



13 June 2024

Tēnā koe

### **Official Information Act request**

Thank you for your email of 4 May 2024 and the subsequent refinement email received on 14 May 2024, requesting a formal response regarding the aim of the contracted services for Very High Needs (VHN).

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision set out below.

I understand you are making your request as you have a client who is querying why they were not able to obtain funding to attend a concert, and they wish to see a list of approved community activities for which VHN funding can be used.

The Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) cannot provide you with a breakdown of what the VHN funding can be used for. The Ministry provides funding to the contract service provider to administer, in line with the terms of their contract with the Ministry.

However, I have identified two documents that fall in scope of your request for information.

**Appendix One** provides the Standard Contract – Service Delivery, which relates to the aims of the VHN service and its delivery. I have highlighted the relevant parts regarding the aim of the service and the intention of funding for community activities.

**Appendix Two** contains the VHN proposal template the Ministry provides to contract services when applying for funding for a new individual under their service.

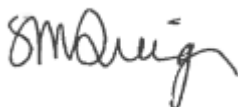
In 2019 the Ministry transferred funding to Whaikaha to support individuals at Enabling Good Lives sites with VHN services. If you have any further questions regarding the services that are provided by Whaikaha you can contact them on the following email [OIA\\_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_requests@whaikaha.govt.nz).

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request regarding information related to contracted services for VHN's, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Magnus O'Neill  
**General Manager**  
**Ministerial and Executive Services**

# Appendix 1 – Service Details

## 1. About Work and Income

- 1.1. Work and Income, through the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry), helps New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent – Manaaki Tangata, Manaaki Whānau.
- 1.2. The services in this Outcome Agreement contribute towards the Ministry's outcomes of:
  - (a) Improve employment outcomes through sustainable work;
  - (b) Improve people's abilities to meaningfully participate in society; and
  - (c) Improve equity of outcomes, particularly for Māori.

## 2. Goals and Outcomes of the Services

- 2.1. The Ministry seeks to fund Very High Needs Services for disabled people that contribute to realising the aims of the:
  - United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly the rights of disabled people to live independently and be included in the community (Article 19)
  - Disability Action Plan 2014 to 2018: Update 2015 to:
    - increase the number of disabled people, including long-term unemployed disabled people, in paid employment and self-employment on an equal basis with others (Priority 2), and
    - promote disabled people having choice and control over their support/services, and make more efficient use of disability support funding (Priority 4)
  - Enabling Good Lives vision to work towards a future in which disabled people and their families will have greater choice and control over their supports and lives, and make more use of natural and generic supports.
- 2.2. These services also contribute to the Ministry's outcomes detailed in 1.2 above.

## 3. Aims of the Services

- 3.1. The aim of the Very High Needs Service (the Service) is to contribute towards disabled people having a good life, in everyday places, as others do at similar stages of life. This will be achieved by enabling disabled people to participate in and make a positive contribution to their communities.
- 3.2. To the extent possible, the Service will provide individually-tailored support to people to enable them to:
  - participate in activities in their communities of interest to them;
  - contribute to their communities in ways valued by them and their communities;

- learn new skills to help them manage their lives and overall well-being, and to participate in their communities;
- maintain and develop social and support networks.

3.3. The Service will also play a role in helping to build:

- inclusive and welcoming communities and mainstream services;
- employers' confidence in employing disabled people.

#### 4. Target Group and Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1. The target group for this Service is disabled people who need support to participate in and contribute to their communities.
- 4.2. People eligible to participate in these services will:
  - be currently living in New Zealand; and
  - be a New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident
  - be verified by the Ministry of Education as ORS Funded – Very High Needs
- 4.3. Exceptions to the eligibility criteria – a person will not be eligible for the services when:
  - the person qualifies for support to participate in the community (via vocational or social rehabilitation) that is funded by the Accident Compensation Corporation;
  - the person is eligible for community day services that are funded by the Ministry of Health for:
    - people who were deinstitutionalised under formal deinstitutionalisation plans
    - people with high and complex needs and an intellectual disability (whether or not they are receiving care under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003)
    - when a person is still enrolled at secondary school.
- 4.4. The Ministry will be under no obligation to make payment for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria.
- 4.5. The funding cannot be used for employment, activities, or services located or provided outside New Zealand.

## 6. Enrolment

Before a client has been accepted, and deemed to have commenced a service, the Provider must have:

- Obtained written consent from the person, or their parent/caregiver, that they wish to commence a service with your organisation
- Requested the person's, or the parent's/caregiver's, consent to share information with their disability or health and support providers (if any) and the Ministry, and recorded whether or not consent has been given
- Written confirmation from the Ministry of Social Development relationship manager that

## 7. Service Content and Delivery

### 7.1. Services Summary

The people participating in the Service will have a broad range of abilities and aspirations. The Provider's role is to facilitate and/or support people to participate in their communities in ways that are meaningful to them, and which enhance their quality of life and mana.

### 7.2. Individualised Plan

The Provider will identify through discussion with each person, his or her aspirations or goals with respect to participating and contributing within their community. The Provider will develop an Individualised Plan with the person, for realising the person's goals and aspirations.

The Individualised Plan will include:

- the person's goals and aspirations;
- the person's strengths, abilities and interests;
- barriers to participation and any support needed to reduce the barriers;
- any skill development required;
- opportunities and activities for achieving the goals;
- key agreed activities that will be undertaken and timeframes for these.

This plan is to be a 'living document' and must be reviewed at least annually.

### 7.3. General Approach

It is expected that Providers will align their services with the principles of the Enabling Good Lives approach. This means Providers will aim to:

- ensure people using their services have opportunities to choose and decide what they are supported to do, where and with whom;
- enable people to try different activities, so that they can identify what they want to do;
- support people to access mainstream services in the community, if they want to;
- support people to develop their capability and natural supports so that they can become more independent of formal support;
- make their services easy for people to use and be flexible;

- ensure participants have opportunities to interact with and develop relationships with the wider community, i.e. activities are not segregated, there is meaningful interaction with people outside the Service;
- deliver individually-tailored supports based around the person's aspirational personal plan (as opposed to a 'needs assessment');
- ensure families/whanau are involved, if this is what the person wants
- develop and maintain good working relationships with other services and organisations, including government agencies and community organisations, and facilitate access to other services that can help the person achieve their participation goals.

#### 7.4. **Facilitation and support to participate**

Activities that people may be supported in include (but are not limited to) the following:

- develop skills for daily living and participating in the community;
- make a contribution to the community through voluntary work;
- achieve valued roles such as: student, teacher, teammate, parent, spokesperson;
- participate in their culture;
- take part in work experience and/or work- related skills training;
- identify appropriate employment opportunities;
- gain and maintain paid employment or self-employments;
- maintain and extend friendships and social and support networks.

#### 7.5. **Voluntary work must be genuine**

7.5.1. People who are being supported to find and/or keep voluntary work may only be supported into a genuine voluntary position doing something of benefit to the community or wider society.

7.5.2. A voluntary position is not genuine if, but for the volunteer in question, the role would be performed by a paid employee.

#### 7.6. **Work experience must be time-limited and part of a wider plan**

7.6.1. Work experience must be time-limited. Generally, placements should not exceed four weeks.

7.6.2. The placement should form part of the person's plan to achieve a specific objective, e.g. to gain work skills or to see if a person likes a particular job or sector.

7.6.3. Work trials must conform to the Employment Relations Act 2000 (90-day trials or probationary periods).

#### 7.7. **Community activities can include recreational activities**

Funding is not available for services that focus on providing leisure and recreational programmes. However, people may be supported to take part in leisure or recreational activities as part of their individualised plan for participation and inclusion.

#### 7.8. **Everyday places in the community**

7.8.1. The focus of the Service is to support people to take part in ordinary community activities that occur in everyday places and mainstream service in the community. It is recognised that, from time to time, some particular supports may best be delivered at the premises of the Provider.

7.8.2. The funding provided under this agreement is generally not available to support activities or services located in the person's home, as it is intended to help ensure that disabled people are not socially isolated.

#### 7.9. **Ancillary support services**

While the primary aim of these services is the person's participation and inclusion in the community, it is recognised that Providers may need to provide personal care for some individuals using the Service and that families/carers may experience some respite as a result of the person's participation.

#### 7.10. **Service delivery hours**

The Service should be available during normal business hours (i.e. 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday). Services may also be provided outside of these times with the individual person's agreement.

#### 7.11. **Information capture and reporting**

The Provider will capture and actively maintain information, including enrolment details and their Individualised Plan, as well as achievement of outcomes. This information will be used to generate reports required by the Ministry.

#### 7.12. **Cessation of services**

7.12.1. The Service provided to a person will be deemed to have ceased where the:

- person no longer wishes to use the Service and withdraws; or
- Provider wishes to withdraw offering the Service to that person; or
- person is deceased or has permanently left the area that the Provider covers; or
- Ministry advises the Provider the person will no longer be funded to participate in the Service.

7.12.2. The Provider must notify the Ministry within ten working days of any client ceasing service for any reason.

### **8. General Standards**

8.1. The Provider will ensure the following general standards are applied:

8.1.1. All participants will have equal opportunity to access the services according to their needs;

8.1.2. The facilities where services are provided are accessible to all participants, irrespective of age, or physical or other disability. Facilities for participants with a disability must be clearly sign-posted;

8.1.3. Participants are fully briefed on emergency and any other evacuation procedures that apply to any premises in which services are provided;

8.1.4. The personal privacy and dignity of participants is respected during the provision of the services;

- 8.1.5. The services are provided in a manner which respects and is appropriate to participants' religious and cultural beliefs and practices, age, gender and disabilities.





## MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

The Ministry of Social Development Service and Contract Management team contract with service providers for the purchase of individually focused services tailored according to the assessed needs of the person with a disability.

The aim of the service will be to achieve one or more of the following outcomes for the person using the service.

- Increase the participation of people with disabilities in employment
- Increase the participation of people with disabilities in their communities

To enable a smooth transition to an approved preferred service for these individuals, the process to follow is:

- Identify if the client is eligible for the Very High Needs service
- Identify which preferred Vocational Service they choose to attend
- Once this has been identified and the individual and family are happy, a written proposal and application from the service provider is required

The following details need to be included in an application for Individualised Very High Needs funding:

### **1. Participant(s)**

*Please provide the following details:*

- Name, date of birth, and address of young person
- Name of key contact, parent / caregivers'
- ORS number - to confirm that the individual meets the 'Eligibility Criteria', i.e ORS funded Very High Needs
- Name of the school or Very High Needs service they are leaving
- Confirmation that the parent has selected your organisation as their provider. A letter or similar from the parents/caregiver will suffice.

### **2. Individual Programme**

*Please provide the following details:*

- The date the Very High Needs service will commence
- An outline of the proposed individual programme the young person will follow:
  - Include the site address, goals, weekly timetable, activities, and any other relevant information regarding the programme to be provided.
  - The application must show that the programme covers the individuals' vocational goals and needs.
- The number of days and hours the service will be provided per week.

### **3. Budget**

Provide a detailed annual budget outlining **actual** costs of this Very High Needs service for the participant(s) referred to in the proposal.

*Please clearly show all the costs involved in delivering the Very High Needs service. For example, any resources required, activity costs, travel and staff wages etc.*

### **4. Service Alignment**

Describe how the proposed vocational service aligns with the Enabling Good Lives approach. The aims of the Enabling Good Lives approach is to work towards a future in which disabled people and their families will have greater choice and control over their supports and lives, and make more use of natural and generic supports.

Enabling Good Lives Principles – these concepts are the basis for all decisions and actions

- Self-determination
- Beginning early
- Person-centred
- Ordinary life outcomes
- Mainstream first
- Mana enhancing
- Easy to use
- Relationship building

For further information on Enabling Good Lives please refer to the following websites.

<http://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/>

#### **Please note:**

**All of the above information is required prior to service commencing**

**Please send the (encrypted/password protected) Proposal Template to:**

Email: **Relationship Manager** or  
[National\\_Contracts\\_Admin\\_Hub@msd.govt.nz](mailto:National_Contracts_Admin_Hub@msd.govt.nz)

Post: **(your Relationship Manager)**  
Level 6, The Aurora Centre  
56 The Terrace, Wellington 6011  
PO Box 1556 Wellington

## Very High Needs (VHN) Proposal Template

<b>Participant</b>	
Client Full Name	
Date of Birth	
Client number (SWN) if known	
Client Address	
<b>ORS Number</b> <i>(clients ORS status is to be confirmed as VHN to be eligible for this service)</i>	
Name of School or other service client is leaving	
Name of Parent/Caregiver	
Letter of Confirmation from Parent/Caregiver	

<b>Individual Programme</b>	
Date Service Commences	
Vocational Services Site (if applicable)	
<b>Service Proposal</b>	
<b>Outcomes</b>	
Programme Outline	
The number of days and hours the service will be provided per week	

<b>Budget</b>	
<b>Summary of Costs p.a.:</b>	
Staffing 1:1	
Transport	
Administration Support	
Consumables	
Person Activities	
<b>Total Costs:</b>	
<b>Plus GST @ 15%:</b>	
<b>Total Costs to Deliver Vocational Services:</b>	
Funding Requested from MSD (up to \$15,676.80 - base funding) Full cost including cost pressure and pay equity = <b>\$23,316.67</b>	

<b>Service Alignment (EGL statement)</b>
<b>Summary:</b>

<b>Provider Signatory details</b>
Have any provider details change i.e address, signatory