

Aide-mémoire

Meeting

Date: 14 December 2021 **Security Level:** In Confidence

For: Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Disability Issues

File Reference: REP/21/12/1375

Disability Community COVID-19 Kōrero

Event details 6.30 – 7.30pm Wednesday 15 December 2021 (you are attending from 6.30pm – 6.40pm)

Meeting to be held via [Zoom](#)

- Meeting ID: 979 2853 3929
 - Passcode: FRsj6Vg9Sr
-

Expected attendees

Key attendees

- Dr Huhana Hickey, Chair
- Tunumafono Ava Faamoe MNZM, Vice Chair and Executive Officer, Tōfa Mamao Collective

Supporting Official

- Brian Coffey, Director, Office for Disability Issues

Other attendees

- Government officials from the Social Wellbeing Agency, Office for Disability Issues, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Health
- NZSL interpreters

This event has been specifically targeted to members of the Māori and Pacific Auckland disability community, but is open to the disabled community throughout New Zealand.

Purpose of event

The purpose of this online event is to provide the disability community with up-to-date information about COVID-19, and will give the community the opportunity to ask questions. Key topics for discussion include:

- COVID-19 Protection Framework
 - COVID-19 Care in the Community
 - Community self-isolation/quarantine when tested as Covid positive
-

-
- Creating a Covid-19 emergency kit, what do you need in it?
 - COVID-19 Vaccinations
 - Medical exemptions – who is eligible and how to access
 - How to get a home-based or centre based vaccine and who is eligible
 - Medical implications of COVID-19 vaccinations, and COVID-19 itself
 - Vaccination data
 - Whakarongorau
 - Welfare support available through MSD.
-

Background

On 14 September 2021, you virtually attended a vaccination event organised by Taikura Trust.

During the event, Ava Faamoe raised that the Ministry for Pacific Peoples had organised virtual events with the Pacific community to provide information and advice regarding COVID-19, and that it would be helpful to have a similar event for disabled people.

Tōfa Mamao

Tōfa Mamao are a grassroots collective made up of Pacific disabled people, their families, and carers. Their vision is to advance the voice of Pacific disabled peoples, their families and carers in all sectors, ensuring that lived experience is valued and respected. Tofa Mamao have a regional presence in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

Tōfa Mamao's mission is to influence change by establishing valuable partnerships, and genuine collaborations with like-minded individuals and organisations. Tōfa Mamao's key target areas are:

- economic capability and employment opportunity
- health and wellbeing
- educational opportunities at all levels
- accessible housing
- accessible society, both physical and attitudinal
- pacific culture and languages identity.

Tōfa Mamao's work includes:

- providing disability audits for organisations
 - working with organisations to co-design services that will add value to the lives of disabled people and their families
 - providing assistance and information for disabled peoples and their whānau, to relevant and appropriate support services.
-

Key issues

Disabled people have many concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives and about how to access support, should they need it.

Many of the concerns and questions raised by the community are the same as the non-disabled community. However, some issues are particular to the disability community. One of those issues is access to accurate and accessible information. Many disabled people find it difficult to access the information about COVID-19 because:

- they don't have access to a computer/phone with the appropriate software to read the information to them
- translating information into alternate formats is a slow process (due to provider capacity, demand, and the speed of change)
- information is only available in writing and is difficult for some people to understand
- They don't have access to online information due to lack of device and/or internet.

Next steps

If successful, the Office for Disability Issues will explore developing further zooms to engage with the disability community.

Author: Pauline Melham, Senior Advisor, Office for Disability Issues.

Responsible manager: Brian Coffey, Director Office for Disability Issues.

Appendix One: Talking Points

You are speaking for five minutes.

Introduction

- Mālō e lelei, talofa lava, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.
- warm greetings, and good evening to you all.
- Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Disability Issues speaking.
- Thank you Huhana for that warm welcome and introduction.
- *[Describe where you are and what you look like today]*
- I would like to start by acknowledging:
 - the disability community for tuning in and participating in tonight's kōrero
 - Ava Faamoe for suggesting this hui
 - Dr Huhana Hickey for chairing this event
- the Officials here tonight who will be sharing information and answering questions.

COVID-19 response

- As 2020 started, with the strange-coloured skies resulting from the smoke of the bush fires in Australia, who would have thought that we were about to plunge into a global pandemic?
- COVID-19 has killed over five million people around the world. There are some really scary statistics internationally – UK data shows that 60 percent of the 76,000 people who died in 2020, were disabled, with people with a learning disability having death rates that were eight times higher than the general population.
- To protect those we love and our communities, we went into lockdown. To stay safe we introduced Alert Levels, managed borders, contact tracing and wearing face coverings. We're now in a new phase with the COVID-19 Protection Framework – the Traffic Light System.
- Supporting the welfare needs of individuals and whānau is central to how we are managing COVID-19 now and at a community level as we move forward.
 - The Government is providing \$204.1m for region-specific, locally led responses. Whether you are in Westport or West Auckland, we want to ensure welfare support such as food,

financial assistance, and connection to the right services is available for you and your whānau.

- This funding and support is available through a range of community providers and is intended for all New Zealanders who need support, including disabled people, and their whānau. I want to thank all those who have been providing support and the developing community-led solutions.

Getting vaccinated

- Getting vaccinated is one of the main ways we can gain more protection against the virus. Everyone in Aotearoa over the age of 12 can now get vaccinated, and I want to encourage everyone to get theirs.
- For disabled people or people with an impairment, we know that the journey to get vaccinated may look a little different. We have created the Manaakitanga Journey online tool to help support disabled people to get vaccinated, providing information on how to get help with transport, how to book a vaccine, and where you can find 'super accessible' vaccination centres. If you, or a family member want to get vaccinated, you can find the tool on the COVID-19 website.

Vaccination data

- I know that like me, you've been keen to see information on how we're going on vaccinations for the disabled community. In consultation with ODI and the Ministry of Health, the Social Wellbeing Agency has done some analysis that shows that disabled people are leading the charge, with higher rates of having at least one dose of the vaccine than non-disabled people.
- This is true across all DHBs, but especially Auckland.
- As at 30 November, over 91% of disabled people have had at least one dose, and Māori and Pacific disabled people have higher rates of having at least one dose than non-disabled people.
- I'm so pleased to see these results, and officials are available today that can share some more detail with you.
- I would like to thank everyone who has started the process of becoming fully vaccinated for playing your part in keeping your friends, whānau and community safe.

Conclusion

- In these challenging and changing times, despite our best efforts, we can never provide enough information to keep all informed in the way they would want.
- This is why events like this kōrero are so important, they allow you as the disabled community to come together, to find out information, to ask questions of officials and give your input and feedback as to how we can make things better.
- I hope that this kōrero today will become the first of many events where the Disability Community comes together online to engage with government officials, not just on COVID-19 but on the range of important disability policy and initiatives we are progressing next year, such as.
 - Establishing the new Ministry for Disabled People (name still to be decided)
 - Taking to scale across the motu, disability supports that give effect to the Enabling Good Lives principles and approaches
 - The introduction of legislation to achieve a more accessible Aotearoa
 - Progressing the New Zealand Disability Strategy through the Disability Action Plan and progressively realising our obligations to disabled New Zealanders, and their family/whānau, through fulfilling our commitments to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.
- Before I go, I want to remind everyone to look out for those in your community who could use some extra help.
- And if you need help, there are resources on the Unite Against COVID-19 website, including people you can talk to.
- By working together and getting vaccinated, we can beat this.
- Take care, stay safe, and I hope you find tonight's event useful.
- Best wishes for the festive season. It is a time to celebrate with those who are important to us.
- Fa'afetai lava.

Appendix Two: Run sheet

6.30 – 6.35pm	<p>Introductions and opening karakia – Dr Huhana Hickey (Chair)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huhana to outline the agenda and meeting protocol • Huhana to invite Minister Sepuloni to speak
6.35 – 6.40pm	Minister Sepuloni speaks
6.40 – 6.50pm	<p>Topic One: Vaccination Data (Social Wellbeing Agency)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five minute high-level overview – Alex Brunt, SWA • Five minutes for questions
6.50 – 7.00pm	<p>Topic Two: COVID-19 Care in the Community (Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five minute high-level overview - Dr Joe Bourne, MoH and Geoff Cook, MSD • Five minutes for questions <p><i>Please note: Dr Joe Bourne must leave at 7pm</i></p>
7.00 – 7.10pm	<p>Topic Three: COVID-19 Protection Framework (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five minute high-level overview - Rory McKenzie, DPMC • Five minutes for questions
7.10 – 7.25pm	<p>General Q&A – Huhana to chair questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials are available to speak to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medical exemptions – Rachel Mackay (MoH) ○ How to get a home-based or centre-based vaccine – Kirsten Curry (MoH) ○ Access, equity, pathways to COVID-19 testing – Kirk Mariner (MoH) ○ Alternate formats – Anne Hawker (MSD) ○ Any other items (to take away for a later date) – Brian Coffey (ODI)
7.25 – 7.30	Closing – Dr Huhana Hickey