



I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.

HELEN KELLER

Summary of recent NZCCSS Submissions

In recent months, the NZCCSS secretariat has worked with NZCCSS policy groups and with partner NGOs to provide comment on a range of proposed government policies:

Family Violence and Sexual Violence Framework (Joint Venture)

Submissions from both [NZCCSS Children & Family Policy Group](#) and [Older Persons Policy Group](#)

Proposals against incitement of hatred and discrimination (MoJ)

Submission outlining [broad support of proposals](#)

Social Security (Subsequent Child Policy Removal) Amendment Bill (2nd reading)

Support of the removal of subsequent child policy. Published full submission [here](#).

Natural & Built Environment exposure draft

Full and detailed submission accessible [here](#)

Dr Betsan Martin also presented to the Environment Select Committee (Link [here](#), from 26 minutes).

Housing and Urban Development Policy Statement

Full and detailed submission accessible [here](#)

Submission also prepared on behalf the Tenancy Advocates Network

Productivity Commission terms of reference for “A fair chance for all – Breaking the disadvantage cycle”

Oral submission and written submission (published on the Commission site [here](#)).

Support of CommVoices submission [here](#).

Conversion Practices Prohibition Legislation Bill

Brief submission in support of the Bill, using quick submission option (yes / no online form)

New Zealand's sixth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Brief submission made [here](#).

Dept of Internal Affairs – Local Government Review

Informal interview on how local government impacts the work we do, potential improvements and potential challenges

Achieving pay equity and fair funding for social workers

Social Service Providers Aotearoa is currently coordinating the employer response to a pay equity claim seeking pay equity and parity with Oranga Tamariki social workers. The outcome being sought is for a whole-of-sector solution – where the settlement will be applied to all social workers across the wider community social services sector, not just the representative group.

You can find out more about the efforts to achieve pay equity and fair funding from:

SSPA's dedicated [Pay Equity page here](#)

This [backgrounder on the work](#).

You're invited: Pay Equity/Fair funding webinar 22/09/21

As part of its pay equity campaign, SSPA is joining with SocialLink, ANZASW, and the PSA to mark Social Worker's Day – Wednesday 22 September – with a webinar to launch a collective call for social worker pay equity and fair funding.

When: 2pm, Wednesday 22 September

Click [here to register](#)

Prospects of mandatory vaccination of workers?

The Employment Relations Authority (ERA) earlier this month ruled that Customs New Zealand was justified in dismissing an employee who refused vaccination. The basis of the ruling was that an unvaccinated frontline worker presented a threat to fellow workers as well as to those she came into contact with while working. This ruling bolsters the Government's moves to make vaccination mandatory for border and MIQ workers.

Currently, employers other than those of border and MIQ workers **cannot** ask an employee to get vaccinated. **But they can decide, where there is a high risk of exposure to COVID-19, that certain work must be done by vaccinated workers.** There

Employment law expert Michael Whitehead says that the ERA finding is a landmark ruling for employers and employees in every industry. It is likely that those in the frontline of social and health care provision can and will be seen in the same position as those at Customs. He says that the decision now places a responsibility on employers to ensure the

health and safety of those with whom their employees come into contact. Employers could face “enormous” penalties for failing to do so.

The Ministry of Health is piloting workplace vaccinations with Mainfreight, Fonterra, The Warehouse Group and Fisher & Paykel Healthcare, before rolling the programme out more widely later this month.

Read the [article quoting Michael Whitehead here](#).

See the [Public Health Order here](#).

Read an [article on the workplace rollout programme here](#).

NZCCSS is keeping a watching brief on the momentum towards mandated vaccination impacting social and healthcare provision workplaces.

Understanding informed consent for 12-15-year-olds' vaccinations

With the inclusion of 12-15-year-olds in the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, Oranga Tamariki (OT) has produced guidance for kaimahi working with tamariki, rangatahi and whānau and caregivers in relation to supporting informed consent.

The OT resource clarifies Ministry of Health guidelines that tamariki are able to give or withhold consent to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. The assessment of this consent is completed by the healthcare professional at the time of vaccination.

The resource provides information and resources to help kaimahi understand how the vaccine could impact the people they work with, and to help them to have conversations with these groups about vaccination.

Find the [Oranga Tamariki resource here](#).

Efforts to address vaccine inequity

Vaccination of the population in this country has reflected the inequities familiar to community-based social services. For Māori and Pacific communities, the inequities are more evident in younger age groups, while uptake has been fairly equitable for above 60 age groups.

Having identified the appointment-based process to access vaccinations as a barrier for Māori and for Pacific people, more compatible pathways have been implemented to up the numbers. These have included drive-through vaccine centres, new 0800 numbers and the use of church locations. Even so, 50% of people with COVID are of Pacific identity, and under 20% are fully vaccinated.

To date, 50% of eligible Māori have received their first dose of COVID vaccine and 25% are now fully vaccinated. Ministers Henare and 'Aupito Sio are both supporting the fight against

misinformation, including 'Fight for your Whakapapa' campaign, social media and the mobile vaccination bus.

Sector hauora/wellbeing in the season of COVID

Living and working under the restrictions of Level 4, Level 3, Level 2.5-ish, takes its toll, especially with people working on the frontline to address the needs of their communities. Community sector network ComVoices has tapped its whānau of NGOs for a hauora/wellbeing check-up and has produced a variety of resources, including a video from sector leaders, to help folk keep upright and breathing.

Visit the [ComVoices hauora/wellbeing resource site here](#).

Guide for developing assisted dying policies now available

Assisted dying services become legal in Aotearoa New Zealand on 7 November 2021. Whether or not health and disability service providers plan to participate in offering these services, the Ministry of Health is encouraging all providers to have in place policies that support staff to respond appropriately if asked for information about or access to the services.

The Ministry has produced guidelines for the development of those policies, one specifically for community and primary care health and disability service providers. The guidelines include a template that providers can adapt to their own context and level of involvement in providing assisted dying services.

You can find the policy guidance among the [implementation resources here](#).

Other support resources on assisted dying services

The Ministry of Health's [LearnOnline portal](#) has an assisted dying implementation learning section. This includes the online module: The End of Life Choice Act 2019 overview, which can be completed as an individual or as part of team meetings. A range of new support resources and training will be available on the portal later this month and into October, including:

- An e-learning module about the assisted dying pathway
- A guide to support conversations about assisted dying, and an accompanying e-learning module, developed by the Health and Quality Safety Commission
- Guidance to support health and disability service providers to develop internal policies and procedures

- Resources for health and disability service providers to use to educate the non-clinical and/or non-regulated workforce.

The Ministry's website is also being regularly updated with information and resources as part of the implementation. See the latest [information sheets here](#).

Visit the [Ministry of Health website here](#)

Sign up to receive the [End of Life Choice Act implementation updates here](#)

If you have questions for the Ministry's programme team, [you can email them here](#).

Conscientious objections permitted

Conscientious objections are provided for in the Act. This was further clarified in June 2020 when Hospice NZ, Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative medicine, and Palliative Care Nurses NZ, sought a declaratory judgement to make clearer:

- *Whether an organisation such as a hospice can conscientiously object to Assisted Dying and operate a 'euthanasia-free' service.*
- *Whether a DHB or other funding agency can decline to fund or contract with an organisation if it does not agree to provide Assisted Dying services.*

Of relevance also for aged-care facilities, the judicial ruling determined services, including 'aged care facilities' have a right to hold conscientious objections and that this should not impact on funding decisions.

You can read a [summary of the judgment here](#).

We welcome your feedback on POLICY WATCH and other publications produced by the Council, email: rosemary@nzccss.org.nz

Ngā mihi nui

From all of us in the team at NZCCSS

Justice & compassion in action

NZCCSS member organisations serve thousands of people every day in communities throughout the country