Sanctions

- The decision to reduce or pause benefit payments is never made quickly or taken lightly. It only happens after a process has been followed.
- Everyone is offered numerous opportunities to recomply before their payments are reduced.
- Following a meeting with the Children's Commissioner, MSD staff have been reminded that each client's circumstances need to be considered before imposing an obligation failure, and this is particularly the case with clients with tamariki.

Should Jobseeker beneficiaries who fail to meet their work obligations have their benefits reduced?

- Yes, if it is appropriate to do so.
- MSD changed its way of working during COVID-19. Staff are more proactive in their engagement with clients and have offered more phone engagements in line with the alert and traffic light settings.
- MSD are working more closely with clients to understand the reason for their non-compliance and make it easier to recomply if you have children.
- Prior to 2020/21, over 60 percent of JobSeeker sanctions are due to clients failing to turn up to an appointment. This reduced for the first time in 2020/21 and reflects the changed environment due to COVID-19, as well as increased Government investment in front-line work focused case management.

Sanctions imposed on working-age benefits by reason and financial year

Financial year	First reason for sanction				
	Failed to attend appointment (% of total sanctions)	Failed to prepare for work	Failed to participate in work	Other reason	Total
2020/21	8,637 (44%)	9,087	1,494	324	19,542
2019/20	23,455 (68%)	6,741	3,944	236	34,376
2018/19	25,319 (64%)	9,245	4,794	272	39,630
2017/18	36,579 (65%)	13,243	6,180	419	56,421
2016/17	37,658 (66%)	12,140	6,557	321	56,676
2015/16	38,965 (65%)	13,555	6,926	345	59,791

- For families with dependent children included in their benefit, regardless whether they are a sole parent or a couple, a **maximum sanction of 50% of the total benefit is imposed**. This is known as 50% protection.

For 2020/21:

- Total sanctions = **19,539 (17,181 distinct clients)**
 - o Sanctions for clients with children = 1,974 (10% of total sanctions)
- 86.5% (1,710) were resolved once they re-engaged with us
 - o Of these, three-quarters (1,302) were resolved within three weeks from the sanction being imposed

For 2019/20:

- Total sanctions = **34,377 (26,868 distinct clients)**
 - o Sanctions for clients with children = 6,234 (18% of total sanctions)
- 93.4% (5,823) were resolved once they re-engaged with us
 - o Of these, over 80 percent (4,833) were resolved within three weeks from the sanction being imposed

Emergency Housing

Budget 2021 – MSD resource to meet the EH demand

- **Budget 2021: \$9.39 million of total funding, over three years**
 - \$3.130 million each year from 2021/22 to 2023/24
 - allows MSD to continue with the 30FTE brought on in the second half of 2020 (25% contribution started October 2020) to address the housing needs of New Zealanders
 - o a mix of housing-related front line staff but are predominately Intensive Case Managers (23FTE – Intensive Service Case Managers, 2 FTE -
 - o MSD funded year-one costs (including set-up costs) from baseline funding and the roles have been in place since September 2020
- **Key outcomes of the funding**
 - MSD can continue to meet the increased demand for housing services, particularly Emergency Housing.
 - New Zealanders contacting MSD with nowhere else to stay can access warm, dry, secure temporary accommodation
 - allows MSD to not only respond to requests for assistance, but work with clients who are in Emergency Housing and make sure they have the support they need – for needs that arise while in Emergency Housing, and for support in finding other more sustainable accommodation options
- Reported 100 contracted Navigators and Support Services. This is broken down to 65 Navigators and 35 Support Services.

Children in emergency housing – why has MSD not made an effort to secure better rates? What work is underway to secure better rates?

MSD do not have legislative power to contract for emergency housing.

KEY STATS – AS AT END OF FEB 2022:

Total households in EH = 4,731

(21% increase compared to Feb 2021)

- 2,370 households with children
- 2,361 households with no children

Children in EH: 4,722 children

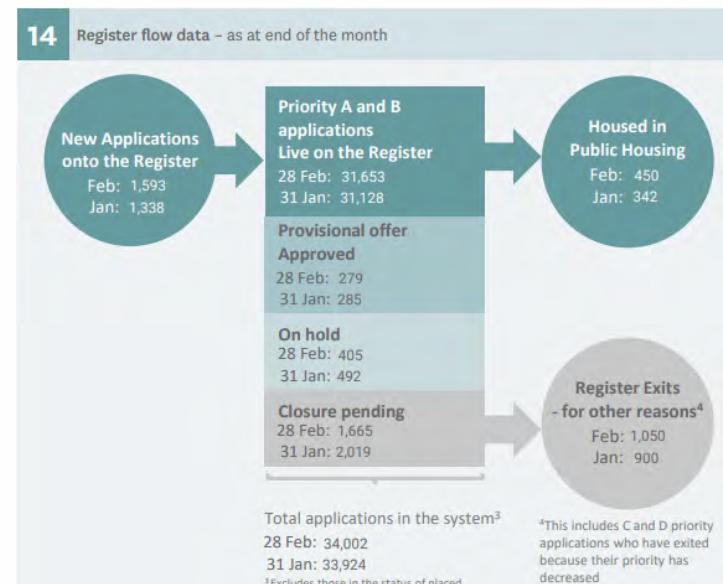
Average duration increased slightly, up to 20.4 weeks from 20.2 weeks last month.

Public Housing Register: 31,653

- *Housing Register* 26,331
- *Transfer Register* 5,325

Value of EH SNGs: \$32.1 million

- 5,718 unique clients
- 11,679 grants



EH SNG spend for the last eight quarters up to the end of Dec 2021

Quarter Ending	Amount Granted (\$)
March 2020	\$54 million
June 2020	\$79 million
September 2020	\$82 million
December 2020	\$82 million
March 2021	\$77 million
June 2021	\$81 million
September 2021	\$87 million
December 2021	\$109 million

Emergency Housing Review

Transforming the housing system requires a staged and planned approach to mitigate risks of long-term motel use:

- tackle urgent needs and issues, while taking actions to address systemic issues that lead to EH SNG demand across the country
- increase supply of Transitional Housing
- increase supply of affordable housing, Public Housing and sub-market rental housing
- increase prevention and support services
- work within the Homelessness Action Plan to focus on at-risk cohorts such as rangatahi/young people

The housing context has shifted since the EH SNG and Transitional Housing were introduced.

- The emergency housing system is defined as the temporary accommodation and support response for people in urgent housing need. It includes both government- and non-government-funded accommodation.
- EH SNGs were originally intended only to be used as a last resort in areas where no contracted emergency housing places (Transitional Housing) were available. Due to wider housing market pressures, increasing numbers of people in need, and the way the system operates and is funded, EH SNGs have become our main response to urgent housing need.
- Even with increased efforts to increase affordable supply, address homelessness and reduce the reliance on motels, the number of people in urgent housing need in emergency housing has increased and remains high. Māori are significantly overrepresented, making up 59% of EH SNG recipients.

Review of the emergency housing system initiated in mid-2021

- In 2021, Ministers asked HUD and MSD to undertake a review of the emergency housing system. The need for further changes to the emergency housing system, such as those underway in Rotorua, raised fundamental questions about the system and specifically whether EH SNGs have a place in our future response.
- Government intends to begin to redesign the emergency housing system this year, and make sure it is supporting New Zealanders in the manner they need (Prime Minister's Statement, 8 February 2022).
- **HUD and MSD will provide Ministers with further advice in June 2022.**

Actions in Rotorua and the rest of New Zealand

By June 2021, in collaboration with Te Arawa Iwi and Rotorua Lakes Council, MSD took immediate action to address housing pressures including:

- HUD contracting EH places with suitable facilities, along with wraparound support services for whānau with children
- expanded client support services in EH SNG or contracted motels
- MSD is worked at pace to consider how to reposition existing EH navigator support and other support services, and identify any additional capability requirements
- possible legislative amendment to give Rotorua Lakes Council a time-limited power to use reserves land for temporary housing
- Kāinga Ora progressing immediate housing opportunities including opportunities for Transitional Housing on Māori land (including two motel purchases).

Further work in Rotorua includes the establishment of a Housing HUB, Te Pokapū, as a co-location of Government, Iwi and NGOs to streamline triage, assessment and placement processes across the housing continuum.

Actions aim to improve the quality of housing and services, the suitability of accommodation placements for diverse clients and family situations, and centre around iwi and whānau needs. The model also supports a pathway to more permanent housing.

Actions MSD have undertaken in Rotorua:

- identified support needed for people staying in EHSNG motels to ensure support while people are experiencing housing distress
- Supported whanau in moving across to the HUD contracted EH accommodation
- Ongoing support for Rotorua clients in EH, including navigation and case management support towards sustainable housing and employment to mitigate financial barriers.

Public housing register management

- Due to COVID, MSD paused proactive register management. MSD restarted proactive register management in May 2021. Through outbound calling, MSD have now proactively contacted all clients on the Register who were identified as suitable for contact.
- **MSD does not proactively contact clients who:**
 - are new to the Register
 - are on the Register and in active case management. These clients engage more regularly with their case managers who will provide support and make sure their information is correct and up-to-date
 - have already contacted MSD and had their housing circumstances reviewed within the last 30 days
 - has an application that is currently in the on-hold or closure pending status.
- Clients who are deaf, hearing impaired, have no phone number or require an interpreter are excluded from proactive outbound calling. For these clients, a letter is sent asking them to make contact to review their circumstances.

Unable to reach client process

- MSD have introduced the 'Unable to reach client' process. This is an additional attempt to contact clients who have not been contactable and their application is at the closure pending status, and have already been through the following:
 - four outbound calling attempts over four separate days and/or
 - a letter requesting contact
 - a manual check on their record for any recent contact through other MSD channels.

Approach moving forward

- MSD's on-going approach for proactive register management is return to business as usual operations, prioritising those clients who have the oldest last contact date.
- Currently, based on the number of calls MSD makes to reach clients and the number of clients on the Public Housing Register, MSD would contact clients every six months on average.
- MSD are looking at the feasibility of introducing text messaging to enhance response rates from clients and better utilise MSD's effort to reach people.

Accommodation supports available under the COVID-19 protection framework

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) is the agency responsible for ensuring people have accommodation they can safely self-isolate in.

Accommodation supports available as part of the health response

- When a health entity (which could be Public Health or a primary health organisation) is notified of a positive COVID-19 case or directs someone to self-isolate, they will make an initial assessment about whether the person or their whānau needs to be moved to a more suitable isolation facility. These options may include managed isolation (MIQ) and supported isolation (SIO) facilities. Health will work with the person and their whanau to decide what is the best option.
- To support the COVID Care Coordination Hubs to source and procure alternative accommodation for individuals, households and whānau who are unable to safely isolate in their usual place of residence, a National Alternative Accommodation Service ("the Service") was stood up. This service builds on the existing accommodation activities that health entities have undertaken to date.
- As a last resort, MBIE have mobile accommodation available throughout New Zealand as part of the Mobile Community Isolation Reserve (MCIR), to assist regions with the provision of campervans. Requests to the MCIR can be made once a region has exhausted its alternative accommodation options.
- MSD and HUD co-chair the National Care in the Community, DCE and National Accommodation groups.

Accommodation supports available as part of the welfare response

- MSD's responsibility for housing support within the welfare system response, refers to income support and housing-related financial assistance to keep people (who meet the eligibility criteria) in their homes while self-isolating only (i.e., to sustain their current housing arrangements).

Supporting clients in emergency housing

- If a client tests positive while in emergency housing, and Health determines the best thing is for them to self-isolate in place, then MSD's role is to provide welfare support so they can do this safely. MSD may bring in extra support for these clients through existing relationships with navigators and support services (funded through the Homelessness Action Plan) to ensure clients are appropriately supported, given the complexities in their lives.
- If whānau in emergency housing are required to be transferred to a more suitable isolation facility, MSD will work with Health to ensure clients receive welfare support and has a room to come back to once their isolation period ends

Employment

- For 2020/21, the Employment and Social Outcomes MCA includes four buckets – income support, work readiness outcomes, employment outcomes, and Flexi-wage.
- Budget of **\$1,159.8m for 2020/21** in the employment MCA **an increase of \$359.1m or 45%**
 - \$150m Employment Service Response to COVID-19 over two years (\$100m/\$50m) to scale up employment programmes
 - \$59.6m over three years to expand Skills for Industry for the Construction Accord (3,500 people into construction)
- In relation to income support, this additional funding has meant we have **added 520 frontline staff in 2019/20 and an extra 967 frontline staff in 2020/21**.
- Part of this was to meet demand, but it has also allowed us to put around **62,100 clients into an intensive case management service as at the end of December 2021**
- This additional funding has allowed MSD to **buy 38,578 interventions in 2020/21, an increase of 43% or 11,523 interventions from 2018/19** (28,280 interventions)
- Work exits are at an all time high** since records began:
 - 74,472 at Dec 2019
 - 82,864 at Dec 2020
 - 119,700 at Dec 2021 (36.2% increase from previous year)
- We are still exiting 10-year-plus beneficiaries in similar numbers as pre-COVID**
 - around 1,200 work exits at Dec 2019
 - 816 work exits at Dec 2020
 - 1,212 work exits as at Dec 2021
- work exits for **people who have been on benefit for 1-3 years**
 - 12,957 of work exits at Dec 2019
 - 11,157 of work exits at Dec 2020
 - 27,729 of work exits as at Dec 2021
- We are starting to see an **increase in sustainable employment**
 - 68.7% in 2018/19
 - 65.2% in 2019/20
 - 67.7% in 2020/21

Working Age Main Benefit work cancellations, by duration

Continuous benefit duration	12-month ending December	
	(Number in brackets shows the proportional percentage for each benefit duration band against the total for that year)	
	2017	2021
Less than 1 year	55,440 (69.5%)	82,842 (69.2%)
1-3 years	15,396 (19.3%)	28,500 (23.8%)
3-5 years	3,798 (4.8%)	4,653 (3.9%)
5-10 years	3,504 (4.4%)	2,493 (2.1%)
10+ years	1,599 (2.0%)	1,212 (1.0%)
Total	79,737	119,700

Of those who exited into work in the 12 months ending December 2020 and 2021 (main benefit):

	Dec 2020	Dec 2021 (# and % of total exits)
Total work exits	87,864	119,700
Māori	28,650	42,003 (36.8%)
Pacific peoples	8,860	14,764 (12.9%)
NZ European	46,812	59,693 (52.2%)
Female	39,852	52,566 (43.9%)
Male	47,874	66,771 (55.8%)
Gender Diverse	138	366 (0.3%)
18 - 24 year olds	28,956	38,199 (31.9%)
55 - 64 year olds	7,560	10,878 (9.1%)

Effectiveness of employment assistance

Cost-effectiveness of MSD's employment assistance (figures for 2020/21 Annual Report)

- **Total spending** - for 2020/21, in the MCA Employment and Work Readiness categories, MSD spent a total of \$348.2 million on employment interventions. **MSD can rate the effectiveness of \$265 million (52 percent) of this expenditure.**
- For 2020/21, MSD spent \$214.5 million on programmes rated as effective or promising within the MCA. **This makes up 80.9 percent of MSD's rateable expenditure.**

Key messages

- **Change in intervention expenditure by effectiveness rating from 2019/20 to 2020/21:**
 - a. effective expenditure increased by 39.3%
 - b. expenditure on interventions with a negative rating fell by 7.5%
 - c. MSD spent \$33.6 million more in 2020/21 on effective programmes. This is mainly due to increased spending on Mana in Mahi and the Employment Placement or Assistance Initiative and
 - d. expenditure on promising programmes has increased by \$14.7 million. This is mainly due to an increase in spending on Flexi-Wage.

Effective employment assistance (\$119.2m)	Promising employment assistance (\$95.3m)
Employment Placement or Assistance Initiative (IEO) Employment Participation and Inclusion Services (IEO) Mana in Mahi (IEO) Vacancy Placement Full and Part time (IEO) Job Search Initiatives (IWRO) Training Incentive Allowance (IWRO) Sole Parent Support Study Assistance (IWRO) WRK4U (IWRO)	Flexi-wage (IEO) Skills for Industry (IEO) Youth Service (IWRO) Training for Work (IEO) Work to Wellness (IEO)

Supports for Job-Seekers to upskill

- Overall, MSD has seen an overall increase in the volume of Jobseekers being supported to upskill over time.
- Since 2017, there have been over 129,000 participation starts across the country in programmes designed to support Job-seekers to upskill (1 July 2017 to 31 March 2022).
- Number of supports has increased over time:
 - 2016/17: around 19,900 participation starts
 - 2020/21: around 28,700 participation starts (a 44 percent increase in starts)
- The specific supports provided vary significantly from general training and support programmes, to full wraparound holistic support into employment.
- In total, approximately 2,240 Jobseekers were supported in FY17 through contracted services delivered by our national Industry Partnerships team. This includes training delivered by employers directly, or via training providers linked to industry employers. This compares to approximately 3,540 Job Seekers in FY21

Table: Participation starts by region and financial year from 2016/17 to 2021/22 (up to end of March 2022)

Region	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 (31 March 2022)	Grand Total
Auckland	5,459	6,608	6,155	6,464	7,890	2,543	35,119
Bay of Plenty	1,239	1,393	1,447	1,782	2,580	1,191	9,632
Canterbury.	698	642	710	621	724	359	3,754
Central	920	1,023	1,165	917	1,232	654	5,911
East Coast	1,461	2,276	1,423	1,809	2,034	1,107	10,110
Nelson	1,585	858	654	1,053	1,285	791	6,226
Northland	1,362	1,351	1,261	1,220	1,864	1,149	8,207
Southern	925	990	788	672	1,541	730	5,646
Taranaki	733	939	774	785	1,258	761	5,250
Waikato	1,777	2,032	2,018	1,937	2,587	1,598	11,949
Wellington	820	935	1,083	1,093	1,408	1,012	6,351
Industry Partnerships	2,244	2,428	2,737	2,978	3,549	2,203	16,139
Other supports including LSV	692	905	1,106	1,112	814	332	4,961
Grand Total	19,915	22,380	21,321	22,443	28,766	14,430	129,255

Notes for table:

- Please note that information in the table has not had random rounding applied to it.
- There are limitations to the information MSD can provide about supports provided to clients in receipt of Jobseeker Support. This is because the data collected is limited to participation starts.
- Mana in Mahi has been recorded in different systems over time, therefore the participant start information reported here is only a partial view. It is likely additional placements are recorded elsewhere.
- Industry Partnership information above does not include some programmes such as fee for Service programmes, i.e., non-referral contracts, for example the Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs Local Government partnership.
- Other supports include bespoke programmes and initiatives operated through the Employment Portfolio.

Participation in employment programmes

Mana in Mahi (rated as effective)

As at Feb 2022, total of **4,587 placements since the start of programme**

- 37 percent (1,680) of all placements were Māori
- 8 percent (387) of all placements were Pacific
- 56 percent (2,568) of all placements were between the age of 18-24

By duration:

- 45 percent (2,082) of placements are not receiving a main benefit
- 40 percent (1,851) have been on benefit for less than a year
- 3 percent (156) in the 2-4 years
- 2 percent (90) in the 4+ years

Point of interest:

- almost 90 percent of clients on a Training Pathway are working towards a qualification at NZQA Level 3 or higher

Flexi-wage (rated as promising)

As at Feb 2022, total of **13,194 placements since the start of programme** (+6,504 placements since same time in 2019)

- 37 percent (4,827) of all placements were Māori
- 12 percent (1,608) of all placements were Pacific
- 33 percent (4,362) of all placements were between the age of 18-24

By duration:

- around a quarter of placements are not on a main benefit
- 44 percent (5,382 participants) have been on benefit for less than a year
- 9 percent in the 2-4 years
- 5 percent in the 4+ years.

Points of interest:

- around 2,400 more Māori have started work with the support of Flexi-wage compared to the same period in 2020
- our 18-24 year old age bracket continues to be the highest represented age group accessing Flexi-wage

He Poutama Rangatahi (not rated, transferred to MSD 1 July 2021)

As at Jan 2022, total of **7,416 enrolments since the start of programme:**

- 79 percent (5,872) of all enrolments were Māori
- 7 percent (548) of all enrolments were Pacific
- 97 percent (who reported back on age) of all enrolments were between the age of 15-24

By duration:

- 37 percent (2,722) of enrolments were receiving a benefit at the time of enrolment

Points of interest:

- 3,463 rangatahi (47%) had been supported into an employment, education, or training outcome so far
- Of this, 2,486 had been supported into an employment outcome and 977 into an education or training outcome
- 5,722 (78%) of rangatahi enrolled were NEET at the time of enrolment
- 3,230 of enrolments (of 7206 who reported back on gender) (44%) were wāhine
- 2,245 (30%) of all enrolments had experienced stand-down's, expulsions or were asked to leave school

Māori Trades and Training Fund (it is not technically feasible to rate at this time)

- The Māori Trades and Training Fund was established in 2020 out of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF).
- During 2020/21 (1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021), seven projects were approved and contracted targeting a total of 294 participants. So far, during 2021/22 (1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022), a further 10 MTTF projects have been approved targeting an additional 434 participants. Additionally, three of the existing projects from 2020/21 have been up-scaled during 2021/22 to target an additional 85 participants in total.
- In total, MTTF currently has **17 approved projects (14 contracted) to date, targeting a total 813 participants.**
 - 94% Maori
 - 3% NZ European
 - 3% Pacific
 - 72% of participants are in or have exited into employment
 - 37% are training.

Training Incentive Allowance

Uptake and training funded

- The number of TIA participants has been **decreasing since 2004**.
- There have been **changes to the TIA policy settings** that have impacted on the number of people who can access this assistance (spend for TIA is reported by financial year – has been around \$1 million a year since 2016/17).
- From 2009, TIA was restricted to study at levels 3 and below** changing the policy intent from gaining higher-level qualifications to assisting those who have left school without qualifications to gain foundational-level education.
- From 1 July 2021, TIA policy settings were reinstated to support sole parents to study at degree-level study and below.** Eligibility was also expanded to include sole parents receiving Jobseeker Support.
- Table below shows the number of clients who have received the TIA:

Academic year (calendar)	Number of clients
2022 (to end of Feb 2022)	1,206
2021	2,037 (456 as at end of 30 June)
2020	585
2019	753
2018	816
2017	975

Effectiveness

- Due to low participant numbers, the **most recent effectiveness rating is from 2016**.
- TIA is **currently rated as effective**, with positive impacts on study and qualifications gained as well as increased income and employment.
- The income impacts are larger for early participants between 2001 and 2008.
- Impact on the time spent in study is lower for participants starting after 2008.

New rate of TIA payable

Table below shows TIA rates adjusted by increases to CPI of 5.95 percent:

TIA maximum rate	1 July 2021	1 April 2022
Weekly	\$114.19	\$120.98
Annual	\$4,567.60	\$4,839.20

SDEU Stories

SDEU 11 March - Rangatahi supported into full-time employment

^{9(2)(a) OIA}, aged 24, with a diagnosis of ^{9(2)(a) OIA}, was granted Supported Living Payment in 2018. He had been working part time and had been supported with a Flexi-wage subsidy since March 2020 but was keen to find full time work.

In August 2020, ^{9(2)(a) OIA} met with Balclutha based work broker, ^{Out of scope} and expressed an interest to work at the local supermarket. James sent ^{9(2)(a) OIA} CV through to an employer and discussed an offer of an Experience Works paid trial for 6-weeks, followed by a Flexi-wage subsidy.

^{9(2)(a) OIA} later connected in with work broker ^{Out of scope} who was filling in for ^{Out of scope} while he was away from the office. ^{Out of scope} was able to renegotiate the terms of ^{9(2)(a) OIA} Experience Works payment from full-time to pro-rata, allowing ^{9(2)(a) OIA} the opportunity to gain confidence in his work and prove himself.

The employer was keen to take ^{9(2)(a) OIA} on and offered him 24 hours a week, which ^{9(2)(a) OIA} accepted on top of his cleaning job. So impressed with ^{9(2)(a) OIA} work ethic, his employer increased his hours to full time work.

^{9(2)(a) OIA} case manager, ^{Out of scope}, also made sure ^{9(2)(a) OIA} and his agent knew all his entitlements along the way. She processed a Transition to Work grant to assist ^{9(2)(a) OIA} with petrol and new shoes and cancelled his benefit once he started full time work.

His agent wrote to ^{Out of scope} to say:

^{9(2)(a) OIA} has now full-time work at the supermarket and gained more hours this week. He's really good at his job".

SDEU 4 March - Supporting Offenders into Employment

As part of the Supporting Offenders into Employment programme, Integrated Service Case Manager ^{Out of scope}, supported a client into work. This client was referred to the programme on 16 September 2021.

When the referral occurred, it was agreed that ^{Out of scope} and the client would meet once a week to work together to achieve his goal of obtaining paid employment, getting back into the community, being financially independent and feeling confident.

While there were times the client wanted to give up, due to facing challenges in all aspects of his life, he was motivated and reminded to focus on the positive aspects of his journey and encouraged for every small step taken to achieve his goals. After six-months of hard work, strong motivation and determination, the client started full-time work on 16 February 2022.

The client sent through feedback thanking ^{Out of scope} for her efforts:

^{Out of scope} I can't thank you enough for all your help, you have made the adjustment back into the community so much easier and I feel truly blessed to have had you supporting me."

SDEU 18 February - MSD Case Manager finds Westport a security guard

When Case Manager Out of scope met with 9(2)(a) OIA 18, 9(2)(a) OIA wasn't sure what he wanted to do with his life or what career path he wanted to pursue.

Out of scope lined 9(2)(a) OIA up for a Limiter Service Volunteer (LSV) course and then visited him while he was at Burnham Military Camp.

During Out of scope visit to the Military Camp, he talked about different career options with 9(2)(a) OIA who mentioned that he would enjoy working as a guard. Since then, Out of scope has been working with 9(2)(a) OIA to find him an employment opportunity in that field.

9(2)(a) OIA graduated from LSV in early January and when one of the 9(2)(a) OIA , Out of scope contacted 9(2)(a) OIA . 9(2)(a) OIA had a successful interview and started his role as a security guard in Westport in late January. Said:

"He's a good guy and I'm happy to be working alongside him."

9(2)(a) OIA seems to be enjoying his new role and was grateful for the path he took. He said:

"LSV was a great experience and it helped me get my life on track."

SDEU 10 December - Rangiora Success Story

Rangiora Work Broker Out of scope had a Rangiora employer looking for two qualified heavy diesel mechanics due to the increased workloads and contracts received.

Out of scope got in contact with the employer to inform him that he'd found a great jobseeker, with a love for cars and a real interest in pursuing a career in diesel mechanic. Out of scope let the employer know that the jobseeker was not a qualified mechanic but that the jobseeker was open to a work-trial opportunity.

The employer requested for the individual's CV and got back the following day to inform Out of scope that he was happy to give them a work-trial the next day. The employer got in touch with Out of scope shortly after to let him know that the work-trial was successful and that they had taken the Jobseeker on full-time as he was a good fit in the team. He also expressed that he was grateful to have an extra pair of hands around the workshop.

SDEU 10 December - Subsidy supports business certainty and new career path

Sitting in the heart of a busy property management office in Taumarunui is 9(2)(a) OIA She joined 9(2)(a) OIA in April 2021 with a Mana in Mahi subsidy supporting her employment and training.

9(2)(a) OIA in 2020 but struggled to find work due to Covid-19. 9(2)(a) OIA However, the lack of employment opportunities upon her return home left her feeling frustrated.

"I was looking for any kind of work, but I didn't want to go backwards, I wanted to go forwards."

She contacted Out of scope a work broker at MSD in Taumarunui, who reworked her CV and set up an interview with 9(2)(a) OIA The Mana in Mahi subsidy meant the company could take 9(2)(a) OIA on in a full-time position and manage revenue with greater certainty.

The role encompasses reception duties as well as booking property inspections, drafting reports, co-ordinating maintenance and tradespeople and being the frontperson for the site on 9(2)(a) OIA If 9(2)(a) OIA decides to branch out into sales and move away from her current position, 9(2)(a) OIA says they wouldn't think twice about using MSD to recruit another employee.

COVID-19 response

COVID-19 Protection Framework (CPF)

- MSD's sites will be open under all levels of the framework.
- Nobody will be denied access to its services.
- MSD is supporting its providers to assess their vaccine requirements for their staff entering MSD workspaces.

Vaccination Mandates

Following a change or update in the Government's COVID-19 settings, MSD look at all COVID protocols and guidance in light of the announcements. This includes its guidance for operating at all sites, and the controls in place, including MSD's vaccination policy.

- MSD would firstly consider the official Government position, and then puts its health and safety assessment over that as well as consider any business continuity/resilience impacts to see if there is more we need to do. We will also review any related guidance for the social services sector that we are responsible for.
- The Ministry's decision to introduce its COVID 19 vaccination policy is not under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Orders but is based on a health and safety risk assessment under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Consistent with our earlier consideration of the Yardley High Court decision that related to the Defence Force and Police Health Order mandates, we will consider what impact, if any, the removal of some current Health Order vaccine mandates will have on our internal vaccination policy. This will be alongside consideration of any updated health and safety risk assessment outlined above.
- As of 1 April, MSD are following MBIE's advice and have paused the Vaccination Policy employment outcomes process. Current notices of termination of employment have been withdrawn while MSD completes the latest risk assessment.

Client vaccination status

- **MSD does not hold or seek information a client's vaccination status.**
- It is possible that some clients have shared their vaccination status with their case manager during discussions about suitable job opportunities. However, this information will be recorded on individual client files rather than held centrally.
- MSD will continue to focus on helping individuals, whānau and communities respond to the challenges posed by the pandemic. MSD is supporting the Ministry of Health with their COVID-19 vaccination campaigns by sharing the messaging with its clients.
- However, Since November 2021, MSD has produced six iterations of reporting on the vaccination take-up rates of our clients. MSD has access to Ministry of Health COVID Immunisation Register vaccination data through a cross-agency Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) project created by the Social Wellbeing Agency (SWA).

Care in the Community

- The Government is supporting New Zealanders who test positive for COVID-19 or have been directed to self-isolate through the COVID Care in the Community model.
- We need to make sure those recovering at home have the support they need to recover safely through region-specific, locally-led responses.
- The Government announced the **\$204 million** in November last year with **an additional \$145.7 million¹** approved on 16 February to sufficiently scale the whole of system welfare approach in anticipation of moving to phase 2 of the response to Omicron.

How much money has actually gone into communities and to providers to support local people in need?

- As of 27 March, MSD has allocated² **\$155.8 million** in funding to support the welfare response as follows:
 - \$30.1 million** to 292 food organisations
 - \$115.8 million** to 261 organisations hosting 500³ Community Connectors (FTE)
 - \$7.7 million** through the Provider Capability Fund
 - \$2.2 million** through the Community Awareness and Preparedness Fund
- This has extended funding for Community Connectors through to 30 June 2023, increased the number of Community Connectors and provided further discretionary funding for non-food essentials for households supported by Community Connectors.
- There has been significant investment into Māori and Pacific providers through the Care in the Community welfare response.
- As of 27 March 2022, MSD has allocated more than **\$86 million to Māori providers and \$22 million to Pacific providers** to support whānau self-isolating.

Support with food and essential items

- Food accessibility has been a key prime focus, particularly with the number of people who are having to self-isolate.
- To support this need, MSD released funding to community groups and foodbanks to help people access food and essential items.

¹ Figure excludes \$58.1 million contingency funding to be used if demand exceed anticipated levels (or new variants emerge).

² Funding allocated is based on the value of funding committed to providers, including verbal commitments.

³ Number of Community Connectors includes the allocation of an additional 197 FTE approved in February.

Care in Community – Welfare response | Week ending 3 April 2022



Week ending
3 April

Requests for
welfare support

Cumulative requests

110,229

In the last week

7,758

4,284 fewer than last week

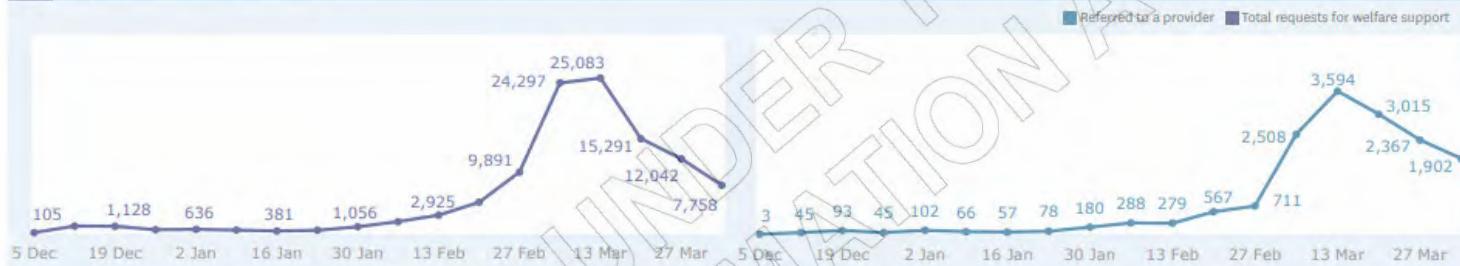
Referred to providers

1,902

465 fewer than last week

1 Requests for welfare support under the COVID-19 Protection Framework in the last week

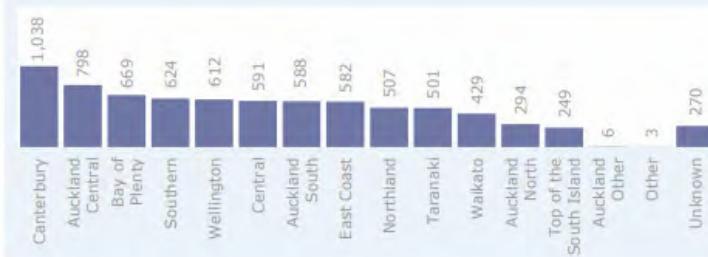
1.1 Weekly requests for welfare support



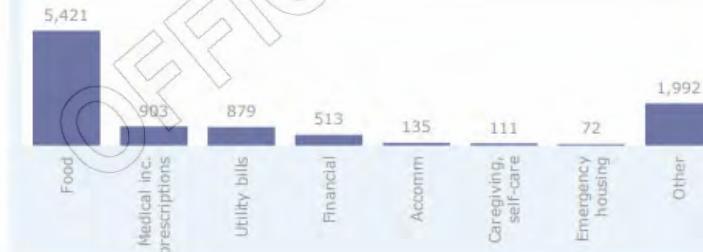
1.2 Source of request for welfare support:



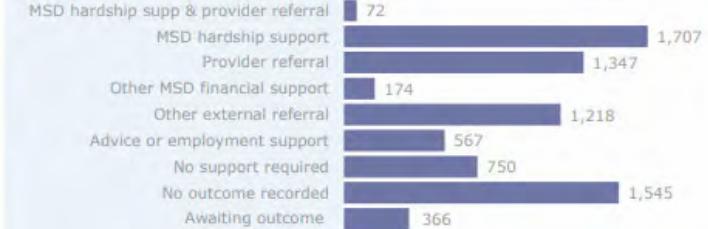
1.3 Welfare support requests by MSD region



1.4 Identified needs of people requesting welfare support



1.5 Outcomes of request for welfare support*



*Excludes 483 people who were referred to a provider in the current week but requested support in a prior week.

'Referred to a provider' means referrals made by MSD and does not include people referred directly by PHUs or people who go directly to community providers for assistance while self-isolating.

Care in Community - Welfare response | Week ending 3 April 2022



Week ending
3 April

Hardship provided*

\$870k

\$508k less than last week

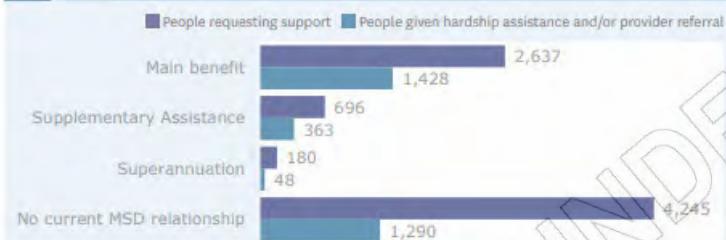
Total hardship grants*

4,548

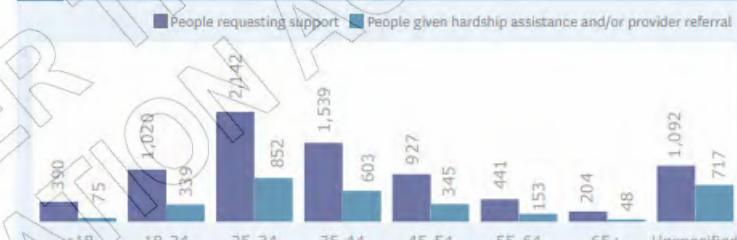
2,970 fewer than last week

2 People who requested welfare support under the COVID-19 Protection Framework in the last week

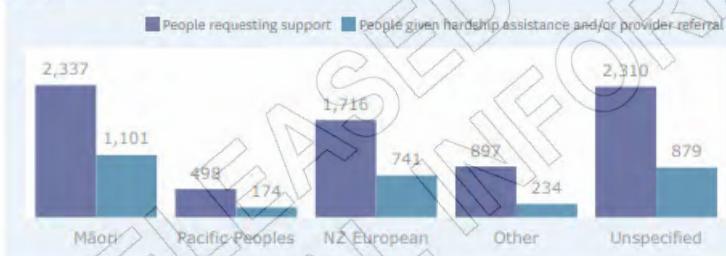
2.1 Existing financial assistance provided by MSD



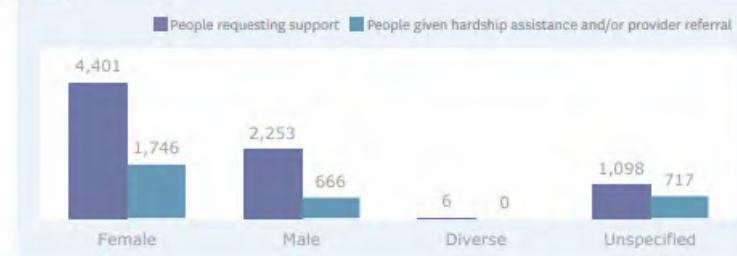
2.2 Age



2.3 Ethnicity

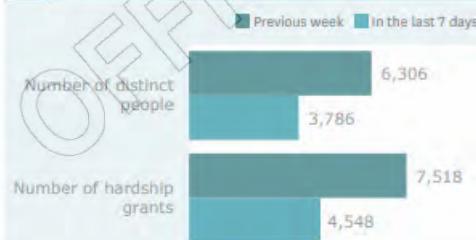


2.4 Gender

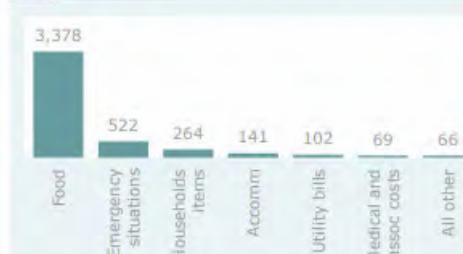


3 Hardship assistance provided to people in self isolation in the last week

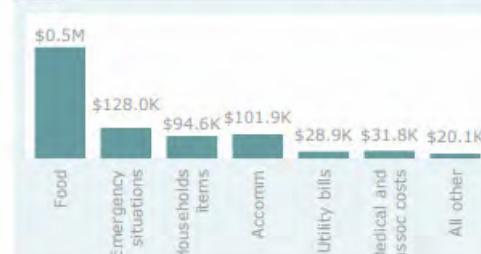
3.1 Hardship assistance provided



3.2 Number of hardship grants, by need type (Total=4,548)



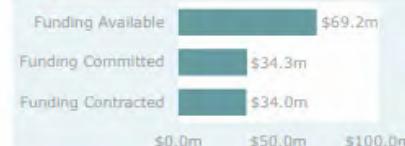
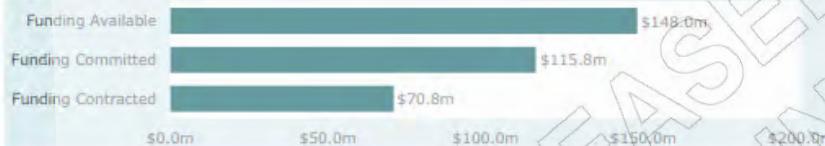
3.3 Total hardship \$ amount provided, by need type



*Excludes emergency housing.

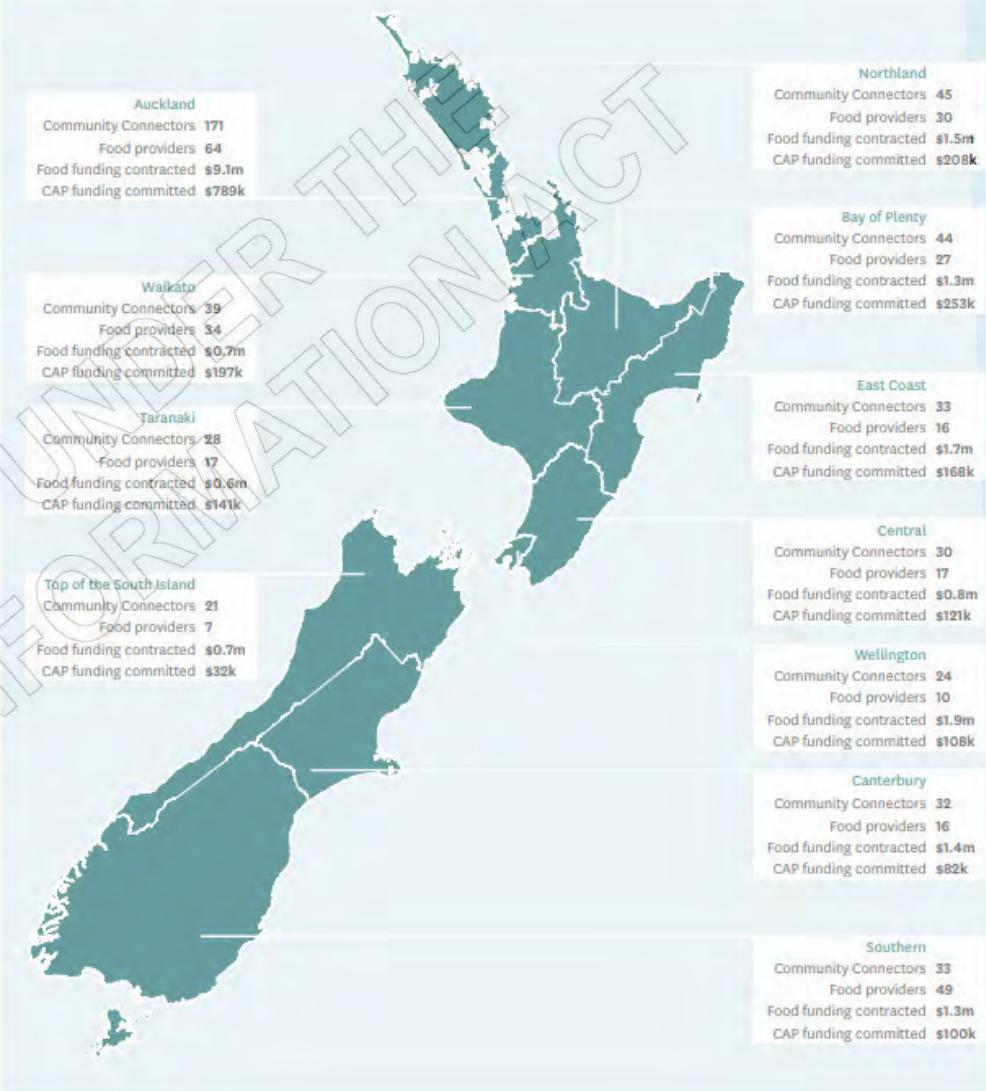
Currently, MSD can only report demographic information for people we have provided direct support to. This is reflected in the high number of 'unspecified' responses across age, gender, and ethnicity. In the coming weeks, changes to information sharing processes will reduce the number of unspecified responses.

This dashboard uses 'prioritised ethnicity' which means that if a person belongs to more than one ethnic group, they have been allocated to a single group in a priority order.

4 Community food support**4.1 Number of funded food providers****287****4.2 Overview of financial spend*****5 Community providers and Community Connectors****5.1 Number of Community Connector host organisations****261****5.2 Number of Community Connectors FTE******500****5.3 Overview of financial spend****6 Other funds****6.1 Community Awareness and Preparedness (CAP)****6.2 Provider capability fund****Notes**

*The information for food funding committed and food funding contracted has now been adjusted to exclude food funding for the Christmas period in Auckland as this funding is distinct from the Care in the Community Welfare Response funding.

**Number of Community Connectors now includes the additional allocation of the 197 FTE Community Connectors approved in February 2022.

7 MSD regions

Support to employers and self-employed | Week ending 3 April 2022



**Week ending
3 April**

Leave Support Scheme

Cumulative amount paid

\$206.6m

\$38.4m increase in the last week

Cumulative applications received

188,121

28,728 increase in the last week

Cumulative applications approved

168,000

27,378 increase in the last week

Short-Term Absence Payment

Cumulative amount paid

\$24.6m

\$1.4m increase in the last week

Cumulative applications received

47,811

2,442 increase in the last week

Cumulative applications approved

40,464

2,205 increase in the last week

8 COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme

8.1

Cumulative amount paid COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme (\$ millions)

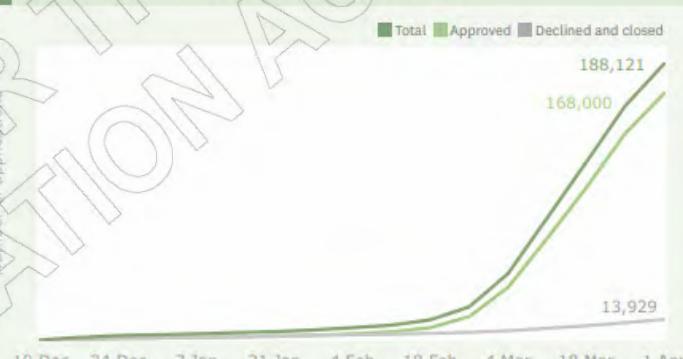
Amount (\$ millions)



8.2

Cumulative applications COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme

Number of applications



9 COVID-19 Short-Term Absence Payment

9.1

Cumulative amount paid Short-Term Absence Payment (\$ millions)

Amount (\$ millions)



9.2

Cumulative applications Short-Term Absence Payment

Number of applications



The COVID-19 Leave Support Scheme and the COVID-19 Short-Term Absence Payment is available to employers, including self-employed people, to help with lost work/income due to COVID-19 isolation requirements.

All the measures on this page reflect a Saturday to Friday week.

Regional or industry breakdowns are not available in this dashboard, however separate reporting is being developed to make this information available.

Oranga Tamariki Oversight Bill

- Policy work on the Oversight legislation began in 2018 and in that time, officials have conducted engagement with communities and key stakeholders.
- The majority of policy decisions were made in 2020 or early 2021 and the Bill was introduced in November 2021.
- The Bill includes a requirement for a review of the Act to be initiated within 5 years of the Bill's commencement.
- Officials have scrutinised a wide range of options and arrangements, informed by consultation, which has culminated in what is proposed in the Bill. Throughout this period, Oranga Tamariki has continued to operate without sufficient oversight, and ongoing system failures continue to be reported, calling for improvements to be made.
- It is imperative to have comprehensive oversight of Oranga Tamariki, in place as soon as possible.
- Delaying the Bill will mean Oranga Tamariki continue to operate without proper oversight.
- The Bill is consistent with the Royal Commission's interim report on redress.
- It reflects the Government's commitment to establish a more comprehensive and more cohesive system of oversight arrangements that will help to improve outcomes for children and young people—tamariki and rangatahi—across New Zealand. There are three key components to the oversight system – advocacy, monitoring and complaints.

Disability Issues

Three key new commitments to disabled people in Aotearoa were announced in 2021, that builds on the work in the Disability Action Plan (2019-2023) and sit alongside initiatives in education and other portfolios to progress the rights and achievements of disabled people.

These **three key initiatives** are:

1. A budget commitment of just **over \$72 million to maintain the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) initiatives in Waikato and Christchurch**, as well as Mana Whaikaha in Mid-Central. These approaches emphasise disabled people and their family/whānau having greater choice and control on the services and support they receive.
2. **A commitment to establish a new Ministry for Disabled People** which will take EGL and Systems Transformation to national scale. The new Ministry, yet to be finally named, will be established in July 2022. The full range and function of the new Ministry is being scoped by an Establishment Unit.
3. **A commitment to Accessibility Legislation** which will be introduced through the Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill which will be introduce to Parliament in the second half of 2022. This will be a framework for an ongoing commitment to an accessible Aotearoa.

New investment will be required for these initiatives to be progressed. In all of these initiatives, disabled people will lead, inform, advise and be involved in design to ensure it works for disabled people.

Budget 2021 initiatives

- **\$481.064 million** investment in initiatives specifically for disabled people (investment for Growing Disability and Accessibility Leadership Advice falls within the Social Development portfolio spend)
- The remaining additional funding is administered through portfolio responsibilities of other Ministers (Health and Justice).
- **\$5.764 million over four years** for Growing Disability and Accessibility Leadership and Advice for Disabled People, which includes:
 - **\$0.680m** Supporting Sir Robert Martin's disability advocacy role at the United Nations and strengthening ODI's advocacy and disability advice to Government.
 - **\$0.863m** Strengthening ODI's advocacy and disability advice to government by providing funding to employ additional staff.
 - **\$4.221m** Increasing the capacity to translate important communications into the range of accessible formats for disabled people – New Zealand Sign Language translations, Easy Read, and the range of formats that work for people with blind and low vision.

COVID-19 Disability Response

Key message

- The Minister for COVID-19 Response is responsible for the Government's ongoing health response to COVID-19. Questions regarding the COVID-19 response should be referred to Hon Chris Hipkins on this basis.

COVID-19 Vaccination data

- The Social Wellbeing Agency (SWA) analysed the COVID-19 vaccination uptake for disabled people (including children) as of 1 March 2022.
 - Of the estimated 1.2 million disabled people over twelve, 66% have received 3 or more doses and 92% have received at least 2 doses – these vaccination rates are slightly higher than for non-disabled people.
 - Of the estimated 30,000 disabled 5-11-year-old children, 54% have received at least 1 dose – these vaccination rates are slightly higher than for non-disabled children. Children have been eligible since 17 January 2022. Numbers of second doses for children are small and therefore not disaggregated in this analysis.
 - Across virtually all analysed subgroups, disabled people have higher vaccination rates than non-disabled people in the same subgroup.

Office for Disability Issues response

- The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has advocated for disabled people and their needs throughout the COVID-19 response.
- In December 2021, ODI hosted an online kōrero about COVID-19 open to anyone from the community – this was attended by almost 100 people.
- ODI is facilitating meetings with key disability community members and officials from across government to ensure the community is kept up-to-date on disability-focussed COVID-19 initiatives, assist officials to better respond to disability-related COVID-19 issues and to get direct feedback from the community [Please note: As of 13 April, one cross-agency meeting has taken place – the next is planned for 14 April].

Back-pocket information

- Most of the direct responses to COVID-19 sit with government agencies outside of the Disability Issues portfolio.
- COVID-19 has exposed the existing vulnerabilities and inequalities that disabled people face in their everyday lives.
- Disabled Peoples' Organisations and officials have worked tirelessly to develop information in accessible formats.
- You have regularly met with disability representatives to hear directly from the community on their COVID-19 priorities and concerns. Disabled people, their whānau and allies have been clear and articulate in identifying these priorities and concerns.
- Your meetings with the community have resulted in close work with Health and COVID-19 Ministers, and their respective agencies (such as the Ministry of Health) to respond to the concerns raised.
- The COVID-19 vaccination rollout was successful for disabled people, with higher rates of vaccination uptake than the non-disabled population. Local heroes worked with disabled people and their whānau to get vaccinated and were supported by accessible vaccination options developed by officials at the Ministry of Health.

Ministry for Disabled People

- On 29 September 2021, the Social Wellbeing Cabinet Committee agreed to establish a new Ministry, provisionally named the Ministry for Disabled People, in the form of a departmental agency hosted by the Ministry of Social Development.
- The new Ministry will be established from 1 July 2022, noting it will take longer for the new Ministry to be fully operational.
- The new Ministry will:
 - drive better outcomes for all disabled people
 - lead and coordinate cross-government strategic disability policy
 - work to deliver and transform disability support services, and
 - progress work on the broader transformation of the wider disability system.
- To support the establishment of the new Ministry, an Establishment Unit has been set up within the Ministry of Social Development. A key focus of the Establishment Unit's work during the establishment and transition period is to ensure that disabled people continue to receive the supports they need.
- The Establishment Unit has set up governance structures that reflect a true partnership approach and includes disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and whānau.
- The new Ministry will be responsible for most DSS currently funded through the Ministry of Health, and for the transformation of those services based on the EGL approach.
- In preparation for the national implementation of the EGL approach, the Establishment Unit is working with the Ministry of Health and the EGL Governance Group to identify and assess options for roll-out.
- The proposed approach is subject to funding decisions, which will be made through Budget 2022.

Representation of disabled people in establishing the new Ministry

- The Establishment Unit will be operating for a time-limited period, laying the early groundwork for the setting up of the new Ministry, and for the incoming Chief Executive.
- The Establishment Unit's governance structure consists of Ministers (Health, Social Development, Disability Issues), Chief Executives from Ministries of Health and Social Development, Ministry for Disabled People Establishment Governance Group, Establishment Community Steering Group, Establishment Officials Steering Group, Establishment Director.
- A key feature of the structure is that the Establishment Unit works directly with disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, mana whenua, families/whānau and carers so that the voice of the whole disability community is given effect to.
- The Governance Group consists of three officials, three disabled people and three tāngata whaikaha Māori (the latter six were appointed by the Community Steering Group)
- The Community Steering Group consists of 12 community members who represent core disabled people's leadership groups and collectives. They were selected by the community and not by officials.

Accelerating Accessibility

- **Improving accessibility is vital if New Zealand is to support disabled people** to achieve their fundamental human rights.
- The Government **has listened to calls for change and agreed to a new framework** for accelerating accessibility. The new framework will support the vision and principles of Enabling Good Lives, and enable barriers to accessibility to be progressively addressed wherever they occur, including in housing, transport, information, communication, technology, public buildings and spaces. These are all really important for disabled people to feel they belong and can fully participate in their communities and wider society.
- The framework will reflect a partnership with disabled people as a key element, recognising disabled people as experts on accessibility from a lived experience perspective, and as advisers that can hold the Government to account on progress and begin to bring about changes across the private sector and wider society.
- The framework will also improve Ministerial leadership on accessibility, particularly where there are cross-portfolio participation barriers, and increase coordination on accessibility through clearer leadership within the public service.

An Independent Accessibility Governance Board will support the accessibility framework

- an Independent Accessibility Governance Board will be established (formal name to be agreed in consultation with disabled people) intended to ensure disabled people have a direct line to myself and government, and continue to be involved in decision making at the highest level possible.
- **The Board will:**
 - **be led by and represent disabled people**, and while independent from the public service, will be able to call on the technical expertise of government and business.
 - **set the strategic direction on accessibility** and draw on the lived experience of disabled people to identify and advise on systemic barriers. It will have a direct line to me as Minister for Disability Issues, and will advise a Chief Executive about accessibility issues.
 - **have an important role to play** by lifting the profile of accessibility issues, setting policy statements, and monitoring progress in removing barriers to participation (including considering whether existing legislation is creating accessibility barriers). In this way, it can hold the Government to account.
- The new framework will be supported by enabling legislation (the Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill) to be introduced in the second half of 2022. The legislative framework will:
 - be underpinned by a clear purpose and principles, that set the direction and expectations for ongoing work
 - reflect a partnership approach with disabled people
 - set a strong mandate to ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld, and that disabled people, tāngata whaikaha and whānau can participate in identifying and addressing accessibility issues.

Welfare Overhaul

What recommendations from the Welfare Expert Advisory Group will be fully implemented in the next 12 months?

The Government is committed to progressing its medium to long-term welfare overhaul plan. This was reinforced in the latest welfare overhaul work programme Cabinet paper (September 2021), which is publicly available. Progress will therefore continue to be made over the next 12 months.

The Government announced the implementation of further increases to main benefit levels in 2022, which will be fully implemented in the next 12 months. Future announcements regarding the implementation of other welfare overhaul initiatives, will be made in due course by the Government.

When will the recommendations from the Welfare Expert Advisory Group that have been agreed by Cabinet be implemented?

Given the scale of the welfare overhaul, a phased approach to the work programme is necessary. There will continue to be opportunities for short-term progress, with work ongoing to advance medium and longer-term initiatives.

The proposed plan for the welfare overhaul, which references the recommendations of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group, is broken into a medium-term work programme, intended to be achieved over the next two to four years; and a longer-term plan, intended to be achieved over the next four to five years, and beyond. Details of the latest welfare overhaul work programme agreed by Cabinet in September 2021 is publicly available online.

Appendix 1: Main benefit increases for 2019-2022

Main benefit (net rates)	Rates as at 1 April 2019	Rates as at 1 April 2020 (\$25 main benefit increase)	Current rates from 1 April 2021	Rates as at 1 July 2021	1 April 2022 rates
JS - single 20-24 years	\$182.47	\$213.10	\$219.70	\$239.70	\$274.37
JS - single 25 years and over	\$218.98	\$250.74	\$258.50	\$278.50	\$315
JS - sole-parent / Sole Parent Support	\$339.69	\$375.17	\$386.78	\$406.78	\$440.96
JS - couple (without children) total	\$364.94	\$401.20	\$413.62	\$453.62	\$536
JS - couple (with children) total	\$391.00	\$428.06	\$441.30	\$481.30	\$566
SLP - single 18 years and over	\$273.70	\$307.14	\$316.65	\$336.65	\$359
SLP - sole parent	\$385.60	\$422.50	\$435.58	\$455.58	\$492.06
SLP - couple (without children) total	\$456.14	\$495.22	\$510.54	\$550.54	\$610
SLP - couple (with children) total	\$482.20	\$522.08	\$538.24	\$578.24	\$640

Appendix 2: Increases to net rates of main benefits on 1 April 2022

Increases to net rates of main benefits on 1 April 2022					
	1-Jul-21	1-Apr-22		Amount of increase 1 July 2021 to 1 April 2022 \$ (2 dp) and % (0 dp)	
		Net average wage indexation only	Final rate (indexation + policy increases)		
JOBSEEKER SUPPORT					
Single 18-19 years old - at home	\$200.91	\$210.38	\$233.75	\$32.84	16%
Single 18-19 years old - away from home	\$239.70	\$251.00	\$274.37	\$34.67	14%
Single 20-24 years old	\$239.70	\$251.00	\$274.37	\$34.67	14%
Single 25 years and over	\$278.50	\$291.63	\$315.00	\$36.50	13%
Couple, without children, total	\$453.62	\$475.00	\$536.00	\$82.38	18%
Couple with partner on benefit, with children, total	\$481.30	\$504.00	\$566.00	\$84.70	18%
Sole Parent	\$406.78	\$425.96	\$440.96	\$34.18	8%
YOUTH PAYMENT					
Single, 16-17 Year old	\$239.70	\$251.00	\$274.37	\$34.67	14%
Couple, without children, total	\$453.62	\$475.00	\$536.00	\$82.38	18%
YOUNG PARENT PAYMENT					
Sole parent 16-17 year old, living at home or financially supported by parents or guardian (earning less than FTC threshold)	\$228.60	\$239.38	\$254.38	\$25.78	11%
Couple, both qualify, with children, total	\$481.30	\$504.00	\$566.00	\$84.70	18%
Couple, partner not on benefit, with children, total	\$254.50	\$266.50	\$283.00	\$28.50	11%
Sole parent	\$406.78	\$425.96	\$440.96	\$34.18	8%

Increases to net rates of main benefits on 1 April 2022

	1-Jul-21	1-Apr-22		Amount of increase 1 July 2021 to 1 April 2022 \$ (2 dp) and % (0 dp)	
		Net average wage indexation only	Final rate (indexation + policy increases)		
SUPPORTED LIVING PAYMENT					
Single 16-17 years old	\$281.15	\$294.41	\$300.89	\$19.74	7%
Single 18 years and over	\$336.65	\$352.52	\$359.00	\$22.35	7%
Couple without children total	\$550.54	\$576.50	\$610.00	\$59.46	11%
Couple, partner on benefit, with children total	\$578.24	\$605.50	\$640.00	\$61.76	11%
Sole Parent	\$455.58	\$477.06	\$492.06	\$36.48	8%
SOLE PARENT SUPPORT					
Sole Parent	\$406.78	\$425.96	\$440.96	\$34.18	8%
OB/UCB rates from 1 April 2022					
	1-Apr-21	1-Apr-22		Amount of increase 1 April 2021 to 1 April 2022 \$ (2 dp) and % (0 dp)	
		CPI indexation only	Final rate (indexation + policy increases)		
14 and over	\$265.62	\$281.42	\$296.42	\$30.80	12%
10-13 years	\$246.93	\$261.62	\$276.62	\$29.69	12%
5-9 years	\$228.15	\$241.72	\$256.72	\$28.57	13%
Under 5 years	\$203.03	\$215.11	\$254.95	\$51.92	26%

Income Support | Weekly Benefits Update | Week ending 1 April 2022

Main benefits

recipients (Graph 1)

↓ **657** decrease

when comparing 1 April (348,336) with 25 March (348,993).

Main benefits

cancels into work (Graph 5)

↑ **507** increase

when comparing 1 April (3,012) with 25 March (2,505).

Jobseeker Support

- **Work Ready**
recipients (Graph 6)

↓ **219** decrease

when comparing 1 April (100,851) with 25 March (101,070).

Main benefits**1 Main benefits – number of recipients****2 Main benefits – weekly percentage change****Grants and cancellations****3 Main benefits - grants during each week****4 Main benefits - total cancels during each week****5 Main benefits - cancels into work during each week****Jobseeker Support****6 Jobseeker Support - Work Ready – number of recipients****7 Jobseeker Support – Health Condition or Disability – number of recipients****Hardship assistance****8 Food Special Needs Grants – grants during each week**

For the full set of data and supporting information please go to: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/weekly-reporting/

Income Support | Monthly Benefits Update | March 2022

**Main benefits
population percentage**
11.1%

of the estimated working-age population received a main benefit as at March 2022.

**Main benefits
recipients (Graph 1)**
↓ 9,201 decrease

when comparing March 2022 (348,336) with February 2022 (357,537).

**Main benefits
cancels into work (Graph 5)**
↑ 1,197 increase

when comparing March 2022 (11,931) with February 2022 (10,734).

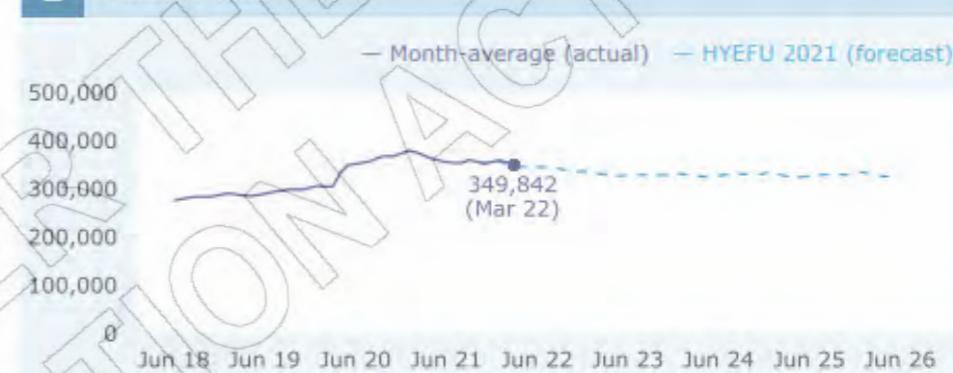
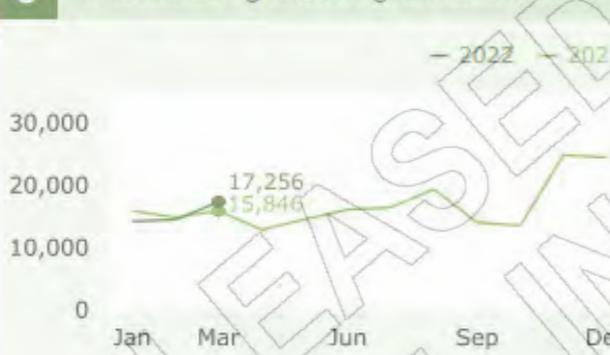
**Jobseeker Support
- Work Ready recipients
(Graph 10)**
↓ 2,577 decrease

when comparing March 2022 (100,851) with February 2022 (103,428).

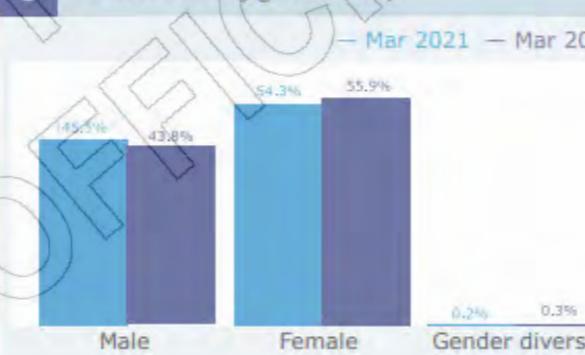
* Ethnicity is reported using 'total response' methodology. For more information please go to: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/tools/how-we-report-ethnicity.html

For the full set of data and supporting information please go to: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/monthly-reporting/

Main benefits
1 Main benefits - number of recipients

2 Benefit forecast

Grants and cancellations
3 Main benefits - grants during each month

4 Main benefits - total cancels during each month

5 Main benefits - cancels into work during each month

Main benefits demographics
6 Main benefits by gender

7 Main benefits by age groups

8 Main benefits by ethnicity*


Income Support | Monthly Benefits Update | March 2022

Jobseeker Support

9 Population proportion receiving Jobseeker Support – Work Ready and percentage point change, compared with the previous year, by Regional Council



10 Jobseeker Support – Work Ready – number of recipients



Hardship assistance

13 Food Special Needs Grants – grants during each month

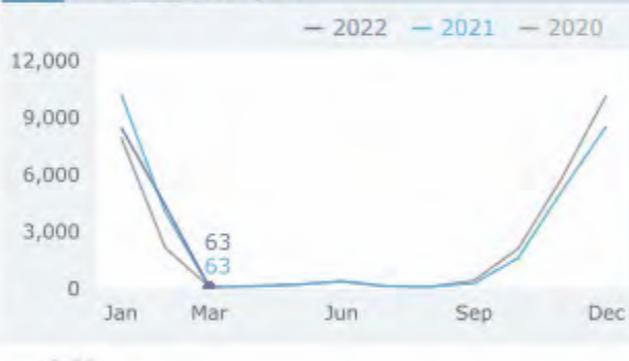


14 Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants – grants during each month



Jobseeker Support Student Hardship

12 Jobseeker Support Student Hardship – number of recipients



15 Benefit Advances – number during each month



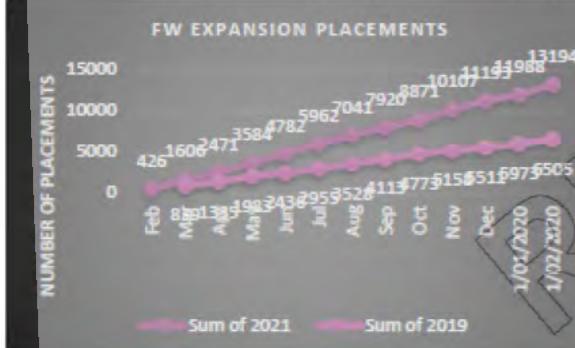


Flexi-wage Expansion Progress Report February 2022

Drafter: Madhu Kandula Status: Final Version: 1.0
Report number: REP/22/3/148

1. Overview

13,194	1,206	6,504
Total Flexi-wage placements	Placements since last report ¹	Placements same time in 2019 ²
1323	Finished Early (on benefit ³)	
1617	Finished Early (not on benefit ³)	
3849	Completed contracts	90% are current, completed, or have finished early but are not on benefit ³
6,405	Current	501 of the 13,194 are part-time opportunities 1623 participants placed into Flexi-wage declared a disability, injury or health condition at referral
2940	Finished Early	1323 Finished Early, and are currently on benefit ³ These 1323 are shown below by benefit duration at referral
1047	Other reason	Not on benefit ³ 12 (9%) <3 months 213 (16%) 3-12 months 438 (33%) 1-2 years 246 (19%) 2-4 years 186 (14%) 4+ years 117 (9%)
1791	Withdrawn	
102	Dismissed	



Design & Implementation Update

Implemented improvements to the Business Training and Advice Grant process for clients, suppliers and staff. A standardised national process was documented, released and communicated to regional staff. The changes will create efficiencies for staff and will improve the experience for Flexi-wage Self-Employment candidates.

A daily reporting dashboard was introduced. Regional staff previously had access to a monthly Flexi-wage report. Following feedback about the information they would like to see in the dashboard, a new and improved version of the reporting tool was rolled out. The tool will help staff monitor the progress of participants in the programme.

2. Demographics

Demographics for all placements at referral⁵

	Feb 2022 15th Feb to 28th Feb 2022	Feb 2020 15th Feb to 28th Feb 2020
By ethnicity		
Māori	4,827 (37%)	2,369 (37%)
NZ Euro	3,954 (30%)	2,139 (33%)
Pacific Peoples	1,608 (12%)	753 (13%)
Other	1,554 (12%)	790 (9%)
Not stated	1,251 (9%)	454 (8%)

By age

<18	264 (2%)	78 (2%)
18-24	4,362 (33%)	2,253 (31%)
25-34	3,909 (30%)	1,835 (30%)
35-54	3,723 (28%)	1,904 (30%)
55+	936 (7%)	435 (7%)

By gender

Male	8,376 (63%)	4,122 (65%)
Female	4,776 (36%)	2,383 (35%)
Diverse	42 (0%)	0 (0%)

By duration on benefit

Not on main benefit ³	3,114 (26%)	945 (17%)
<3 months	2,052 (15%)	1,506 (20%)
3-12 months	3,780 (31%)	2,087 (32%)
1-2 years	2,151 (16%)	904 (16%)
2-4 years	1,341 (9%)	534 (8%)
4+ years	753 (5%)	529 (8%)

86% of those on benefit for 2+ years at referral are current, completed, or finished early and are not currently on benefit³

Participants with children in care

Has children in care	2,014 (15%)	1,305 (20%)
No children in care	11,180 (85%)	5,200 (80%)

By benefit type at referral⁴

Job seeker	7,320 (55%)	3,999 (66%)
Health Condition and Disability ⁶	1,623 (12%)	720 (10%)
Sole Parent Support	759 (6%)	646 (8%)
Youth Payment/ Youth Parent Payment	33 (0%)	18 (1%)
Other Main Benefit	345 (3%)	177 (1%)
Non-Beneficiary Assistance	462 (4%)	168 (4%)
Not on Benefit	2,652 (20%)	777 (3%)

Footnotes

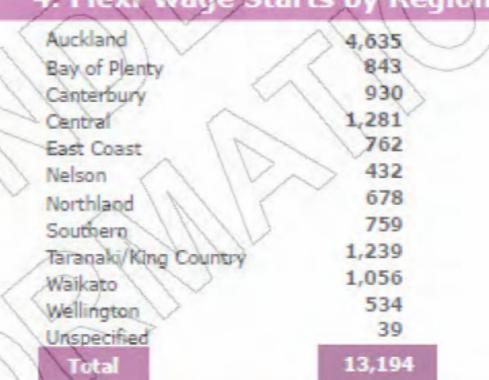
- ¹ Last official report was 31 January 2022
- ² Comparison period is 15 February to 28 February 2020.
- ³ Benefit information as at 28 February 2021
- ⁴ Not on benefit for at least 28 days prior to referral
- ⁵ Due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100%
- ⁶ Includes those on Job Seeker Health Condition & Disability
- ⁷ Only includes commitment for placements made 15 February 2021 to 28 February 2022
- ⁸ Training costs with no on-going wage subsidy

3. Contract Starts

Breakdown of Flexi-wage contracts



4. Flexi-wage Starts by Region



5. Top Seven Industries



9(2)(a) OIA

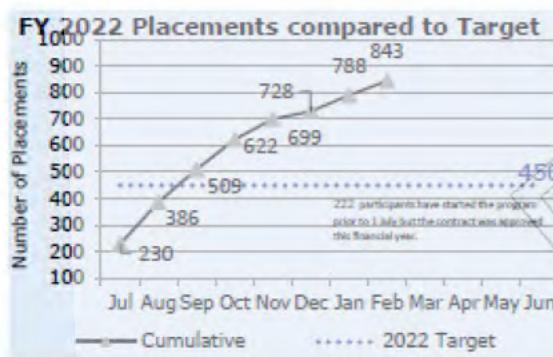
Gender: Male
Age: 35-54
Status: Active
Ethnicity: NZ European
Benefit duration: 3-12 months



Gender: Female
Age: 18-24
Status: Active
Ethnicity: Māori
Benefit duration: < 3 months

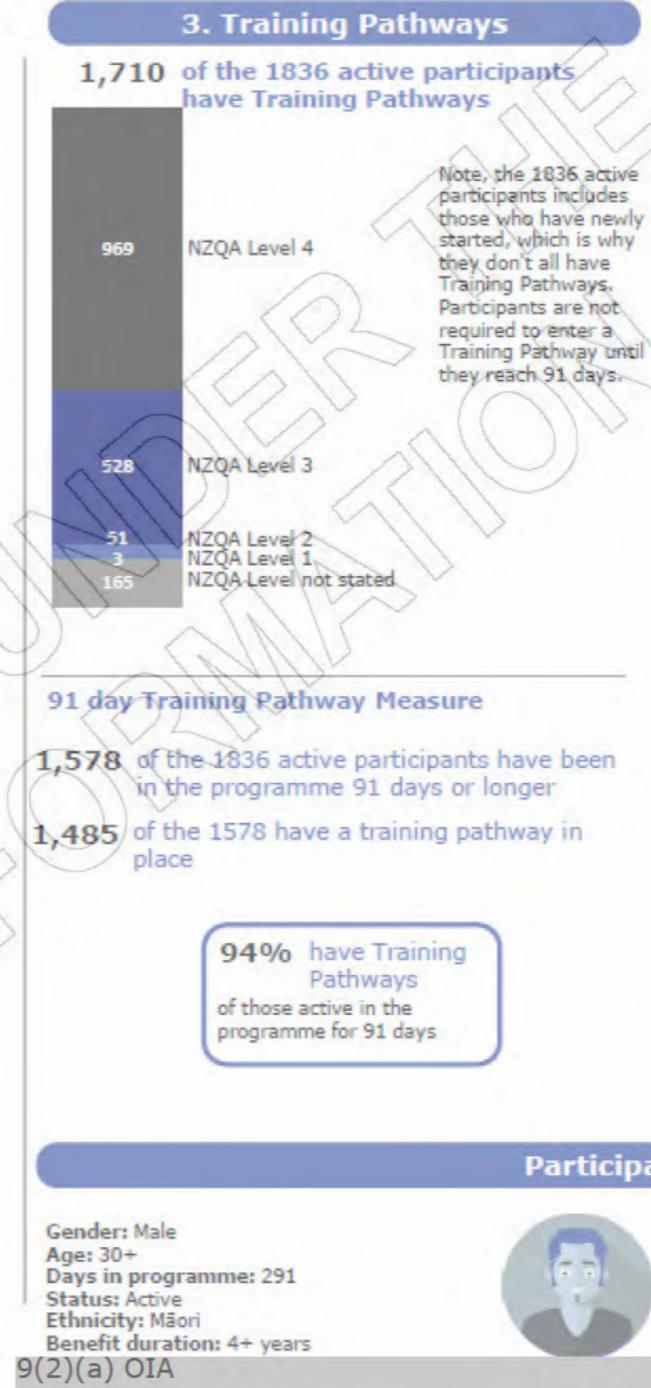


1. Overview			
4,587	4,488	99	603
Total placements ¹	Individual participants ²	Placements since last report ³	Total second year extensions
480	Exited early (currently on benefit ⁴)		
1017	Exited early (not on benefit ⁴)		
1263	Completed programme		
1,836	Actively participating	84 of the 4,587 are part-time opportunities	
		225 participants placed into Mana in Mahi declared a disability, injury or health condition at referral	
1500	Exited Early	480 Exited early, and are currently on benefit ⁴	
24	Unknown	These 480 are shown below by benefit duration at referral	
66	Dismissed	Not on benefit ⁵ 99 (21%)	
		<3 months 60 (13%)	
		3-12 months 183 (38%)	
1404	Withdrawn	1-2 years 81 (17%)	
		2-4 years 36 (8%)	
		4+ years 24 (5%)	

**Footnotes**

- ¹ Total placements since the start of the programme
 - ² Some of these people have had more than one placement
 - ³ Last official report referenced throughout is January 2022
 - ⁴ Benefit information as at 28 February 2022
 - ⁵ Not on benefit for at least 28 days prior to referral
 - ⁶ Due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100%
 - ⁷ Includes those on Job Seeker Health Condition and Disability
- All data contained in this report has been randomly rounded to a base of 3 as part of MSD's confidentiality policy, so individual numbers may not add to the provided totals.

2. Demographics			
Demographics for all placements at referral ⁶			
	End of Feb	End of Jan	
By ethnicity			
Māori	1,680 (37%)	(37%)	
NZ Euro	1,152 (25%)	(25%)	
Pacific Peoples	387 (8%)	(8%)	
Other	399 (9%)	(9%)	
Not stated	972 (21%)	(21%)	
By age			
<18	369 (8%)	(8%)	
18-24	2,568 (56%)	(56%)	
25-29	717 (16%)	(16%)	
30+	936 (20%)	(20%)	
By gender			
Male	3,474 (76%)	(76%)	
Female	1,107 (24%)	(24%)	
Diverse	3 (0%)	(0%)	
By duration on benefit			
Not on benefit ⁵	2,082 (45%)	(45%)	
<3 months	681 (15%)	(15%)	
3-12 months	1,170 (26%)	(26%)	
1-2 years	405 (9%)	(9%)	
2-4 years	156 (3%)	(3%)	
4+ years	90 (2%)	(2%)	



4. Employers			
2,352	369	54	72
Contracted employers	Small (1-19)	Medium (20-49)	Large (50+)

Note, employer size is based on number of employees, as reported by employers. 1854 do not have a reported size, mostly due to this feature not yet being available in CMS.

5. Points of Interest**Demographics**

Since the expansion of Mana in Mahi, the percentage of participants over the age of 30 has been steadily increasing.

There has been a slight increase in female participants, 25 more and the increase has been consistent across the last three months.

Since the last report, an additional 98 participants have now taken up the second year of Mana in Mahi.

Training Pathways

Of the 1,710 participants on a Training Pathway, 88% of those are working towards a qualification at NZQA level 3 or higher.

Participant Stories

Gender: Male
Age: 30+
Days in programme: 291
Status: Active
Ethnicity: Māori
Benefit duration: 4+ years
9(2)(a) OIA



Gender: Female
Age: 18-24
Days in programme: 217
Status: Active
Ethnicity: NZ European/Pakeha
Benefit duration: 1-2 years