

## (A) Little Hope for the Marginalised? PAUL BARBER

A central part of the Christian message is hope for a just and fair sharing of the plentiful resources of our country and our community. Hope is not an empty optimism that things will get better 'some day.' Hope is built on the lived experience of communities seeking just and fair outcomes for their people. NZCCSS speaks out of the experience of those who stand beside vulnerable people in their pain, need and desperation

and work with and their communities to bring change, to take their lives to a better space. The 2015 Budget saw a glimmer of hope for children in poverty in New Zealand, but there is a lot more to do. Major structural change to overcome poverty can happen and is happening around the world. In an historic moment, the President of the World Bank joined together with [world religious leaders](#) in calling for an end to extreme poverty in the world by 2030 as part of the new global sustainable development

agenda. They noted that the hope for this is founded on the real experience of seeing the number of people living in extreme poverty reduced from 2 billion to 1 billion globally. Religious leaders stated that *We in the faith community embrace this moral imperative because we share the belief that the moral test of our society is how the weakest and most vulnerable are faring. Our sacred texts also call us to combat injustice and uplift the poorest in our midst. No one, regardless of sex, age, race, or belief, should*

*be denied experiencing the fullness of life. ([www.oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org))*

While New Zealand does not have extreme poverty on the scale of many of the poorest countries of the world, the message about poverty applies both to how we treat the poorest in our country as well as our contribution as a country to developing countries.

If our social and economic policies as a country are guided by the vision of ending poverty, then the targets and goals our government sets itself will reflect this.

So among the next steps we look for from our political leaders is a clear commitment to reducing child poverty and a timeframe for achieving this. A reasonable and very achievable target has already been proposed

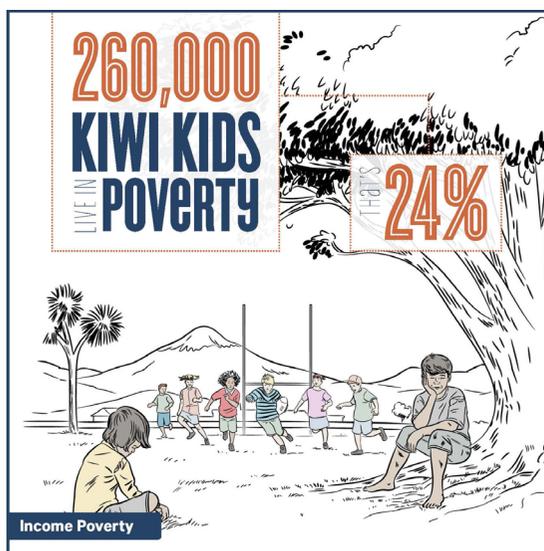
by the Children's Commissioner's experts advisory group on child poverty:

Reduce child poverty by  
40% (lifting about 100,000  
children out of poverty)

That is a target worth committing to... ■

### CONTENTS

People Power on Poverty: It Works!	2
Actions to Implement Human Rights	2
Outcomes Plus: The added value of community organisations	3
Outcomes Plus	4
More Effective Social Services	5
No Interest Rate Cap In Final Code	6
Emergency Housing Review	7
Pitifully small response to large & urgent need	8
Help Shape a Strategy for Health of Older People	9
Worker Safety Checking Begins	9
Care Workers Main Earners for Families	10
Legislation and submissions	11



### A Housing Warrant of Fitness Will Save Lives...

Emma-Lita Bourne is not the first victim of the poor quality of rental housing in this country. Housing researchers have been reporting the health impacts of poor housing for many years. Around [40,000 children end up in hospital each year](#) as a result of poor quality housing. An [evaluation of the Warm Up New Zealand housing insulation programme](#) calculated that, among the other benefits of the programme, it resulted in around 18 fewer deaths among older people relating to heart and other circulatory disease.

The laws covering minimum standards for housing in this country date from 1947, nearly 70 years ago. The calls for minimum standards for rental housing have been coming for years, from NZCCSS and many others, but the political will has been absent. Finally, shamed by a coroners court finding that made a direct link between poor quality state rental housing and Emma-Lita's death, Housing NZ Minister Bill English has hinted that some sort of minimum standards are now going to be introduced, but

# People Power on Poverty: It Works! Actions to Implement Human Rights

It worked! The child poverty message got through and change happened.

16,000 voices helped build the pressure to lift incomes for the poorest families in New Zealand as the team of online activists at Action Station worked with UNICEF, Child Poverty Action Group, Every Child Counts and NZCCSS to call for government action in the 2015 Budget to lift incomes for the poorest children and their families.

The first significant lift in benefit incomes for a whole generation (since the savage cuts to welfare benefits 25 years ago in 1991) was a welcome sign that the message about poverty is understood and the pressure on politicians to take action is growing.

Maori Party MP Marama Fox received the petition on Parliament steps along with MPs from the Green Party & Labour.

This is nothing more than a first step and much more is needed (see our article on [Child Hardship](#)) but it is also a recognition of many years of work from many groups consistently showing the harm that high levels of child poverty are doing to our children and to our society.

Please add your voice to the chorus for change, to lift incomes for the poorest and call for more action from those in leadership in our country. ■



Let's take what the government has said it will do and design an online tool to help us monitor what they actually do and when they do it. That is the approach being taken by the Human Rights Commission to the 2015 [Human Rights Nation Plan of Action](#) (NPA).

Instead of printing a report with a couple of hundred pages of text and bullet points, the HRC has developed an agile new interactive tool that allows for the actions and commitments to be monitored are regularly updated. All New Zealanders will have the chance to see how our country is progressing on implementing human rights, such as the rights of children or the right to housing.

**'Accountability through transparency is fundamental to human rights' (Dr Jackie Blue)**

Human Rights Commissioner Dr Jackie Blue points out that New Zealand has "an excellent human rights reputation and the NPA is a real way we can safeguard, monitor and improve that reputation... Evidence and monitoring are crucial steps in realising our human rights". The tool was launched on 30 June on the [Human Rights Commission website](#). ■



# Outcomes Plus: The added value of community organisations

NEW NZCCSS REPORT

The report *Outcomes Plus: The added value of community organisations* released on 28th May arose out of the experience of the social services sector since the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). The government has changed its guidelines for purchasing social services to work with through the Government Electronic Tendering System (GETS) system. A system that works well for buying paper clips and laptops for government use is now being used for purchasing home based support, social work and counselling for families.

Some government agencies also decided to actively reduce the number of providers they purchased

services off, such as ACC reducing its home support provider contracts from 86 down to six, while various District Health Boards have reduced their regional contractors from up to 14 local providers down to as few as three.

Successful bidders for new contracts are often international or national for-profit businesses. This rise in national and international for-profits delivering services has impacts on community resources. Funds are moving from community based organisations using resources in communities to corporates delivering services and extracting profits.

NZCCSS wants to highlight the value of community based organisations and how they add value to the communities within which they work. We have had many reports of how organisations were unable to maintain the additional programmes of support and community based activities they used to deliver – a real loss to their communities.

Our research has a real focus on how this added value contributes positively on whānau, families and individuals and is part of the community sector's continuous improvement. We want to focus on the positive added value delivered by community based social services organisations in addition to the outcomes purchased.

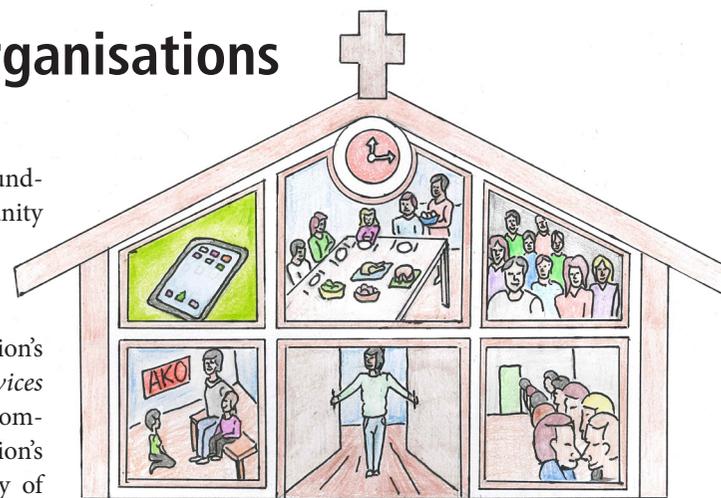
We also want to celebrate how funded services are used by community based social services to provide a useable infrastructure for their communities

The Productivity Commission's report *More Effective Social Services* provided further motivation to complete this work. The Commission's inquiry along with the Ministry of Social Development work on its Community Investment Strategy, and its Child Youth and Family modernisation process, together represent a time of major change of government thinking about what services it wants and how to purchase them.

**"These aren't quick fixes, it's a journey. Not many organisations would be willing to stick with a family and see them through to the desired outcomes, some five years down the track, but that's what it takes and we do see those results."**

## Who did we talk to?

The data for this research comes from nine community social services organisations, that are involved in offering social services within communities from Balclutha to Auckland. Individual interviews and focus groups took place in Dunedin,



**Ehara taku toa te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini**  
**Success is not achieved individually, but from the work of many people**

Wellington, Porirua, Whanganui and Auckland with a total of 70 participants: nine managers, 37 staff, 10 volunteers, 11 clients, and three external stakeholders/community representatives.

We worked with large, medium and small organisations, including one marae-based and eight Christian social service agencies. There was remarkable alignment in the feedback received with interviews and focus groups recorded and transcribed to ensure the anonymity of the providers and participants is maintained before a thematic analysis was undertaken.

## What did we find?

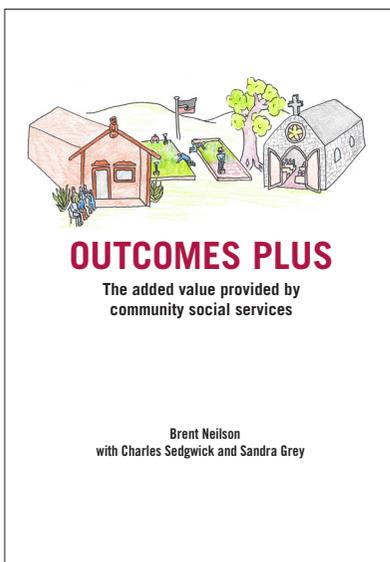
The analysis identified the richness that is contributed to our communities through both 'organisational

specific capital' and 'community value'.

Organisational Specific Capital is a term borrowed from a 2013 NZ Treasury document (*Contracting Social Services*), an economic term defined by Treasury as

'best fit' is linked to the community the organisation supplies, or the skills it has built up supplying similar services. In economic literature, this can be referred to as organisational specific capital.

Community Value is a term we have used to describe the 'features of social organisations such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate co-ordination and cooperation for mutual benefit'. In many ways this community capital describes the 'added value' provided by community social services.



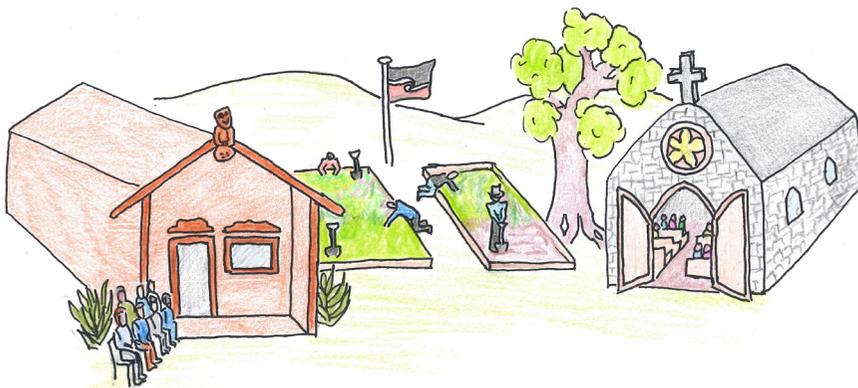
[Read the report 'Outcomes Plus'](#)

## OUTCOMES PLUS

### Organisational specific capital

These are the elements of the organisational specific capital we identified:

- **Organisational kaupapa and mission:** The organisation's values-base, philosophy, or ethos.
- **Organisational accessibility:** Attributes or services provided which promote access to the organisation, services, or personal development.
- **Community-embedded nature:** The organisation's history, visibility and knowledge of the local area and community.
- **Institutional and community knowledge:** The organisation's knowledge of local and national governmental processes, and of the local area and community.
- **Networking and collaboration:** The organisation's existing relationships with local business, community, local and national government and other community and voluntary agencies.
- **Time management:** The flexibility afforded by community and voluntary organisations to work in a flexible manner with regards to time.
- **Innovation:** The organisation's ability to respond innovatively to needs identified within the community.
- **Manaakitanga:** Processes and qualities of community and



"We have the local knowledge of being a longstanding organisation. We may know these people; we may have dealt with them before and built up that relationship, so we can often put something in place in the interim to hold them over until we can deal with it properly..."

voluntary organisations which promote respect, generosity, hospitality, kindness, empathy and support for others.

### Community value

In conjunction with organisational specific capital there are the dimensions of wider community value that community based organisations contribute to:

- **Social cohesion and inclusion:** Well-connected neighbourhoods and communities where people are engaged positively and getting on with life and with each other. Community social services organisations use their organisational specific capital to bring together community members, and create inclusive environments which role model and begin to engender greater cohesion.

- **Community development:** Is about communities doing it for themselves, taking charge and implementing change within their neighbourhoods and wider communities and creating change from the community up.
- **Empowerment of communities:** Community leadership, empowered whānau understanding and using their individual and collective strengths to identify their own way into more positive futures.

### Current environment

The *Outcomes Plus* work gives a picture of the current environment for social services that is not encouraging for community based agencies.

- **Increased vulnerability:** Changing government requirements and increasing accountability

with no new money or even inflation increases. There is a constant pressure to try to raise funds.

- **Professionalism:** The increasing use of only credentialed staff, and the introduction of institution-like approaches which is resulting in the loss of volunteerism and home grown solutions.
- **Accountability and risk aversion:** Shifting risk from government to service providers and then auditing the life out of them, requiring procedures and policies but ignoring what really works. Stifling innovation and creativity in favour of avoiding risk.
- **Standardisation of services:** Tightly prescribed services, 'one size fits all' approaches with little or no ability to deliver the services that are needed, instead requiring that organisations must deliver the standard product.
- **Competition:** Market-based approaches to competitive tendering in an environment without new funding leads to high levels of competition that are breaking down the natural collaborative and cooperative structures in the community.

### What now?

The United Kingdom has already noted the decline in social value that was occurring as a result of community based organisations and social enterprises going to the wall following competitive market procurement by government agencies. As a result Social Value legislation was introduced in 2012 to force government agencies to consider the wider impact of their purchasing practices. That UK legislation describes it as:

'Social value' is a way of thinking about how scarce resources are allocated and used. It involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is when a public body chooses to award a contract. Social value asks the question: 'If £1 is spent on the delivery of services, can that same £1 be used to also produce a wider benefit to the community?'

So this is what we are thinking of as the *Outcomes Plus* process. We are not advocating that contracted organisations should not deliver the required outcomes – what we are saying is that to get best value for the investment funders must look at what else the provider is delivering as well as the outcome. How is the provider supporting their communities to build Community Capital, to be resilient and supportive of their families and whānau? ■

# More Effective Social Services

Trevor McGlinchey

The Productivity Commission draft report *More Effective Social Services* was published on 28th April 2015. The report contains 8 questions, 81 findings and 47 recommendations. Its findings on the current operating environment, including things like overly prescriptive contracts brought about by risk-adverse politicians and government department imposing high level of control on how funding should be used are supported by our own feedback and research. Other finding are more problematic, including a finding that existing social services are not well placed to deal with “multiple and inter-dependent problems ... of New Zealand’s most vulnerable families”.

## Positives

Positives in the report include it noting that current procurement practices were not effective and that a system of more subtle methods were needed to ensure the right mix of social services were available. This mix they called “commissioning”. They identified seven types of commissioning service models:

- **In-house provision** – the government agency providing the service directly
- **Contracting out** – when wanting specialist services or accessing difficult to reach groups

- **Managed markets** – multiple providers competing for market share
- **Trust and shared goals** – shared ownership of goals encouraging integrated problem solving
- **Client directed budgets and vouchers** – when the client is best placed to decide what services are needed.

Key to commissioning is deciding which service model is most appropriate to the situation. This would seem superior to the put everything on GETS (Government Electronic Tendering Service) and may-the-best-tender-win approach taken at the moment.

This section sees commissioning occurring as close to the user and their communities as possible. It sees the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies as a model worth further exploring. In its first question it asks:

What communities would like to be involved in commissioning of social services?

## Client choice and fully-funded

The report goes on to emphasise the client-directed budget and vouchers as the preferable model whenever they can be used. They believe client choice will drive innovation and responsiveness to client need.

This seems to speak to the ‘customer knows best’ philosophy – we know people in vulnerable situations and/or in crisis do not always know best. Nor is it likely that a choice of services will be available in all areas – severely limiting the concept of choice.

In order to ensure the system has healthy, capable and sustainable providers the Commission believes that Government should fully fund those services where it expects to fully control the service outcomes. This funding, “... should be set at a level that allows an efficient provider to make

**The report’s overall thrust of creating a commercial market for meeting the needs of vulnerable New Zealanders is troubling, both ethically and in terms of the impact this will have in communities and for those whose vulnerability is not profitable and therefore less likely to be addressed**

sustainable return on resources deployed, encouraging investment by existing providers and entry by new providers”.

This commissioning section saw the Productivity Commission identify the added value provided by community based social services as community development “spill-overs”. They explicitly state, “Fully

funded contracts for the delivery of social services should not be awarded on the basis of claims of “community development” spill-overs.”

## Lack of innovation by not-for-profits?

In the Innovation chapter, the report makes the claim that NFPs (not-for-profits) are less able than FPs (For-profits) to raise capital to fund innovation. Because NFPs have single buyer of their services (government) who prefers shorter term contracts and who may “shift the goal posts ... NFPs are therefore less likely to take on the risk of innovation”. This contrasts with many other service industries such as banking and retail which “...have experienced disruptive business re-organisation over recent decades, facilitated by information and communications technology (ICT).”

There is a push in these parts of the report to fund social services at a level where FP are likely to come in, use their capital to develop mobile phone or other types of electronic systems so they can disrupt the current system and create a more innovative market.

## Evaluation evidence lacking

The section on evaluation is also interesting. In this section the lack of a credible evidence base is identified.

As is the unreliability of relying on overseas evidence to say a successful service programme can be transplanted into Aotearoa. This area also has the following statement:

To the extent that evaluations can adversely affect the payment they receive for services or the opportunity to receive future contracts, some NFP providers may prefer weak or no evaluation.

No evidence was provided for this startling statement – yet to me it seemed to put into words an underlying attitude held by at least some of the report’s authors towards the community social services sector. Overall the perceptions they hold of the NFP sector tended towards the concept that some of the larger providers had the ability to be more productive, to innovate and to evaluate but generally NFP providers were not good at this type of activity.

In the Productivity Commission’s thinking, For Profits, however, were more likely to bring in the spirit of competition, innovation and higher productivity. They were likely to raise capital and take risks in using this capital to generate innovative new ways of achieving outcomes. NFPs and FPs will cost about the same to deliver a service – the NFP needs to make a surplus to be sustainable and the FP needs to generate a return on

investment – from the Commission’s perspective it’s all about the same really.

### ‘Big data’ is in fashion

The report also resonates with much of the thinking of Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Bill English about [using ‘big data’ more effectively](#) and taking an investment approach to calculating the return on investment against the capital spent on fixing a person.

Overall the draft report is a mixed bag with some good points and some bad. Its overall thrust of creating a commercial market for meeting the needs of vulnerable New Zealanders is troubling, both ethically and in terms of the impact this will have in communities and for those whose vulnerability is not profitable and therefore less likely to be addressed.

Read NZCCSS’s full comments on the draft report on our website under Publications. The final report is due 31 August 2015. ■



**Trevor McGlinchey** is the executive officer at NZCCSS.

## No Interest Rate Cap In Final Code

In March the final version of the [Responsible Lending Code](#) was released and came into force on the 6th June 2015. NZCCSS provided comment on the draft Code and reviewing the final Code, it does not appear to address the concerns of many of our recommendations.

NZCCSS recommended that the Code include clear guidance that interest rates in excess of 50% per year are not “responsible lending” in terms of the Code. The Code has not changed from the approach in the draft Code that requires “high cost credit agreements” with interest rates over 50% per year to carry a “risk warning” that they are not suitable for long-term or regular borrowing (Clause 3.6).

Consumer NZ CEO [Sue Chetwin](#) criticised the Code because it will ‘... do nothing to fix one of the core issues in lending to beneficiaries and poorer families, whether by mobile shopping trucks selling goods on

credit, or for high interest loans. Even if they abide by all these rules, which some of them will, they are still selling products at outrageous prices to the vulnerable, and the same goes for those loans.’

NZCCSS recommended that taking of direct debits for loan repayments on ‘high cost credit arrangements’ not be accepted as responsible practice. This is a common practice of the mobile selling trucks and a significant problem in low income communities, but once again Code does not address this problem.

### Reasonable fees, existing customers and cooling-off period

Clear guidance in the form of a published schedule of ‘reasonable standards of commercial practice’ for fees was another recommendation we made. Because of on-going legal action around what constitutes reasonable fees in consumer credit contracts, the Code may be further

reviewed once the case is concluded, But the guidance remains very general and it is hard to see how an ordinary borrower will be able to make an assessment of the reasonableness of fees in the absence of any clear guidance.

One positive change is in the clauses around assessing ability of borrowers to pay, the final Code has removed clauses relating to ‘existing customers’ that appeared to be open to manipulation by lenders marketing further loans to people already in debt or who have borrowed from them previously.

The Code still does not contain clear information about cooling-off periods for loan agreements. We had proposed the Code require lenders to advise borrowers about the relevant cooling-off period under which they could withdraw from any loan without penalty.

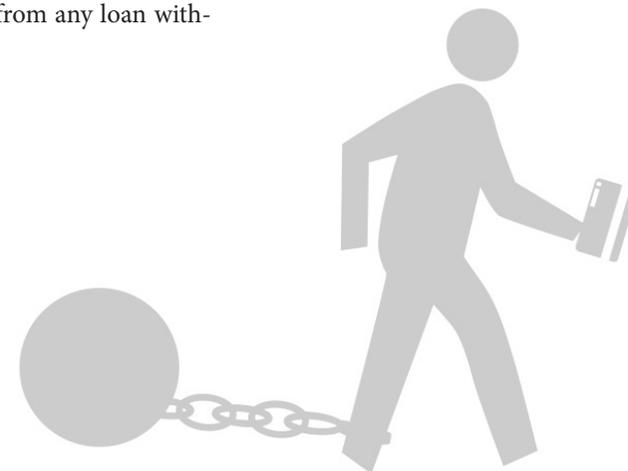
### Effects on people

NZCCSS has recommended that the Code be reviewed soon after its implementation (after one year) to assess whether lender’s behaviour has improved and whether there is evidence of less exploitation actually occurring. At this stage the Consumer Affairs Minister Paul Goldsmith has simply said that he will be [‘monitoring the effects of the Code’](#). NZCCSS has recommended that Consumer Affairs use ‘secret shoppers’ to test whether lenders are following the Code and it is to be hoped that the department has the resources to enforce the Code. ■



Sue Chetwin

“Even if they abide by all these rules, which some of them will, they are still selling products at outrageous prices to the vulnerable, and the same goes for those loans.” (Sue Chetwin, Consumer NZ)



## A HOUSING WARRANT OF FITNESS WILL SAVE LIVES...

continued from page 1

he described a housing warrant of fitness as an “extreme measure”.

### A simple and affordable safety check

In actual fact, the housing warrant fitness trial that was conducted in 2014 by five local authorities looks anything but extreme. The WoF included a visit from an inspector that lasted usually less than an hour to check basic safety and health aspects of the rental property such as insulation (ceiling and underfloor), smoke alarms, heating, hot water temperature, handrails and window security stays (where required).

Most of the landlords and almost all the tenants supported the trial and most of the landlords agreed that the WoF gave a fair and accurate assessment. Around two thirds of the houses visited needed more than minor work to meet the standard, most common issues were needing to install a fixed form of heating and repair handrails or balustrades that would not meet the building code requirements. Most importantly, only 12% of the landlords involved indicated they would look at increasing

the rent if they had to meet the WoF requirements. The [report](#) concludes that:

There is a workforce willing and able to carry out the inspections at a reasonable price and both landlords and tenants appear to generally support a rental housing woF.

Housing NZ has also been trialling a warrant of fitness and has [shared its checklist](#) that does not seem very ‘extreme’ but rather setting out the basics that anyone would rightly expect in a house in a prosperous 21st century country like New Zealand. Unfortunately, the results of the initial trial of 500 HNZ houses conducted last year have not been published, despite the original government announcement signalling that the woF checks (if successful) would be rolled out [from mid-2015 to all HNZ properties](#).

### Measuring housing quality

Statistics NZ has produced an [excellent overview](#) of the situation in New Zealand and options available to measure housing quality. It is very important that New Zealand gets on

with better measuring and monitoring of housing quality and enforces regulations that can help literally save lives. Statistics New Zealand look at a number of options for collecting data on housing quality and rate those options, with a preferred option for an expanded BRANZ survey or purpose-built survey of housing quality. A housing warrant of fitness would be best combined with a survey or the census to give information about households and their inhabitants. Surveys using self-rating or self-reported quality measures are not effective as research has demonstrated that house occupiers consistently over-estimate the quality of their housing.

Political will is needed to give the legislative and financial support to measuring, monitoring and enforcing housing quality standards for all rental properties. We urge individuals, communities, church groups and organisations to add their voices to the call to introduce housing standards, to encourage MPs and local councils to take action to implement enforceable housing standards. ■

## Emergency Housing Review

Funding for emergency housing is a piece-meal afterthought on the margins of a state and social housing sector that is under-resourced and is operating in an environment of a private rental market that is insufficiently regulated and insecure. It arises out of a charitable model of service provision and the initiative of local communities and individual agencies. It lacks a sense of place within a wider housing strategy (which is itself unclear). This funding situation reflects the overall confusion at the lower end of the housing market, where government intervention is inadequate. (NZCCSS comments to the Emergency Housing Review May 2015)

NZCCSS shared some forthright views on the need for more emergency housing and the overall urgent housing needs for vulnerable New Zealanders in our submission on the [Emergency Housing Review](#). Our comments and recommendations are summarised below.

### What is emergency housing?

The review defines emergency housing as:

Urgent and very short-term accommodation for people who have nowhere to stay (e.g. night shelters) to longer-term accommodation for weeks and possibly months that supports people while they transition into more permanent accommodation.



Camping grounds often function as emergency housing.

There is great need for emergency housing. At the 2006 Census (the most recent published research) researchers identified 650 people living in night shelters, women’s refuges or the 45 other accommodation providers that targeted people who ‘lack access to minimally adequate housing’. MSD currently funds only 16 organisations, which suggests that only one third of all providers receive government funding. This in turn be seen in comparison to the over 5,000 people estimated in 2006 as living without accommodation (i.e. living rough or in housing that lacks basic amenities without security of tenure).

### Right to housing

New Zealand is bound by international human rights agreements that include the right to adequate housing. State and social housing is the means by which the government ensures the right to housing for vulnerable people is protected. It imposes a high duty of care on the state to

ensure that Housing NZ and community housing groups are resourced to support people well.

**Recommendation:** The review of emergency housing needs to ensure that the right to housing is acknowledged and the obligations this places on government intervention on behalf of the most vulnerable in the housing market are adequately addressed.

**National homelessness strategy**

The absence of any form of strategic direction for state and social housing at present means that there is little focus or coherency to the way the needs of the most vulnerable in the housing market are responded to. A strategy needs to be developed with those most affected themselves (i.e. people in severe housing need) and those who support them and advocate for them. It would need to be well-resourced but developing a comprehensive strategy should not be used as an excuse to delay changes to ensuring good emergency housing responses are in place now.

**Recommendation:** develop a coherent and long term housing strategy that includes recognition of the priority of those in the most severe housing need (i.e. homeless).

**Results that can be achieved**

It is important to ensure that the process is people-focused, looking at what will give individuals and

families the basis to improve their wellbeing. Research and experience tells us that helping people to build community and find a sense of belonging is a central role of housing. Emergency housing can help begin to bring stability and community into complex life situations. This requires a commitment from funders for long-term support that recognises the real costs of offering the services.

The Emergency Housing projects that have been started in Christchurch appear to offer a hope for an adequate approach to funding emergency housing. The contracts have two years funding attached to them through MSD and are fully funded and are not dependent on the housing provider owning the properties. While these projects are in the early days, being able to have enough of the right kind of skilled staff is showing very positive results.

**Recommendation:** The Christchurch projects be well evaluated and the possibility of trialling these in other cities such as Auckland be considered.

**Recommendation:** Commitment to sustained and long-term funding support.

[Read NZCCCSS's comments on the review here.](#) ■

# Pitifully small response to large and urgent need

	Houses planned	Houses needed*
FAR NORTH	20	320
AUCKLAND	1,810	4,980
WESTERN B.O.P.	20	180
WHAKATANE	10	210
OPOTIKI	0	60
GISBORNE	0	190
PORIRUA	20	200
GISBORNE	0	20
CHRISTCHURCH	341	630

\*based on numbers in severe deprivation estimates from the 2006 Census

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has announced social housing purchasing intentions for the next 2–3 years. The intention is to purchase around 2,850 extra places. This compares with total known need at 31 March 2015 of 4,808 and total severe housing deprivation estimated at 33,946 people needing 12,000–20,000 units to house them (in 2006, the most recent data).

Breaking it down by region exposes just how pitifully small the planned growth is in comparison to the identified high need. In Porirua MSD plans to purchase an additional 20 one-bedroom places, there were 52 on the social housing register

at 31 March 2015 (Priority A & B). The regional breakdown in of 'Severe Housing Deprivation' estimates a total of 608 people in severe housing deprivation (using 2006 Census data) in Porirua. In short, probably something like **200–300 new social housing places** would be needed in Porirua simply to have any impact on severe housing deprivation.

Looking at the centre of the housing crisis in Auckland – the purchasing intentions of 1,810 places might get close to meeting the current registered need of 2,537 applicants, but that pales in comparison to the nearly 15,000 people in severe housing need. ■

Local authority	New social housing places (mix of 1–4 bedrooms) government plans to buy next 2–3 years	Existing Priority A & B applicants (Social Housing Register 31/3/15)	Total 'severe housing deprivation' – the highest level of housing need (2006 Census base)
Far North District	20	54	951
Auckland Super City	1,810	2,537	14,926
Waitomo	0	*	126
Western Bay of Plenty	20	28	525
Whakatane	10	45	617
Opotiki	0	7	192
Gisborne	0	42	558
Porirua	20	52	608
Kaikoura	0	*	54
Christchurch	341	539	1,889
New Zealand	2,850	4,808	33,946

\* = number too small and not disclosed to ensure tenant confidentiality

# Help Shape a Strategy for Health of Older People Worker Safety Checking Begins

New Minister of Health Jonathan Coleman and Associate Minister of Health Sam Lotu Iga have re-discovered the idea of having a strategy and all of a sudden both the NZ Health Strategy and the Health of Older People Strategy are being reviewed and revised.

The draft Health Strategy is due for release by the end of June 2015 and there there will be opportunity for public comment after that, so keep an eye out for further announcements about this.

After appearing dead and buried under the National Government, the Health of Older People Strategy launched in 2002 is being re-visited and the Ministry of Health Older Peoples Health team are seeking public input into the development of the new strategy. in the early stages of preparing documents for public consultation. The Ministry is due present a draft strategy to the Minister by the end of the year and they are ask comments by **15th September 2015**.

An obvious question to ask about the previous strategy is “what did

it achieve?” No evaluation of the Strategy was ever completed or published although in 2010 the Hope Foundation published an [evaluation of progress of the strategy](#) by researcher Sarah Hood. The [Ministerial Review Group](#) (Horn Report) into health in 2009 noted that the objectives of the HOP Strategy had not been achieved by DHBS during the term of the Strategy (to 2010). But, as the Hope Foundation report points out, the need to develop planning and strategy across all DHBS, the piloting and testing of new models of care and support and developing collaborative ways of working all takes time, especially for the magnitude of change envisaged in the HOP Strategy.

The Horn report reiterated the twin goals of the HOP Strategy of better services to support older people to remain in their homes and a wider and more integrated continuum of care. Five years later in 2015 it is a good time to ask how much further progress has been made and what the direction should be for health of older people over the next 10 years. ■

Worker safety checks are compulsory from 1 July 2015 for all core children's workers.

After months of preparation and engagement with the sector, 1 July 2015 marks a key deadline for those who work with vulnerable children. It is important that all organisations that are funded either directly or indirectly by the government state services undertake worker safety checks to help assess whether people pose a risk to children and also to help prevent unsafe people getting involved in working with children.

This is a further stage in the Childrens Action Plan and covers paid employees and contractors who work with children (up to 17 years of age). The safety checks apply to new and existing employees and

contractors and are split between core and non-core children's workers.

Core workers are those who have regular contact with children who work unsupervised or alone with children and have primary responsibility for children, eg, doctors, nurses, paediatricians, youth counsellors, care and support workers. Under the Act, regular is defined as at least once a week; or on at least 4 days each month or overnight.

Non-core workers are those who have regular but limited child contact, e.g, general hospital staff, health administrative staff

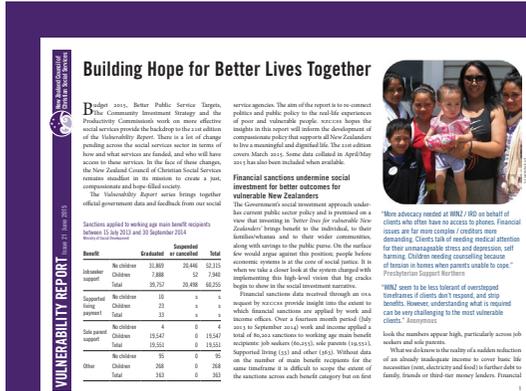
Worker safety checks include:



**Children's Action Plan**  
**He Taonga Te Tamariki**  
Identifying, Supporting and Protecting Vulnerable Children

- police vetting
- reference checks
- interviews
- a risk assessment that considers the specific child safety related risk.

For more information about the safety checks and further steps in implementing see our [April 2015 Policy Watch](#) post. The full details are on the [Children's Action Plan website](#) and there is also very good summary information on the [Ministry of Health website](#).



**Vulnerability Report 21**  
**Building Hope for Better Lives Together**

What does hope look like for the most vulnerable in our community? Reports from our social services networks on their experiences working with vulnerable people are put behind the official statistics to show the real stories behind the numbers.

## Vulnerability Report 21 due for release soon

What does hope look like for the most vulnerable in our community? Reports from our social services networks on their experiences working with vulnerable people are put behind the official statistics to show the real stories behind the numbers.

The latest report and the full series of Vulnerability Reports are online to download here.

# Care Workers Main Earners for Families

Aged care workers in home support and aged residential care love their work but are concerned about the pressures of their work and the low pay. AUT researcher [Dr Ravenswood](#) describes the typical aged care worker as 'female, aged over 45 and is the main earner for her family but she earns \$15 or less per hour'. The Auckland University of Technology report on the 2014 Aged Care Workforce Survey was released on 28th April 2015. They surveyed nearly 600 people working in home & community support and around 300 people working in aged residential care. The report is focused on the workers' experience and they note that, although they sought responses from managers in those areas, there were 'too few responses to draw meaningful conclusions'. The report's authors aim to provide a benchmark of the workers' experience and situation against which future changes can be measured.



Dr Katherine Ravenswood

The context for this work is the expected shortfall of care workers in the future as more and more people are living longer. At the NZCCSS conference in 2014 DHB CEO [Chris Fleming](#) [pointed to the huge gap](#) between expected demand for workers

through to 2025 (3.2%) and the projected growth in the overall workforce (0.6%), meaning there is likely to be a shortage of people willing to work in the sector.

## What happens when the main earner can't earn enough?

More than half of the home care workers surveyed (56.9%) and nearly two-thirds of the residential aged care workers reported that they are the main earners in their families, which emphasises how important their incomes and work conditions are for those families. Most care workers are employed as permanent full or part-time (home support 82.6%, residential 84.4%). Nearly half (43.1%) of care workers reported working less than 20 hours a week and nearly three quarters (73.3%) were on hourly rates less than \$15. In contrast, most aged residential care workers (69.9%) worked more than 30

hours a week, most earned between \$15-\$19 an hour although just over a third (37.7%) earned less than \$15 an hour. Not surprisingly, almost all carers, home or residential, say they are not satisfied with their pay.

While the majority of people reported satisfaction with their job and the amount of freedom they have in how do go about it, there is a very significant group that did not feel their work environment and relationships with management and colleagues was good enough. Most of those surveyed had completed training (home support 78%, residential 82.6%) and felt they had sufficient skills to do their job. Although a significant proportion of carers reported that they often experience physical and verbal abuse from clients or residents, most are satisfied with the work itself and many enjoy the flexibility the work offers to fit around their other aspects of their lives.

## What is happening to address the workforce challenges highlighted in this report?

- Careerforce and Health Workforce New Zealand are developing the [Health and Disability Kaiāwhenua Workforce Action Plan](#), a five-year plan of actions to develop and strengthen the workforce that has involved extensive

input from all involved in the sector.

- The [home support travel time settlement](#) is in the process of being implemented beginning July 2015 and this will see home support workers receiving payments for their travel time and in 2016 a reimbursement for travel costs is planned.

One conclusion to take from this survey is that lifting wages in the sector (e.g. closer to the [Living Wage of \\$19.25](#)) would make it a much better place to work and more attractive as a choice for people looking to use their people skills in a role that is flexible enough to fit around family life and other out of work activities.

The chief obstacle to further developing a workforce largely funded through the Government health budget is the on-going cumulative funding squeeze as over the past five years or more, the health funding to DHBs has [been declining in real terms](#) and not keeping up with costs and demographic growth, meaning DHBs are searching desperately for savings.

As many commentators have pointed out, the

investment in improving the work conditions including pay levels of the estimated 75,000 carers working in the sector would have benefits right across our communities. In our [November 2014 Kete Kupu](#) NZCCSS (see article 'Pay Equity & the Services for Older Sector' p.4) set out its view on the way lifting wages is an investment in wellbeing for workers, their families and the older people they support. Adding a significant extra amount to health expenditure to help ensure that people and their communities are well supported would be a great example of wise social investment.

[The report is available to download on the AUT website.](#)



THE NEW ZEALAND AGED CARE  
WORKFORCE SURVEY 2014  
A FUTURE OF WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

Katherine Ravenswood, Julie Douglas, Stephen Teo

the typical aged care worker is 'female, aged over 45 and is the main earner for her family but she earns \$15 or less per hour'

# Legislation and submissions

## Child Hardship Bill – make a submission

The Support for Children in Hardship Bill is the legislation implementing the increases to welfare benefits announced in the Budget 2015. Public comments on this Bill are important way that politicians can hear directly the views of the public on the changes proposed. Changes proposed in this Bill are:

- raise work requirements for parents receiving a benefit, who must now seek when their youngest child turns 3 years of age (instead of 5 as at present) and require them to be available for part-time work of up to 20 hours per week (instead of 15 as at present).
- raise the maximum childcare subsidies payable by one dollar to \$5 per hour.
- increase payments to parents receiving a benefit by \$25 per week and low income parents in employment by \$12.50 per week from 1 April 2016.

### A welcome and historic change in policy

NZCCSS encourages as many people as possible to submit on the Bill and call for more to be done for children in poverty. The additional income

to very low income families is a very welcome first step by government and will make a positive difference for families. It is important that all those submitting acknowledge this historic change in policy by the National-led government. The Government has finally and formally recognised that income is too low for families not in work and the most effective way to lift families out of hardship is to lift their incomes. The Government has taken the first steps towards overcoming the high levels of poverty that have existed over the past 25 years since the huge benefit cuts in 1991.

Unfortunately, this first step is too small to achieve its stated aim to lift children in the most hardship out of poverty. As [Michael Fletcher](#) of AUT has pointed out in his analysis of the package, a sole parent family with two children will still be around **\$77 per week** below the lowest poverty threshold measured by MSD (\$555 per week, 50% of median household income before housing costs, see [Household Incomes in New Zealand](#), MSD 2014, Table E.2 p.123).

### More change needed

Some issues that have been identified that could require changes to the Bill are:

- The poorest families will benefit least from the Bill because the payment is being made on a per-family and not per-child basis. This is a major flaw and means the stated aim of targeting the children in most hardship is missed. The children in greatest hardship are those living in households with two or more children (79%). Not surprisingly more than half of the children in

most severe hardship are in families with three or more children.

- Bring forward the implementation date to 1 October 2015 (or even 1 July 2015, as the legislation can be made retrospective), so low income families get the support they need as soon as possible.
- Because of the way core benefits interact with other additional benefits like Temporary Additional Support (TAS) or the Accommodation Supplement (AS) many low income families will not receive the full \$25 increase, but more like \$17.50. It is

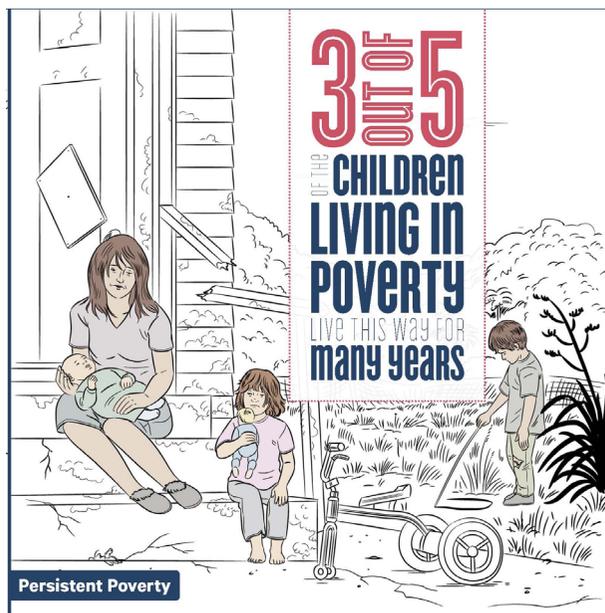
important to ask the Select Committee to change the Bill so that it clearly ensures that the full increase of \$25 goes go to low income families.

- Targeting that is missing the mark is once again a feature of this Bill. Excessive attempts at targeting assistance to the children perceived as most in hardship is creating even more complexity in an already confusing and complicated benefit system. As noted above, not only will this Bill make the system more complicated,

but the poorest families and their children benefit least from it.

- Work testing for parents of 3-year-old children is quite likely to add to the stress of poverty for those families. The childcare subsidy increases and changing the part-time work availability requirement to 20 hours means people can access Working for Families credits (assuming they can find work for 20 hours a week) and offers some hope to lift incomes. But this is dependent on actual access to decent work at hours that match with school and quality childcare, as well as covering transport times and costs. The Government believes very young children in hardship benefit most from early childhood education – but there are many questions whether enough good quality childcare is really available in the communities where those children live.

Submissions are due on **Wednesday 8th July**. Go to the [Parliament website to make a submission](#) or post your comments to: Committee Secretariat, Social Services, Parliament Buildings, Private Bag 18041, Wellington 6160.



## LEGISLATION &amp; SUBMISSIONS

**Housing NZ transfers – feedback sought**

Treasury continues to feel its way into the unexplored territory of selling off Housing NZ houses in Invercargill and Tauranga to non-government buyers. In series of [Market Information and Feedback](#) sessions being held around the country, Treasury and Ministry of Social Development have been sketching the outlines of the tortuous path the government has chosen to try and increase the supply of social houses. It would surely have been easier to simply instruct Housing NZ to work on a larger scale with other social housing providers to redevelop existing properties to create more units as [they are already doing](#) around the country.

After attending the Wellington briefing, there are still many questions unanswered. The briefing confirmed



that a community housing provider must be the buyer or part of a consortium buying the properties. New legislation passed on Budget night gives more flexibility in designing income related rent subsidy (IRRS) contracts to better suit the needs of tenants and housing providers. MSD contracts for other “wrap around services” for tenants are not part of the bundle of contracts and arrangements for these contracts (MSD plans to look at this at some later point). The specific outcomes that Treasury is seeking from the transactions remain relatively undefined (better than HNZ is doing might be a good summary!).

Several of those at the session asked how tenants are being involved in this process. Treasury advised that thus far (apart from a [letter and info sent by HNZ](#)) tenants have not been involved. It was pointed out to officials that, if this was all about getting better outcomes for tenants, that it is important that the tenants be more involved in the process. Perhaps they could be asked what they would like to see happen in their communities?

Treasury is asking for feedback about the size, scope and process for any transfers by **3rd July 2015**. Send any comments to [market@treasury.govt.nz](mailto:market@treasury.govt.nz). The presentations and market information background papers are on the [Treasury website](#).

**Few Changes to Gambling Bill**

The Select Committee report on the Gambling Amendment Bill (no.3) on the 11th of May and it went through its second reading in Parliament on 4th June. The Bill was supported by National, Labour, United Future and ACT parties with the Greens, NZ First and the Māori Party opposing it. The third and final reading of the Bill may bring further changes as parties indicated they would be proposing amendments in the final Committee stage of the Bill.

As reported in the [March Kete Kupu](#), NZCCSS supported the Bill's intentions to require more detailed and more widely accessible reporting from pokie trusts. But NZCCSS also opposed proposals to grant longer license periods to pokie trusts and also the clauses allowing the payment of commissions to pokie trusts based on their turnover. NZCCSS also shares the concern of other submitters about the lost opportunity to reduce gambling harm, as yet another Gambling Bill goes through Parliament that does not introduce

simple controls like pre-commitment cards that help gamblers limit the amount they gamble.

The Select Committee report is a majority report and includes minority views from the Labour & Green Parties. Clauses have been added strengthening the requirements on pokie trusts to distribute proceeds of gambling in the geographical areas where the money was lost, which seems a good move. But they have reaffirmed the intention to allow Internal Affairs the right to grant longer licenses as an “incentive for best practice and compliance” among pokie trusts and gambling venues, which is disappointing. The [Internal Affairs ‘mystery shopper’ visits](#) to gambling venues in late 2014 showed only one out 102 venues visited actually intervened properly around clear problem gambling behaviour, which does not indicate a sector even close to earning any “rewards for good practice” but rather more active regulation.

Read the [NZCCSS submission](#) on our Publications page under Submissions and the Select Committee report is online at the [Parliament website](#).

**Kete Kupu**  
Word Basket

ISSN 1174-2514 (Print)  
ISSN 1174-2526 (Online)

The newsletter of the NZ Council of Christian Social Services  
PO Box 12-090, Thorndon,  
Wellington 6144

3 George Street, Thorndon  
Wellington

If you would like to receive this newsletter in a different format (by email, mail or both) please contact NZCCSS (04) 473 2627 or [admin@nzccss.org.nz](mailto:admin@nzccss.org.nz)

Acknowledgements: In addition to its member subscriptions, NZCCSS extends its thanks to: JR McKenzie Trust, TG Macarthy Trust, Tindall Trust and Think Tank Trust for the grants and donations that help to make the work of NZCCSS possible.

Disclaimer: Every effort is made to ensure the correctness of facts and information in this newsletter. However, we cannot accept responsibility for any errors. Items from this newsletter may be freely copied provided the author and the sources are acknowledged.



New Zealand Council of  
Christian Social Services