# The New Zealand Government’s additional report, 2019 – 2022, to the United Nations Committee on the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

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## Glossary - additional Te Reo Māori words used in reporting, subsequent to the 2019 UNCRPD report

**Te Tiriti o Waitangi** – the Treaty of Waitangi – Aotearoa/New Zealand’s founding document signed by the British Crown and 540 Māori rangatira (chiefs) at Waitangi in the Bay of Islands in 1840.

**Te Ao** **Māori** – the Māori world view acknowledging the interconnectedness and interrelationship of all living and non-living things

**Tāngata whaikaha Māori** – the literal meaning is “people who are determined to do well” – this language is used by disabled Māori to reframe existing perceptions of disability by describing themselves as people who are determined to do well and create opportunities for themselves as opposed to being labelled as in the past.

**Whānau whaikaha – the family or network of people of tāngata whaikaha Māori**

**Tāngata whai ora (whaiora**) – used by Māori, particularly in the area of mental health, to reframe current perceptions of people with mental health challenges by describing themselves positively. The literal meaning of tangata whai ora is “a person seeking health.”

**Iwi/hāpū** – tribe and clan of identity and belonging for Māori.

**Kura** - school

**Tamariki** - children

**Rangatahi** – young people

**Ākonga** – students

**Aiga** – Samoan word for family often used when speaking about Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

## Introduction

1. This report is an update following the New Zealand Government’s response to “the list of issues prior to submission of the combined second and third periodic review of New Zealand” provided to the United Nations Committee in 2019. The report highlights areas of progress by the New Zealand Government in implementing the CRPD 2019-2022.

2. Since the last report, the world has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst Aotearoa New Zealand has had fewer COVID cases and deaths per capita than most other countries, progress in implementing the CRPD has been affected. Nevertheless, the Government has continued to prioritise engagement with disabled people/tāngata whaikaha Māori across significant high profile work programmes and as a result, has been able to progress some far-reaching initiatives in partnership with them.

3. In March/April 2022, 35 key Government agencies, representing the Government, reported to the CRPD Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM) through an online domestic forum. Whilst the Minister for Disability Issues, Hon Carmel Sepuloni, had intended to host this forum in Parliament, COVID restrictions meant that the forum needed to be held online. The forum provided agencies with an opportunity to hear directly from disabled people/tāngata whaikaha, their families and whānau about the issues that are of highest priority for them. The forum also created an opportunity for disabled people/tāngata whaikaha Māori, and their whānau and families to hear about the current work of the Government in progressing the rights of disabled people/tāngata whaikaha Māori and to gain a better understanding of how that work is being implemented and reported on. Questions were asked about current actions that were only dreams four years ago.

4. All agencies reported increased engagement with disabled people including tāngata whaikaha Māori to develop policies and practices and highlighted key actions in response to the two reports published by the IMM: *Making Disability Rights Real 2014-2019* and *Making Disability Rights Real in a Pandemic 2019-2021.*

5. Agencies reported much greater use of data and evidence in order to understand the current state for disabled people tāngata whaikaha Māori. Most agencies have more to do to be able to use data to monitor their progress and make change.

## Highlights since 2019

### Obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi

6. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand**.** Government agencies are increasingly striving to work in partnership with tāngata whaikaha Māori/whānau hauā Māori to build understanding of Te Ao Māori and include whānau and cultural connections in all their work, enhancing Māori health and wellbeing. This work is still at an early stage but has grown over the last four years.

7. New models of partnership with tāngata whaikaha Māori/whānau whaikaha will be fundamental to ensuring all voices are heard and understood as the new, Ministry for Disabled People comes into being.

8. Data indicates thattāngata whaikaha Māori and their whānau experience signifcant inequities.

9. A series of claims on behalf of tāngata whaikaha Māori are being heard at the Waitangi Tribunal [[1]](#footnote-1)over 2022 and 2023. The claims focus on how the health and disability systems have not historically provided well for tāngata whaikaha Māori. The Tribunal’s decisions will be important to determine future disability policy and service development.

### Pacific peoples

10. The rate of disability among Pacific peoples is about 11 percent of the Pacific population. It is estimated two in three Pacific disabled people live in Auckland, New Zealand’s largest city, and mainly in the lowest socioeconomic areas.

11. The 2021 review of the Ministry of Health’s Faiva Ora National Pasifika Plan 2016-2021 highlighted gaps and areas for improvement and identified opportunities for best practice within the health and disability system to be “fit for purpose” for the Pacific disabled community. Priorities for the next four years include:

* child and youth health
* increasing the leadership capacity of the Pacific disability workforce
* improving access to and experience of care
* taking an intersectional approach to disability and the wellbeing of Pacific people
* increasing the Pacific community’s understanding and awareness of disability
* getting evidence-based data on Pacific disabled people.

12. The refreshed Pacific Plan developed collaboratively with Pacific communities will be a “single plan” encompassing all stakeholders and the wider community. The Faiva Ora Leadership group will continue to give high-level advice to the Ministry of Health and guide the development of the Pacific Disability Action Plan.

13. Other key agencies such as Oranga Tamariki - the Ministry for Children, the Ministry of Transport - Waka Kotahi and the Ministry of Education also have action plans for Pacific Peoples which include actions to enhance outcomes for disabled children and young people.

### New Zealand Disability Strategy

14. The New Zealand Disability Strategy was developed in 2001, and later revised in 2016, with the aim of making New Zealand a fully inclusive society that highly values disabled people’s lives and continually enhances their full participation. It is underpinned by three principles: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ensuring disabled people are involved in decision-making that impacts them, which are realised through eight outcome areas important to disabled people. There is a strong focus on collecting better disability data to measure progress against the outcomes in the Strategy and to inform policymaking.

### The Disability Action Plan 2019-23

15. The Disability Action Plan 2019-23 is the Government’s primary, but not only, vehicle for implementing the Strategy. It was updated and agreed by Government in 2019 based on consultation and co-design with disabled people and the wider disability community. It reflects the eight outcomes of the Strategy i) education; ii) employment and economic security; iii) health and wellbeing; iv) rights protection and justice; v) accessibility; vi) attitudes; vii) choice and control; and viii) leadership.

16. Every six months, the Disabled Persons Organisations Coalition works with government officials to report on progress in implementing the Disability Action Plan. This isthen published on the Office for Disability Issues website.

### Disability system transformation

17. New Zealand has an increasingly diverse population with experiences of significantly inequitable health outcomes. This includes Māori, increasing populations of Pacific peoples and a growing Asian population. Within these cohorts, there are growing numbers of disabled, ageing, and rural populations.

18. The Disability System Transformation is a core component of the Government’s Health and Disability System Reform Programme. The Health and Disability System Review 2018-2020 was charged with recommending system-level changes that would be sustainable, lead to better and more equitable outcomes for all New Zealanders and shift the balance from treatment of illness towards health and wellbeing.

19. The Disability System Transformation is based on the Enabling Good Lives approach for disabled people which seeks to improve outcomes through greater choice and control over their supports and more use of natural and universal supports. Enabling Good Lives is based on key principles including self-determination, beginning early, person-centred, ordinary life outcomes, mainstream first, mana enhancing, easy to use and relationship building.

20. The New Zealand Ministry of Health has led work across government with people from the health and disability sectors. Enabling Good Lives pilot projects in three different areas across Aotearoa New Zealand have shown that this approach and system is making a significant difference to disabled people’s lives, their whānau and communities. The 17 critical shifts identified by disabled people and whānau include increased autonomy and social connectedness, improved quality of life, better use of funding, and better access to education and employment opportunities. The pilot projects also included higher uptake of support and services by groups traditionally marginalised, including tāngata whaikaha Māori and disabled Pacific peoples.

21. Enabling Good Lives will be rolled out nationally within the new Ministry for Disabled People as part of the New Zealand Government’s transformation of the disability system.

### New Ministry for Disabled People

22. As part of the Health and Disability System reforms, the New Zealand Government is establishing a new Ministry for Disabled People from July 2022, yet to be formally named. A key principle of the new Ministry’s establishment is that disabled people, tāngata whaikaha and whānau whaikaha Māori are embedded at each level of governance and are actively involved in decision-making and oversight.

23. The new Ministry for Disabled People will:

* drive better outcomes for all disabled people
* lead and coordinate cross-government strategic disability policy
* work to deliver and transform disability support services
* progress work on the broader transformation of the wider disability system.
* assist, monitor and report on outcomes for disabled people to ensure progress is being made in the right direction in the right way.

24. Importantly, while the new Ministry will need to ensure that it has a strong stewardship role for progressive realisation of the UNCRPD, and effective disability policy and service development, all other government agencies will need to continue to ensure that all policy works for disabled people and their families/whānau, using data effectively and engaging with disabled people and their whānau to do so.

### Accessibility

25. The New Zealand Government is accelerating efforts to make Aotearoa New Zealand more accessible by introducing a new accessibility framework that will take a progressive approach to identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to participation for disabled people, tāngata whaikaha and whānau whaikaha Māori and others with accessibility needs.

26. The Accelerating Accessibility work programme will be backed by enabling legislation, with a Bill to progress the legislation set to be introduced in the second half of 2022. This will involve the establishment of a new Ministerial Advisory Committee, to give independent advice on addressing accessibility barriers to the Minister for Disability Issues, led by and representing disabled people, tāngata whaikaha and whānau whaikaha Māori and others with accessibility needs. How services and facilities will be progressively made accessible will be determined as the Committee gives its advice.

27. Other cross-government work on accessibility includes the creation of an Accessibility Charter, co-designed and signed by government Chief Executives, focused on providing training for staff and ensuring awareness of accessibility in all aspects of people’s work. The Charter is now being implemented at a local government level.

28. Government agencies have worked collaboratively to enhance all areas of accessibility through implementation of the Lead Toolkit, the co-design of the Accessibility Charter with disabled people, and contribution to the development of the Accelerating Accessibility legislation work programme.

29. Work is currently underway to explore the best way to include Te Reo Māori without compromising accessibility. An issue remains in terms of trilingual interpreters. Options are being explored.

30. Options are currently being scoped to introduce a captioning and audio description regime across Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Data and evidence

31. Government agencies are increasingly working together to enhance their understanding and use of data and information about disabled people’s lives and outcomes through the Disability Data and Evidence Working Group. The group is jointly facilitated by Statistics New Zealand and the Office for Disability Issues with a strong focus on use of the Washington Short Set of Questions. All of Statistics New Zealand’s household surveys utilise the Washington Group Short Set, allowing for data to be disaggregated by disability status.

32. Individual agencies are committed to improving the collection of data disaggregated by disability. The New Zealand Health Survey, published in November 2020, disaggregated by disability for the first time. Subsequently, scoping is underway on the Patient Profile/National Health Index project which will correlate health and disability information about individuals. The Ministry of Health also included the Washington Group Short Set in the COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey.

1. Statistics New Zealand’s New Zealand Disability Survey, last held in 2013 and planned again for 2023, will collect details on disabled people’s characteristics, including their impairments, the supports they need, and their wellbeing compared to non-disabled people.
2. The Disability Data and Evidence Working Group is informing the Ministry of Education’s Te Rito project connecting information of ākonga and learners across kura, schools, ngā kōhanga reo and early learning services, to ensure the rights of disabled learners are paramount in relation to their information.
3. Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children is implementing a disability work programme that includes a focus on improving disability data collection. The work will involve hearing the voices of disabled children and their whānau, engaging with disabled people’s organisations and group and addressing issues identified in the Ministerial Advisory Board report *Hipokingia ki te Kahu Aroha Hipokingia ki te Katoa.*
4. The Public Service Commission census that included the extended Washington six questions was an important starting point knowing how disabled people in the public service are treated.
5. There are now increasingly reliable disability data sets across Government to inform policy development and monitor progress on the Disability Strategy. There is more work to be done on the effective use of consistent cross-government administrative data sets to assist agencies in understanding who is accessing services and their experience of services.

### Mahi Aroha Carers’ Strategy Action Plan

33. Government agencies have partnered with the Carers Alliance for Mahi Aroha Carers’ Strategy Action Plan 2019-2023. Several actions have relevance to disabled people and others with aged care needs, long term chronic health conditions and mental health and addiction needs and their family/whānau/āiga carers.

34. A controversial part of the Family Funded Care legislation has been repealed and changes have been made to policy, payments and eligibility for paying family carers. Models for flexible funding, Individualised Funding and Carers Support, and the 2020 changes to Funded Family Care have been actioned, particularly in relation to disabled people and family/whānau/āiga carers. Further advice is being developed on payment for family carers to ensure alignment with human rights law.

### Education

35. The Education and Training Act was legislated in 2020 and states “students who have special education needs (whether because of disability or otherwise) have the same rights to enrol, attend and receive education at State schools as students who do not”. This right is backed with:

* powers for the Ministry of Education to support school enrolment
* a power for the Ministry of Education to direct a school to enrol a student
* $1.1 billion per year in funding to provide learning support services.

36. The Ministry of Education includes disabled people’s representatives on key advisory groups, and within education policy design processes, including the Refresh of the New Zealand Curriculum and the update of the National Certificate of Education Attainment (NCEA).

37. The tertiary sector has worked with disabled students to develop *Kia Orite, a Code of Practice* to enable disabled learners to succeed in inclusive environments. The Tertiary Disabled Students’ Association has developed *Whiria Ngā Rau* to support student networks and providers to strengthen relationships between learners and providers.

### Housing

38. The Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development released in September 2021 outlines the government’s long-term vision for housing and urban development in Aotearoa New Zealand. This document takes a multi-decade approach to help align the work of both government agencies and the private sector, supporting the housing and urban development system to work toward realising an enduring set of outcomes. Increasing accessibility is acknowledged in the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development as an important part of ensuring houses across the housing and urban development system meet diverse needs.

39. One of the published priorities in the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development is to increase the supply of universally designed and accessible housing. To achieve this, the New Zealand Government is working with disabled people, iwi and Māori and industry to increase the proportion of new-build homes that are accessible and universally designed.

40. Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, the Government agency responsible for public housing, developed an Accessibility Policy in consultation with the disabled community in 2019. Through the implementation of that policy, a comprehensive definition of universal design as well as “accessible design” has been developed, requirements have been communicated to staff and training is being delivered. There is a commitment to increasing the number of homes that meet universal design standards.

41. A new Design Guide provides design and specification guidance for typical and standard typologies including diverse variations for customers who are disabled or have health conditions.

42. In 2020, recommendations from the New Zealand Spinal Cord Impairment Action Plan Final Evaluation report focussed on the need for alignment of Ministry of Health and ACC processes for access to equipment, housing modifications and transport. The recommendations are being addressed through the Health and Disability System reforms and cross-agency action to improve the processes for the funding and implementation of housing modifications and equipment.

### Seclusion and restraint

43. Following the recommendations in *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction,* the New Zealand Government launched a programme of work to repeal and replace the Mental Health Act 1992. Immediate, short-term improvements under the current legislation have included releasing new guidelines to improve people’s experiences under the Mental Health Act 1992 and making amendments to the Mental Health Act 1992 to eliminate indefinite treatment orders, better protect people’s rights and improve safety. Longer-term work to prepare for repeal and replacement is also progressing.

44. Public consultation on the discussion document to repeal and replace the Mental Health Act 1992 commenced in October 2021. This includes specific questions about the use of, or prohibition of, seclusion, restraint, or other restrictive practices. The inclusion of Māori and lived experience perspectives is a priority for the project. Policy options for new legislation will be developed and advice provided to the Government by the end of 2022.

45. In February 2022, the updated Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard New Zealand Standard 8134:2021 replaced the previous Standard. The Ngā Paerewa Standard reflects the shift towards more person- and whānau-centred health and disability services. People are empowered to make decisions about their own care and support to achieve their goals, with a stronger focus on outcomes for people receiving support.

46. While new legislation is being consulted on and developed, the Ministry of Health is developing guidelines to replace the Seclusion under the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992. The new guidelines will align with the Ngā Paerewa Standard and focus on reducing and eliminating seclusion and restraint, as well as the safe use of these practices when they cannot be avoided. National reporting on the use of restraint in mental health facilities was introduced in 2020 to strengthen monitoring and transparency in the use of this restrictive practice.

47. Guidelines regarding the use of seclusion under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care & Rehabilitation) Act 2003 were also updated in 2020. The focus of the guidelines has been to reduce the use of seclusion whilst ensuring safe practice when seclusion cannot be avoided.

48. Teacher training is being developed for a proposed new approach to minimising physical restraint in schools, which includes stronger recognition of the communication challenges faced by some neurodiverse children and young people.

### Removing barriers to civic participation and access to sport and recreation

49. The Electoral Commission’s Access 2020 Disability Strategy includes provision for persons with intellectual impairments to have someone support them to enrol, or to vote in a voting place. It also provides for more information and resources available in accessible formats. The Election Access Fund Act 2020 established a fund designed to remove or reduce barriers to standing as a candidate in a general election or a by-election faced by disabled individuals. The Electoral Commission is working with the disability sector to implement Government-allocated funding of an initial $1 million to allow grants to be made to disabled individuals seeking selection or standing as a candidate.

50. Aotearoa New Zealand is a sport-loving nation. Sport NZ’s Disability Action Plan includes an intermediate term goal for the improvement of physical environments and facilities, to ensure that they are usable for disabled people. The Disability Inclusion Fund provides support to initiatives and programmes that increase the opportunities for disabled youth to be physically active and supports new and innovative opportunities for improving accessibility.

### Justice

51. The Ministry of Justice is implementing a signifcant programme of change, Te Ao Mārama, “the world of light” to improve access to justice for all people, including disabled people. The programme is multi-faceted across all parts of the justice system ensuring all aspects of accessibility are included.

52. The Communication Assistance Quality Framework was implemented in 2021 with the aim of reducing barriers to effective communication between disabled participants and the justice system. Communication Assistants are one of the services available during a court proceeding to enable effective participation and access to justice for all people, regardless of their communication abilities.

53. Ten key Government agencies have been involved in a Joint Venture to develop *Te Aorerekura – the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence*. A key part of the strategy is recognising the diverse needs of both the victims and perpetrators of family violence and sexual violence. This includes an action to implement safeguarding responses for disabled and vulnerable adults

### Employment

54. The cross-Government *Working Matters: The Disability Employment Action Plan* was released in August 2020. This Action Plan recognises disabled peoples’ right to work and employment and aims for them to have an equal access to employment. It is one of several plans under the New Zealand Government’s Employment Strategy that aims to support its priority to ensure an inclusive economic recovery from COVID-19.

55. Progress on the Working Matters Action Plan is reported to the Employment, Education and Training Ministers Group every six months.

56. On 1 October 2021, the Government provided legislative guidance on a new Procurement Rule on Quality Employment Opportunities. This includes a requirement for supplier policies and initiatives to strengthen workforce participation and inclusion for particular groups, including disabled people, to be included in agency tender evaluation criteria.

57. The new rule (Rule 18A) is mandatory for New Zealand's central government agencies. Other government agencies such as school boards of trustees, are expected to have regard for the new rule and follow best practice.

58. The Lead Toolkit incorporates three key factors in the development of an inclusive workplace - disability awareness; reasonable accommodations; and accessibility. Agencies have developed disability awareness training for staff, and significantly increased use of accessible formats, including creation of accessible websites and apps, through a holistic all-of-Government approach

### Transport

59. Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency’s disability and accessibility team is leading work to ensure that accessibility is built into the way transport is provided across Aotearoa New Zealand. Continuing engagement with the disability sector has informed the work on the pedestrian network and public transport infrastructure guidance. A Disability Impact Assessment tool to assess the impact of proposed changes has been developed This will inform decisions about current and future packages.

60. Three research projects are underway, including understanding the transport experiences of disabled people, determining what barriers exist for people wanting to use Total Mobility and exploring new ways to improve outcomes, and understanding disabled people’s experiences of transport during COVID-19 lockdown.

### Personal integrity

61. The End of Life Choice Act 2019 was passed in November 2021. Detailed monitoring requirements have been included in the Act and will include representation of different groups seeking assisted dying, including Māori and disabled people.

62. The safeguards in place to prevent disabled people being disproportionately impacted by the Act include that, in order to be eligible to access assisted dying services, people must be aged 18 years or over, be suffering from a terminal illness that is likely to end their life within 6 months, be in an advanced state of irreversible decline in physical capability, be experiencing unbearable suffering that cannot be relieved in a manner that the person considers tolerable, and be competent to make an informed decision about assisted dying.

63. The New Zealand Government has emphasised that a person cannot receive assisted dying solely because they have a disability.

### Supported decision-making

64. The Minister of Justice has asked Te Aka Matua o te Ture | Law Commission to review the law relating to adult decision-making capacity. The Law Commission is an independent, publicly funded agency that provides law reform advice to the Government which does not direct how the Law Commission carries out its work or the recommendations it makes.

65. The Terms of Reference state that the Law Commission will work with disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, and their representative organisations to facilitate accessible consultation processes and maximise the participation of those individuals and communities most directly affected by the laws relating to adult decision-making capacity.

66. There will be a public consultation process in 2022. The Law Commission intends to report to the Minister Responsible for the Law Commission, the Minister of Justice, by the end of 2023.

### Disabled children and young people

67. Over the past two years, the Ministry of Health has worked with Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children to remove a legislative barrier to disabled children having the same access rights to services and supports as other children who are placed outside of their home situation. The repeal of section 141 and section 142 of the of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Oranga Tamariki) Act 2017 in July 2019 means that disabled children have the same rights and access to legal processes and services that all other children have. Both agencies have been working collaboratively to implement the changes required.

68. A renewal and enhancement to the agencies’ Memorandum of Understanding in July 2021 sets out that ongoing disability support is available to children irrespective where they live. Disability Support is transportable, so that the child can be supported in the environment that best meets their needs. There is recognition that parties must work collaboratively and in partnership with each other to respond effectively to the needs of disabled tamariki and rangatahi in a way that is mana-enhancing, works with their whānau, and helps to maintain the connection with their whānau. The views of the tamariki or rangatahi and their whānau, are sought and considered and reflected in decisions.

### Response to the Pandemic

#### Information

69. The Ministry of Health has the key responsibility for implementation of the Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry has engaged over the last two years with a range of specific disability groups to understand their experiences and challenges during COVID-19. Feedback from advisory groups, engagement groups and research has been used to inform communications approaches, service design and delivery and quality improvement initiatives.

70. A $2 million fund for Disabled People’s Organisations and other Non-Government Organisations was established for communities to support disabled people be informed about the vaccination and support uptake initiatives. This included the information dissemination through non-digital channels.

71. During May 2020, the Office for Disability Issues undertook a weekly survey on the issues and risks being experienced by disabled people in the COVID-19 environment. Targeted consultation was also undertaken. The surveys and the consultation sat alongside other information and issues that government agencies were made aware of through direct feedback from disabled people, the disability sector and through Disabled People’s Organisations.

72. The Ministry of Health has increased its use of accessible information in alternate formats. There has also been a shift to more online meetings. This has created more opportunities to engage more with disabled people. However, there are still issues around accessing technology for some disabled people

73. All-of-government announcements about the COVID-19 pandemic are available with a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter and are available as audio downloads. Written material is also posted on the Ministry of Health website.

#### Support

74. During the COVID-19 lockdown that began in March 2020, the Ministry of Health introduced flexibility for two disability support services:

* Individualised Funding, which is a mechanism that allows disabled people to manage the Home and Community Support Services they are allocated.
* Carer Support, which is a subsidy to give family members who are full-time carers of disabled people a break from their caring responsibilities.

75. This was to ensure disabled people had choice and control, continuity of support to enable equitable public health outcomes and access to support in a way that worked for them. Evidence gathered showed:

* people were able to access support that met their needs
* disabled people and their whānau reported positive outcomes
* while some disabled people changed how they use their funding, the overall volume of funding did not materially change from previous trends
* evidence and support from the community to implement the Enabling Good Lives vision and principles nationally.

76. Guidance was provided to the health and disability sector about adopting measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic personal cares have been considered an essential service and have continued to be provided. Home help has been available, if it could be provided safely, assessed on a person-by-person basis.

77. The COVID-19 vaccination and immunisation programme focused on enabling supported decision-making. This included the development of three supported decision-making tools, training for health workforce on supported decision-making and regular communications about the tools.

#### Education

78. In response to Covid-19, the Tertiary Education Commission enabled disabled learners to continue to access tertiary education and training through provision of suitable devices, adequate operating systems, programmes and technical support.

79. Throughout successive COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, the Ministry of Education and school-based specialist staff continued to check in with disabled children, their whānau and educators to provide adapted virtual guidance and support. This included virtual “home visits” and assessments, telepractice sessions by phone, a hardship fund for relevant technology and help for families to use the resources they had available in their homes to support the learning of their children and young people.

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1. The Waitangi Tribunal is a standing commission of inquiry. It makes recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to legislation, policies, actions or omissions of the Crown that are alleged to breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)