

DPO Coalition Key Messages - May 2024

This set of Key Messages covers our DPO Coalition meeting in May 2024.

Sir Robert Martin

The DPO Coalition acknowledged and honoured the passing of Sir Robert Martin. We attended Parliament where the Minister for Disability Issues moved a motion in honour of Sir Robert, as follows:

“In 2016, Sir Robert was the first person with a learning disability (intellectual impairment) to be elected to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and was re-elected for a further term that was due to end in December 2024. In 2020, his knighthood honoured his lifetime achievements as a disability leader, his passion, and activism within New Zealand and internationally. As a baby who experienced a brain injury at birth, he spent most of his childhood in state institutions. His experiences led to his activism, advocacy, and a life-long commitment to break down barriers for people with learning disabilities. As the new Minister for Disability Issues, I did not have the chance to work with Sir Robert, but I am familiar with his advocacy for disability rights Nations Committee. It was a proud moment for New Zealand when he was elected to this important role. Many disabled people in New Zealand and internationally are living better lives because of Sir Robert’s achievements and commitment, and they will be mourning his passing while celebrating his legacy. I hope the whole House would extend with me sympathies to his wife Lady Lynda, and disabled people both here and internationally”.

Minister for Disability Issues, Hon. Louise Upston

The Minister for Disability Issues paid an impromptu visit during our May meeting. She had learned we were meeting and took advantage of a visit with Whaikaha officials to briefly meet with

us. We were all introduced to Minister Upston and she spoke with us briefly about our work. The Coalition welcomed this surprise opportunity, and we are looking forward to developing our relationship with the Minister for Disability Issues.

Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM)

The DPO Coalition approved the refreshed and modernised IMM Terms of Reference. These will be shared once the full range of alternate formats are created. Each of the three IMM partners has a six-month turn by rotation of being Chair of the IMM. The DPO Coalition is the next IMM partner to have a turn. We appointed Jonathan Godfrey as our Chair for the IMM from July 2024 to December 2024.

Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People

Ben O’Meara, Deputy Chief Executive Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

We held a workshop with Ben O’Meara to discuss the prioritisation funding landscape. No decisions were made, but a wide-ranging discussion was had.

Paula Tesoriero, Chief Executive

This was our first meeting with Paula this year. We learnt that Whaikaha’s current priorities are:

- building a great organisation
- establishing a framework for Human Resources
- strengthening service delivery, and supporting the Minister for Disability Issues throughout the independent review
- core operating systems.

Sheryl Pinckney, Group Manager Partnerships and Stewardship, Neil Melhuish, Policy adviser

We discussed the process and our involvement in developing the next iterations of the NZ Disability Strategy and Action Plan. We were reassured that the Minister intends to consult with the

DPO Coalition in the drafting of a Cabinet paper which will cover how the UNCRPD recommendations will be progressed.

**Total Mobility Scheme Review, Bridget Doran,
Principal Researcher, MRCagney**

Bridget informed us that the Ministry of Transport has introduced changes to the review process which extends the timeframe for this work by several months. This includes the engagement process with disabled people and other Total Mobility Scheme users. We learned that Ministry of Transport officials are reviewing the discussion paper(s) which may then be edited. A significant change in the process is that before the papers are released for consultation and engagement, they must now be submitted to Cabinet for approval. We are concerned about the delays. We are writing to the Minister of Transport to encourage him to proceed with the review as soon as possible.

**Donald Beasley Institute (DBI), Robbie Frances
Watene, Research Lead and team**

The DBI team provided an update on their current cycle of monitoring reporting, which is about accessing disability support services. The team outlined their methodology used to capture people's stories and experiences. We noted DBI's ability to pivot and capture experiences since the 18 March 2024 announcement. The DBI team will continue to develop their report and we will meet with them again in October 2024.

**Law Commission, Geoff Shirtcliffe, Commissioner
and team**

We had a thorough discussion with the Commissioner and members of his team on the Review of Adult Decision-Making Capacity Law.

Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum

We agreed to apply to join the Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum.

South Korea

Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) Korea invited delegates from the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM) to an international workshop and meeting in May 2024. The purpose of the meeting is to share knowledge about how New Zealand's IMM was established, the challenges faced, and how it operates. The delegation will also discuss how our IMM can work together with DPI Korea to support the implementation of an IMM in South Korea. We accepted this invitation. A small IMM delegation is attending the event in Seoul, fully funded by DPI Korea.

Representation

If you are interested in being considered as a DPO Coalition representative on advisory groups about a particular topic, please contact your DPO.

Voice of disabled people

The DPO Coalition is the first place that the Government goes to when wanting to engage with the voice of disabled people. We are continually looking for new member organisations to join the DPO Coalition to increase our coverage across the disability community. New members must represent disabled people who are not already represented by an existing member. If you would like to apply, please email the Secretariat at: us-dpo@groups.io