



Number 1 - October/November 2008

## NGA MIHI

E te Atua, e te kaihanga, nāu nei ngā mea katoa. Ka whakahōnoretia tōu ingoa i ngā wā katoa. Manaakitia mai mātou katoa, hei āwhina, hei tautoko i ngā tāngata rawakore, te hunga pōhara. Tūwheratia ō mātou ngākau ki a rātou. Amene.

Lord, the Creator, all things belong to you. Your name is honoured at all times. Enhance our mana collectively, to help, to support those without resource, the poor. Open our hearts to them. We believe.

Kia koutou katoa, ngā mihi, nau mai. Haere mai ki tēnei, ko te putanga tuatahi o Kete Kupu, te pānui a te New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services.

Tēna koutou me ngā āhuetanga o te wā, o tātou mate e noho mai i te ao wairua. Otirā, tātou o te ao ora, kia ora huihui mai tātou katoa.

To you all, greetings and welcome. Welcome to this first edition of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Service's newsletter Kete Kupu. Greetings to you and yours, to our many dead who dwell in the spirit world. To all of us of the world of the living, greetings to us all.

## Introducing Kete Kupu

In response to the speed of change and development occurring for Christian social service providers and for the poor and vulnerable people they serve, NZCCSS is committed to bringing you new ways for keeping up to date with the issues. After many years of publishing the important and informative newsletters Services to Older People Mailing and General Social Services Mailing, NZCCSS has moved to incorporate both newsletters into **Kete Kupu** our new publication. In order to provide the most up to date information we are also emailing **POLICY WATCH** to our members on a fortnightly basis.

NZCCSS is a research and advocacy organisation. It uses the written and spoken word to advocate for change for poor and vulnerable people. As an organisation NZCCSS is committed to the Treaty of Waitangi, thus in choosing **Kete Kupu** for the name

of this newsletter Council is acknowledging the importance of te ao Maori in New Zealand today and the critical role of words as a tool for carrying out the Council's work .

**Kete Kupu** will be published every two months. It will contain in-depth articles on issues affecting poor and vulnerable people and analysis of emerging policy and its impact on the provision of social services. This will reinforce the messages we have been promoting in our "**Aroha tētahi ki tētahi - Let Us Look After Each Other**" call for more action, namely that by working together we can grow a more just and compassionate New Zealand.

By combining topics related to both general social services and services to older people in one newsletter NZCCSS will more effectively communicate the wide scope of work undertaken by Christian social services. Our website [www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz](http://www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz) is another important way that we provide NZCCSS members, and other interested people, with the knowledge and tools to advocate for positive change in our society.

As **Kete Kupu** grows and develops we will seek feedback from you, our valued members, on those issues that most need analysis and research to best support you in carrying out your work. We look forward to receiving your feedback and advice. To contact us please email [admin@nzccss.org.nz](mailto:admin@nzccss.org.nz) or telephone 04 473 2627

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From the desk of the Executive Officer

## Raranga Whakaaro

### - Weaving thoughts...

The inevitability of how the poor and vulnerable will be the first to feel the effects of the international economic crisis seems to have slipped past the thoughts of the main party politicians as they pitch their policies to gain votes. The mantra of 'prosperity through employment' seems reasonable in an environment of high levels of employment yet already we witness the closures of factories and the winding back of employment across a whole raft of previous growth industries.

The politicians from the two major parties continue to focus on 'work first' policies with no initiatives to address the low levels of benefit payments. Where some relief is proposed, through increasing the amount of money a beneficiary can earn without it being taken directly off their benefit, any such measures won't take full effect for a further three

years. Yet in many New Zealand small towns the big and sometimes only employer is retrenching or shutting up altogether, there is no other work nor are there buyers for family homes. These families are stuck in areas where finding new work is not an available option. In the cities many families on the margins are working in low paid and vulnerable jobs – these jobs are the first to go in any economic downturn. Many of the cities' working poor may soon find themselves reliant on an unemployment benefit.

Benefit levels in New Zealand remain pitifully low, the recent tax cuts did not result in any increase for beneficiaries - their gross benefit was reduced so that their net income remained the same. Many more individuals and families will soon be joining the ranks of those on this below the poverty line income.

Christian and other providers of social services know that poverty creates tension and crisis within families. The services of these providers are going to be needed to greater and greater levels as the economic cutbacks bite.

Strong communities, supportive and well supported families, innovative social services and community initiatives provide a means to help families become empowered. This type of support becomes even more critical to families in the grip of hard economic times.

Community organisations and social service providers are already doing this work. They need to be well supported by all of us – and by whichever parties take the Government seats after the Election. We need to carefully consider the options and exercise our votes in a way that encourages political parties to consider the wellbeing of all New Zealanders. As a society we cannot afford to relegate whole neighbourhoods and communities to the status of an 'underclass'. It is through looking after each other – aroha tētahi ki tētahi – that we will ensure New Zealand emerges from this economic crisis with a fair and inclusive society.

Heoi anō. Nāku noa, nā

Trevor McGlinchey

## A wealth of information exchanged through NZCCSS telephone survey

NZCCSS has recently undertaken a sample telephone survey of members in the Wanganui, Manawatu and Wellington areas. The survey offered an opportunity to reconnect with our extended membership base, to seek feedback as to members' availability for further collaboration and to check contact details held on our database. A high degree of goodwill and awareness of the advocacy work of NZCCSS was apparent. The survey found that our information is largely accurate and up-to-date.

Our database's scope for listing Staff and Volunteers was a useful means of tracking continuity and change within organisations. Programmes provided often revolved around key staff, reflecting that individuals are the critical resource of many of our member organisations. At times the information held understated the social services being offered. Reasons for this were:

- Some programmes were difficult to quantify such as community building among a migrant community.
- Some programmes were seen as ancillary, such as playgroups, parenting courses, OSCAR providers, and exercise classes.
- Some activities were seen as integral but were not seen as social services and so were not counted, for example, youth groups.
- Some community partnership arrangements existed where an organisation substantially enabled a service, but did not provide personnel. For example, land provided for a community vegetable garden.
- Some member organisations funded services such as a doctor's salary for ADHD services and a doctor's salary

for a People's Resource Centre that were not recognized as services provided by a Christian organisation.

Many members identified email as their preferred method for providing feedback to us on important issues confronting their social services. Some preferred direct telephone contact (if they were available, they would rather talk through issues immediately). Few identified with the idea of a feedback form on our website. Some mentioned that a written survey was portable and could be taken to a meeting for wider consultation and reflection before input, rather than just 'off-the-cuff' responses limited to the point-of-first-contact.

We indicated that we may publish a small directory of local Christian social service providers. Many expressed willingness to be included in such a publication. A few identified their services as unique or they were locally isolated and the only service provider in their region.

The NZCCSS database provides a rich source of information about our member organisations. It is a useful baseline from which to track changes occurring across the sector. Many of our members operate on the basis of key individuals providing services reflecting their interests and strengths. An issue confronting the sector is the ageing of individuals, in some cases leading to organisations being unable to continue to provide the levels of service that they did in the past. The generosity and goodwill of the voluntary sector underpins a great deal of the services offered. Without this contribution, many of our members would struggle to offer programmes of the quality and quantity presently provided.



## ELECTION 08

### How has it stacked up against the themes of “Let Us Look After Each Other - Aroha tētahi ki tētahi”?

Anne Kelly, NZCCSS Policy Advisor

Many of you will be aware that NZCCSS launched an information and advocacy programme in March this year under the theme of “**Let Us Look After Each Other - Aroha tētahi ki tētahi**”. The aim of this programme is to raise awareness of policy matters relevant to the delivery of social services in Aotearoa New Zealand and to call for more action on social justice and compassion issues.

In this programme we proposed that a just and compassionate society can be achieved by more action to:

1. Support families and communities in nurturing and protecting children as taonga
2. Provide older people with a range of choices for their homes, support and lifestyle
3. Utilise our nation's prosperity responsibly to eliminate poverty in New Zealand
4. Enable access to good affordable housing for everyone
5. Support community based organisations to grow the spirit of aroha tētahi ki tētahi – looking after each other

In this article we use the themes of this programme to examine what different political parties have told us they will do to address social justice issues. It is not possible to cover the policies of all parties – rather this article provides a sample of the most relevant policies to prompt your own thinking about which policies reflect the principles of justice and compassion.

#### Nurturing our children

There are a wide variety of policies that help to improve the well-being of children, young people and families. Some of the parties have extensive policies while other are less explicit about specific policy support.

The National Party has made the commitment to retaining a number of substantive policies that were

introduced by Labour. These include Working for Families and 20 Free Hours of Early Childhood Education. If elected, the latter policy will be amended by removing the 6 hours daily cap and opening up the eligibility to other early childhood educators including Playcentres. The Progressive Party would like to extend 20 Free Hours to 25 hours per week.

Labour has announced a significant amount of new funding for essential family support services. This is intended to be delivered over four years through a policy known as Pathway to Partnership – with full funding achieved by 2012. National has intimated retaining this funding for social services but has not committed itself to the Pathway to Partnership policy.

Financially, life for students would be easier under Labour, Greens, NZ First and Progressives. Labour has announced the phasing out of parental means testing on student allowances, the Greens and NZ First are both calling for a universal student allowance and the Progressives’ are promoting more liberal criteria for student allowances. The National Party has promised a 10% rebate on the early repayment of student loans.

Child poverty reduction is a platform issue for the Greens and Maori parties. They have proposed a mixture of policies including the reintroduction of a universal child benefit, raising benefit levels, increases in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

The Greens would entitle beneficiary families to the In-Work Tax Credit under Working for Families. The Maori Party proposes the elimination of child poverty by 2020 and the establishment of an official poverty line – at 60% of median household income (after housing costs). Labour has made the commitment to continue to increase the minimum wage.

Both Labour and National have put forward policies to try to retain more young people in education. Within the smaller parties there are a selection of policies that could be positive for children and families. United Future wants to establish a cross-party parliamentary group for children, to extend paid parental leave to 12 months and to introduce a caregivers allowance for those providing unpaid support for their disabled children. The Progressive party continues to advocate for better policies regarding youth issues (alcohol, drugs and suicide) and a greater investment in early years intervention and sport.

NZ First has also said that it wants a greater investment in programmes for under-sixes such as PAFT and HIPPY. The ACT party offers very little for families as its philosophy is one of personal responsibility and minimal government.

#### Well-being of older people

With the exception of the ACT Party, all parties are largely supportive of the current NZ Superannuation scheme. NZ First wants to raise superannuation to 68% of average wage, whereas Labour and National have committed to the 66% figure. The Maori Party would like an earlier age of entitlement for groups with a lower life expectancy. United Future advocates for Superannuation calculations to include forecast Consumer Price Index (CPI) indexing to overcome the inflation lag. The Greens support the maintenance of CPI indexed Superannuation. United Future was the only party which advocates for retaining older people in the workforce on a part time basis after they reach 65 years and promotes using wage-subsidies to help the older unemployed into work.

Many parties have a huge array of health policies many of which are of relevance to older people. The Maori party want to review services for kuia and kaumatua with moderate health needs to ensure they are supported to stay in own home for as long as possible.

Both Labour and National parties have health policies to support aging in place. Very recently Labour announced an immediate \$13 million cash injection to boost rest-home budgets and develop the nursing workforce.

National has announced an \$18 million commitment to support and retain aged care nurses and \$5 million to increase respite care. For National better delivery of health services is to be achieved through public and private partnerships whereas Labour sees this as a form of privatisation that would undermine the public health system. The Progressive Party support policies that strengthen the current public health system. They advocate for a \$200 winter electricity rebate and for interest free loans against assets for housing repairs and maintenance. NZ First has a large number of policies related to strengthening the aged care sector.

### **Elimination of poverty**

Some parties have been explicit about the importance of reducing poverty whilst others have policies that will contribute to reducing poverty but have not promoted their policies with poverty reduction as a goal.

Both National and Labour share very similar philosophies about paid work being “the best route out of poverty” and to provide people with the assistance they need to get into work.

For National however, their welfare policies tend more towards the stick than the carrot with more punitive policies. They intend to introduce part-time work obligations of 15 hours per week to DPB recipients and Sickness or Invalids Beneficiaries who are assessed as able to work.

National will also be requiring all people who have been receiving an unemployment benefit for 12 months to reapply for their benefit and undergo a comprehensive work assessment.

Both National and Labour have announced changes to earnings thresholds (static since 1996) with Labour’s adjustment being more generous.

As mentioned earlier in the children’s policy section, both the Maori Party and the Greens share a number of policies that would help children living in poverty, including lifting benefit levels, introducing tax free brackets and universal child benefits. Some of United Futures’ policies would help children and families by extending paid parental leave to 12 months and introducing a caregivers allowance for those currently providing unpaid support to family members.

The Progressive Party has no specific policy on poverty alleviation but strongly advocates for worker protection including lifting the minimum wage and childcare subsidies for working parents. NZ First has no explicit reference to poverty alleviation in their policies. Unsurprisingly ACT has no policies related to poverty alleviation and promotes radical reform of the welfare system.



### **Access to affordable housing**

For NZCCSS affordable housing includes access to affordable and good quality rental housing for people on low incomes as well as policies that assist low income people into their first homes. With housing prices doubling since 2002 the issue of affordable housing in public debate includes policies of more relevance to middle income families.

One of the key policies to ensure affordable housing is the income cap of 25% for rent for HNZC (state house) tenants on low incomes. Both major parties have made a commitment to keeping this cap, as have the Greens and the Maori Party. The Greens have a policy to increase the acquisition and building of state housing units by at least 3000 units a year for the next 3 years.

Labour has recently announced 1500 sites of crown land to be made available for affordable housing for first home buyers on the median wage. The land would be free and houses prices as low as \$165k. National has a similar scheme to Labour but with option to buy after 10 years (New Gateway Housing). Neither of these policies will be of help to those on lower incomes.

While National will maintain the Accommodation Supplement the Maori party is calling for it to be reviewed.

For the Greens access to affordable housing is a key issue and they want to create a legally binding duty on the public sector to ensure housing needs are met. The Greens have identified that housing provided by community organisations needs to be expanded. This is also a view shared by United Future. NZ First is keen for Local Authorities to retain their existing housing stock for pensioners.

There were no specific housing policies for the Progressive Party.

For ACT, the answer lies in freeing up more land for housing and this should be done through reducing compliance costs and reforming legislation such as the Local Government Act and the Resource Management Act.

The Greens were the only party that sought to introduce a capital gains tax on all but the family home.

### **Supporting community-based organisations**

The community and social services sectors play an important role in helping people and in creating a stronger society. In this section we examine what parties have to say regarding the importance of the sector and what concrete policies they have to preserve and strengthen it.

Labour, National, Greens, Maori and United Future acknowledge the important role of the community and social services sectors. Both Labour and National claim ownership of policies to abolish the cap on charitable donations and changes in tax rules on reimbursements and honoraria.

Labour’s Pathway to Partnership policy seeks to strengthen community groups through increasing funding, and decreasing contracting issues and compliance costs. National also has policies to increase funding reduce compliance costs on NGOs, and it supports multi-year contracts. National would like to investigate whether a venture capital fund for the community and voluntary sector, like those that have been set up in the United Kingdom and Australia, has merit.

The Greens are calling for a sector-led review with Government of all funding and contracting relationships with the sector, with a view to developing a Code of Practice. They would like to see the removal of Pokie machines , a

\$20k limit on tax deductible donations and more money for Community Organisations Grants Scheme (COGS). The Maori Party has a kaupapa of empowering communities, whanau, hapu and iwi to develop responses to issues and resourcing them, for example, resourcing iwi and Maori organisations to develop sustainable housing initiatives. While the Progressives and NZ First had no specific policy both support greater investment in early intervention initiatives. NZ First is calling for more funding for Well Child Health providers and Women's Refuges. ACT has no policies related to social services or the community sector whatsoever.

### Tax Policies

In the June edition of our General Social Services newsletter (GSS Mailing) we discussed the implications of tax policies for poor and vulnerable people. Since this article was written most political parties have released new tax policies. The tax policies of the National and Labour parties are well known. Both have promoted a mixture of varying degrees of tax cuts and changes to tax thresholds. No element of the tax policies of either of the main parties helps to address the financial hardship experienced by some of the poorest members of our society – beneficiaries in particular have been left behind. Less well known are the tax policies of the other parties. These are set out in the table on this page.

When approaching an election it can also be useful to look at each party's law and order policies as these can be a useful guide to a party's true values on compassion and justice. Whilst these issues fell outside of the Let Us Look After Each Other – Aroha tetahi ki tetahi key messages I would encourage you to visit each party's website.

- [www.national.org.nz](http://www.national.org.nz)
- [www.labour.org.nz](http://www.labour.org.nz)
- [www.greens.org.nz](http://www.greens.org.nz)
- [www.nzfirst.org.nz](http://www.nzfirst.org.nz)
- [www.unitedfuture.org.nz](http://www.unitedfuture.org.nz)
- [www.act.org.nz](http://www.act.org.nz)
- [www.maoriparty.com](http://www.maoriparty.com)
- [www.nzfirst.org.nz](http://www.nzfirst.org.nz)

More information on party policies related to the Let Us Look After Each Other – Aroha tētahi ki tētahi can be found at:

[www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz](http://www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz)

### Tax Policies

Greens	Maori	United Future	Progressive	NZ First	ACT
Make the first \$10,000 tax free	Make the first \$25,000 tax free	Advocates for income splitting for parents with dependents.	Wants to review tax thresholds but no change to structure	Make the first \$5,200 tax free	Gradually reduce personal and business tax rates
Plan to introduce a suite of eco-taxes	Reduce business tax for small businesses  Keen on a GST exemption on food	Proposes lowering both personal and business tax thresholds	Promoting a \$200 power rebate for low and middle income households	Reduce both personal and business tax rates  Reduce GST	Also reduce GST & petrol tax

## POVERTY ISSUES



### Facts about Fuel Poverty

The lowest income households are struggling with a 45% increase in the proportion of their income spend on household fuel and power between 2004 and 2007. This is one of the realities revealed by the Domestic Energy Users Network (DEUN) fact sheet on energy use.

It is retail electricity customers who are facing the biggest price increases although they make up only around a third of total demand. Industrial and commercial electricity demand has been rising at a faster rate but their price increases have been minimal. Adjusted for inflation, residential electricity prices have been rising at an average of 4.7% per year for the past seven years, compared to only 1.4% for commercial and 2.8% for industrial users.

The DEUN is calling for consumers who produce 46% of total electricity revenue to be represented on the Electricity Commission, where they currently have virtually no voice. The DEUN is also calling for the Electricity Commission to be changed to an Energy Commission with scope to look at all aspects of energy efficiency.

See more on the DEUN Position Statement and Factsheet on the CPAG website [www.cpag.org.nz/resources/](http://www.cpag.org.nz/resources/)



### Give It Up – What are you doing with your tax cut?

The October tax cuts are now in our pockets – but what will we do with the \$12 to \$28 a week individuals save on their tax bill? The Anglican Commission for Social Justice is promoting a GIVE IT

UP message regarding tax cuts. The Give It Up campaign website includes some nice thoughts from people commenting, including a couple of people wanting to donate more to foodbanks (see [www.giveitup.org.nz](http://www.giveitup.org.nz))

The supporters group for this initiative is also citing international research that goes a long way to proving that higher-tax societies have fewer social problems.

Their key reference is the 2006 Canadian report "The Social Benefits and Economic Costs of Taxation: A comparison of High- and Low- Tax Countries". This report was published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and can be found online at: [www.policyalternatives.ca/Reports/2006/12/ReportsStudies1507/](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/Reports/2006/12/ReportsStudies1507/)

These publications can be searched for and downloaded from the Publications Library on the NZCCSS website at [www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz](http://www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz)

**Public Private Partnerships for Funding Affordable Housing Developments in New Zealand**  
(April 2008)

This report, written by Patricia Austin for Waitakere City Council, looks at case studies from Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and United States showing the range of possibilities for private sector, community sector, local authorities and central government to partner in developing affordable housing for all ages and levels of need.

**Rebuilding the Kiwi Dream**  
(Salvation Army, August 2007)

A Kiwi Housing Fund of up to a \$1 billion dollars would be an ideal government investment to respond to the impact on the building industry of recession in the housing market and the likely consequences of the worldwide finance crisis, according to the Salvation Army's Director of Social Services, Major Campbell Roberts. The details of how this fund would work are set out in the Salvation Army report "Rebuilding the Kiwi Dream". This call for more investment in social housing also forms part of the NZCCSS message "The REAL Housing Affordability Problem".

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**Follow the Homeless Soccer World Cup!**

The LIFEWISE programme of Methodist Mission Northern and Downtown Community Ministries are two NZCCSS member agencies that are helping New Zealand to get a team to the Homeless World Cup for the first time in Melbourne in December.

People currently without a home or with personal experience of being homeless are eligible and a team of eight will travel to Melbourne to compete with 46 other countries. The experience of team work, self-confidence gained and support of millions worldwide has been shown to make a life-changing difference for participants at previous Homeless World Cups.

Follow the team online at:  
[www.homelessworldcup.org/groups/new-zealand](http://www.homelessworldcup.org/groups/new-zealand)

## SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE UPDATE



### Future of the Health of Older People Forum left in doubt

The last minute cancellation of the September meeting of the HOOP forum was a disappointing moment. It seems that neither the MoH nor the Minister is committed to the forum and they feel that there were not sufficient sector representatives involved to justify holding the meeting. This forum has in fact been a very valuable and unique gathering of representatives of all parts of the sector consumers, workers, service providers and funders. Three very successful national forums have been held bringing regional DHB representatives together with others in the sector to help share the best initiatives and build understanding of the needs of all those involved in supporting older people. NZCCSS will be exploring possibilities with the incoming Minister of Health for organising further such national or regional forums with DHBs to continue this good work. In the light of the increased funding and service pressures in the coming years, the importance of this work will not diminish.



### NZ Superannuation "windfall" to benefit the Care of Older People

District Health Boards NZ Lead CEO for aged care issues Chris Fleming has assured the sector that District health Boards will be passing on to sector the extra money they are now receiving as a result of the 1st October increase in NZ Superannuation. Responding to a public challenge from Presbyterian Support Otago CEO and former NZCCSS Vice President Gillian Bremner, he acknowledged that the extra \$12.92 per week increase in NZ Superannuation (for a single Superannuitant) that older people in aged residential care receive reduces the amount that District Health Boards have to "top up" to cover the costs of the aged residential care subsidy.

This unexpected "windfall" arose out of the Government's May Budget announcements and was not known about back in April when the national Aged Residential Care Contract price was reviewed. NZCCSS raised this issue with DHBNZ and with the Minister of Health in June but it has taken until October for public acknowledgment. According to Chris Fleming this money will be applied to the sector but exactly how has not yet been worked out. NZCCSS is working with DHBNZ to ensure that a decision on how to pass on the funding is made without further unnecessary delay.



### Call for Retirement Village Operators to "do better than the minimum"

Age Concern is calling on retirement village operators to "do better" than the minimum standards set out in the new Retirement Villages Code of Practice released this month. The new Code comes into force on 1 October 2009, six years after the original Retirement Villages Act was passed in 2003. Some provisions in the new Code, according to Age Concern President Liz Baxendine, represent a step backwards from the earlier Code Practice. The earlier version was declared invalid in December 2007 after the Retirement Villages Association representing many operators of retirement villages challenged the Code in the High Court.

Consumer protection is still not strong enough according to Age Concern, meaning that it's still "buyer beware" in the retirement village market. They wanted to see greater commitment to helping prevent elder abuse and neglect, and to have the Code's protections offered to all residents irrespective of their length of tenure. A lack of clarity around definitions

of “as new” and “fair wear and tear” mean residents of some retirement villages will still have to pay the full costs of having their units refurbished if they have to move out. Age Concern view is that under the Code there is nothing to stop operators ripping a three-month-old carpet out and charging for a new one.

**Residents in religious, welfare and charitable villages** were in the main supportive of the Code, according to the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) summary of submissions. Any concerns expressed by these residents tended to be around the potential negative effect of the Code’s provisions on their strong relationships with their operators, and also the compliance cost burden that the policies, procedures and information to intending residents that the Code requires. NZCCSS has in its advocacy around the RV Act consistently pointed to the challenges it poses to smaller, charitable villages that have been set up to meet needs of communities and not as money-making enterprises.

The current Act and the new Code do little to address these issues and it will be necessary to seek improvements to the legislation when the Act is reviewed next year. Cabinet has asked the DBH to look at whether exemptions to a clause or clauses in the Code of Practice are necessary to help some operators meet the requirements set out in the Code of Practice. Comments can be sent to the DBH by email: [info@dbh.govt.nz](mailto:info@dbh.govt.nz) The final Code, a Summary of Submissions and a Questions & Answers fact sheet can be viewed online at the DBH website: [www.dbh.govt.nz/code-of-practice-2008](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/code-of-practice-2008) or hard copies can be ordered from Vic Books on 0800 370 370 (there will be a charge).



### **New Health & Disability Sector Standards come into force June 2009**

The Minister of Health has approved the revised NZS 8134:2008 Health and disability services Standards. The New Zealand Gazette of 2 October 2008 gives notice that these come into force on 1 June 2009. The standards

have been the subject of a review conducted by a wide-ranging expert committee and included public consultation. The Standards set out the rights of consumers and ensure service providers are clear about their responsibilities for good outcomes.

NZS 8134:2008 is mandatory for those health and disability service providers that are subject to the Health and Disability Services (Safety) Act 2001. This Standard is also mandatory for relevant service-based contracts that receive health funding. Where this Standard is not a requirement, its application will promote good and safe practice by providers for consumers. There are four parts to the new Standards, available as a set or separately. Each part is designed to be read in conjunction with Part 0. The four parts reduce duplicated content between the four previous health and disability services Standards, making them simpler to use. Content has been updated to reflect current best practice for quality consumer outcomes. The new Standards should also reduce duplication of effort for audits, and assist health providers’ compliance with the Health and Disability Services (Safety) Act 2004.

**Special Vote of Thanks:** NZCCSS has been involved in the review process for these Standards and submitted comment on draft documents as part of the consultation process. We wish to honour the immense contribution of our NZCCSS Standards Committee member Judy Hindrup, CEO of Atawhai Assisi Home & Hospital in Hamilton. Over a period of nearly five years she has served on successive standards committees and her professionalism and commitment to the quality development and safety issues has been consistently outstanding. Thank you Judy!

## **ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE**

### **Positive Ageing Action Plan 2008 – 2010**

Take some time to check out whether your local authority is taking any action to support positive ageing. Less than half of them report any plans at all in the latest Positive Ageing Action Plan 2008 – 2010 released by the Office for Senior Citizens. Health housing, better footpaths, events that celebrate older people, information services, free parking in the city, improving public awareness and creating visiting services for older people are examples of things that some local authorities are planning for the next two years to meet their obligations under the Positive Ageing Strategy.

Government Departments also list out their planned actions, so take some time to get an idea of who is planning what, on the Office for Senior Citizens website: [www.osc.govt.nz](http://www.osc.govt.nz)

### **National Ambulance Strategy Consultation**

Ask the question of ambulance services – how can they better serve the particular needs of older people? Does the proposed new Ambulance Strategy offer the chance for improvement? Submissions are called for and close on 12th December 2008.

The consultation documents are online at the website: <http://naso.govt.nz/consultation/>

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### **Five useful facts about Aged Care**

In June 2008 there are approximately:

750 aged residential care facilities nationwide.

28,000 older people living in aged residential care services.

60,000 older New Zealanders received home support services.

In the year to 30th June 2008 the Government spent:

\$715 million on aged residential care services

\$160 million on home based support services

NZCCSS Member Focus

## Friendship Centre Trust – Community Housing

Andrea's story [see right] is one example of the way that the West Auckland Friendship Centre Trust is helping people to rebuild their lives. Based at Glen Eden Baptist Church, the Friendship Centre has been providing social services into the community of West Auckland for the past twenty years. The Trust now provides care for over 6000 people in the community, using a very integrated and holistic approach to Care.

About six years ago it became very evident that homelessness and housing affordability were huge issues facing people in our community. The Trust worked with Housing NZ Corporation (HNZC) to start an Emergency Housing service for women and children in Waitakere and in 2004 the Trust's Emergency House was opened, housing up to five women and ten children at any one time. In the course of this work the Trust recognised that although Emergency Housing is vital, of even more importance is the need for families to have a safe and affordable home with security of tenure available to them. Around this time the Government announced the Housing Innovation Fund (HIF) initiative which is administered through HNZC.

The Trust saw HIF as a way of purchasing housing with the purpose of providing affordable, long term supported tenancies to low income families in West Auckland and to date has been successful in obtaining funding for the purchase of ten houses for this purpose. Families living in one of the Trust's houses can live in the home for up to five – eight years (and possibly longer based on housing stock and need), with the support of a housing social worker, who works alongside the family to ensure underlying social issues are being addressed and tenants are being empowered to make long term changes in their lives.

Rents are based on 75% of market rent and all the homes must fit into the Trust's 'healthy home' criteria and are all freshly renovated at the time of purchase. Families also have access to the range of services offered by the Trust and many of the families attend parenting courses; budgeting and counselling services and one tenant has started working for the Trust's HomeCare service as a Support Worker.

The reward for the Trust's work is to see families settle in to a community; get their children settled in to one school and see the effect that a sense of housing security can have on a family. To find out more visit the Friendship Centre Trust website: [www.fct.org.nz/](http://www.fct.org.nz/)

### A Path out of Homelessness – Andrea's Story

*(Names have been changed and permission has been given to use this story)*

When Andrea came to live at Kharece House, the Friendship Centre Trust's emergency accommodation, she was 25, seven months pregnant, just out of jail and homeless. "I had lost my kids; that ripped my heart out", says Andrea. "But I had also lost my freedom and the power to choose." Andrea says she had learnt some hard lessons in prison. She wanted to make positive changes in her life and get away from the unstable environment of drugs, alcohol, violence and depression that until then had been the only way of life she knew.

She moved in to Kharece House and her life began to transform. For the first time in years she felt safe, secure, supported and stable. "I went from being nothing to being something; from being nobody to being somebody." She took parenting and budgeting courses offered by the Trust so that she could learn to save for her family's future and even got involved in volunteering work. In June 2007, Andrea moved into her own home through the Friendship Centre Trust's Long-term Supported Housing Programme. But her best reward of all was when her daughters, Susie and Amy, were returned to her custody. "I am so grateful and thankful for all that the Trust has done for me and my children. Even the little things have made a huge difference in our lives."

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