



Executive Officer Update

5 April 2024

Enable:

- Scott Ambridge has been announced as the new CEO as of 1 May 2024. He returns to Enable after 5 years, most recently at Te Whatu Ora – Capital Coast and Hutt Valley District where he is the Acting Executive Director Mental Health, Addiction and Intellectual Disability Services (MHAIDS).
- We had communications with Angela, Greg and David about the changes at Whaikaha and what this meant for trials. Year to date spend on the 13th of March was stated as being 8% above budget. We were seeking clarification on what would happen with existing trials once the budget cap was reached. No immediate confirmation that successful trials would be paid for was forthcoming until I shared Accessable's communication with Enable. Greg then confirmed that the Accessable communication was what they expected, as they were following Whaikaha's guidance as published on the website.
- We followed up on a member request about tender schedules. David Benfell provided a schedule that had been prepared by Gavin Eades, adding that with understaffing they were a bit behind schedule, but that a new schedule would come out soon after consultation with Keely Richards.

Accessable:

- Communications with Accessable, including a call from Graham Walling, indicated that they hadn't seen a budget overrun at the end of November but that sales hadn't slowed down over the Xmas period which they would normally see. Graham is interested in seeing the information that comes to us under OIA from Whaikaha, offering help to interpret the data. They were clear that the process with trials is that they get approved if the need is prioritized and there is budget, so that any existing trials that are successful will be paid for.

Whaikaha:

- Major upset and distress amongst the disabled community after announcements that Whaikaha budgets would be capped, and needs would be prioritized.
- Equipment Spend data has been requested and some of it has been provided. Some of the older information is difficult to find. I have 6-monthly reports from Enable covering the last 4 periods but am still waiting on the End Dec 22 report from Accessable as there is difficulty in finding this.

ACC:

- The request for data was slow to get off the ground but once it was in the OIA process it was quick to be delivered. The data file is raw data with commercially sensitive information, which won't be shared with anyone and only used in summary slides. Those slides have already been shared with the members.

- Anushka Annand is very keen to be presenting at our next expo and now that she understands us better will be providing a more strategic overview of what ACC is doing.

Ministry for Disability Issues:

- We communicated with the Minister about our concerns around the Whaikaha changes and received a response which was shared with members. It gives some confidence that the minister is sympathetic to the needs of the disabled community and will be seeking additional funding for 2024 and will work with the community to develop a disability support system that is sustainable and progresses the vision and principles of Enabling Good Lives

MTANZ:

- Had a meeting with Cushla Curie, whose main focus is on Pharmac and TPB. We can leverage this relationship and attend events with ministers and high-level Te Whatu Ora and Pharmac managers. I'll be attending sessions during Healthtech Week on a complimentary basis.

New members:

- We have had 3 new members join ATSNZ: Link Assistive, Intelicorp/The Bidet Shop and BQ Mobility.

Newsletters:

- The February Newsletter went out a bit late. If there are any ideas for items for the April newsletter, that would be very much appreciated.

Technician Training:

- Jonathan from My Skillz updated us on the Wheelchair Training for Technicians, mainly referring to changes based on user feedback (Rob @ Mobility Manawatu) and a discount no longer applies as everyone gets the same rate.

ATSNZ Disability Expos:

- Auckland 6-7 November, the main hall has sold out and we have 40% left to sell of the additional space – mainly 2m x 2m booths.
- Christchurch 21-22 November, we have sold 40% of the available space.
- All previously interested parties will be followed up with again next week when updated floor plans for both Auckland and Christchurch are available.