

He aha muri? | What next?

This report is one of the key pieces of work for 2023 for our portfolio focusing on Older People.

Our aim was for this report to provide the fullest possible picture, in one place, of what is currently available for older people in New Zealand as well as what is missing.

By framing it as an easy-to-read guide with links to further information, we hope it will be of benefit to our members as well as to the people they serve in their communities.

This work was also intended as a call to action, to generate interest and spark collaboration. Our members have observed that many of the issues relating to the provision of services to older New Zealanders can be traced back to lack of prioritisation of older people's needs. We feel strongly that this is because of systemic ageism that undervalues and deprioritises the needs of older New Zealanders.

Without specific older people's policy, attention within and across the system, the issues we are seeing of insufficient funding, isolation and loneliness, physical and mental health deterioration, digital divide, and lack of visibility for older people's needs will persist or grow as this population increases in size.

Below is our plan to tackle these issues, and more...

Current Workstreams

Understand and engage with current practice to:

- Build on existing policy work (internally and at a government level) with this cohort as the priority.
- Undertake an assessment of approaches to ageism on a national and international scope, and contrasts to domestic approaches to other forms of hegemonic oppression (sexism, racism, homophobia, etc).

Possible Next Steps

Through our policy group, and in collaboration with key partners:

- Develop, test and evaluate initiatives targeted at improving the wellbeing of all older New Zealanders, and also specifically those of lower socio-economic standing.
- Educate and advocate for greater cross-sector understanding on ageism and its effects on policy and service provision.
- Choose specific outcomes of ageism that we see affecting vulnerable older New Zealanders and creating specific education and advocacy campaigns to challenge them.

Longer Term Ideas

Establish leadership, collaboration, and resources to:

- Define best practice for engagement.
- Facilitate the sharing of information and expertise.
- Provide cohesive leadership and advocacy on issues of importance to this age group.

We're working towards an Aotearoa where older people's needs are seen as valid and valuable, and where the many effects of ageism are seen as connected and solvable. A country with a specialised workforce who deeply understand older people and their needs. An Aotearoa where older New Zealanders are prioritised within government policy, funding and the wider social sector.

Strategic planning and action is needed now, to ensure a good future for all older people in New Zealand for many years to come. As we all age, so too will we all see the benefit of this work.

If you'd like to be part of this important mahi, please get in touch: comms@nzccss.org.nz.

Working for a fair and compassionate future for all.

Te Kōrero mō ngā Kaumātua

New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services

PO Box 12-090, Thorndon

Wellington 6144, Aotearoa New Zealand

Email: eo@nzccss.org.nz | www.nzccss.org.nz



New Zealand Council Of
Christian Social Services