

Tēnā koe,

Atamira | Platform Trust (Platform) welcomes the opportunity to comment on Stats New Zealand's Consultation on content for the 2023 New Zealand Disability Survey (The Survey). Platform is a peak body representing Mental Health and Addiction (MHA) Non-governmental organisations (NGO) and community sector organisations. Notably, some of these MHA NGO and community organisations include organisations who provide disability services, alongside MHA services. As a part of this submission, Platform consulted with these member organisations.

In addition, Platform represents a wider network of MHA NGOs (approximately 166) who share the same aspiration of a MHA system and sector that is driven by the need for better and more equitable outcomes for all. Collectively, during the year 2019/20 the whole MHA NGO & community sector organisations supported over 75,940 tangata whaiora, and their whānau, that are directly impacted by MHA issues.

## Introduction

As a part of this submission, Platform consulted with member organisations who provide disability services. The feedback was generally positive, with the survey covering key areas in appropriate ways. There was concern with underlying assumptions of the survey, as well as areas that are missing key data currently. These are outlined below.

## Impairment subgroups

As a part of the screening questions for the 2023 Disability Survey, participants who fall under multiple impairment subgroups are required to record a main impairment. Many people with a disability will fall into multiple subgroups, any of which will affect them the most at any given time. Many of our member organisations who provide disability services report that it is common for tangata whaiora to have physical, intellectual, and psychological disabilities affecting their lives. Missing the intersectionality does not give an accurate picture of how people with disabilities are faring. From a service perspective, this information will be used by other agencies to inform need. If this is inaccurate, services will not be adequately contracted to support the actual number of tangata whaiora, the organisations will face sustainability issues, and people with disabilities will not receive the support they require. The survey needs to allow for participants to put down as many disabilities as they need to, not a main impairment, to collect accurate data.

## Different questions for modules

The survey operates under the assumption that different modules face different needs and barriers. Throughout the survey, the different modules; Adults living in private households, Children living in private households, Adults living in residential care, are asked a reduced set of different questions. For example, under S.6 Employment, Adults living in residential facilities are excluded. This assumes that all people living in a residential facility are unable to work. People may be in residential facility for a variety of reasons. Operating from the assumption that these different modules face different needs and barriers, risks Stats NZ missing key data.

## Areas that need extra data

### Housing

Housing is an increasing issue within the disability sector. Supply and accessibility of suitable housing has decreased. The question should be expanded to include wait times for people with disabilities, and what housing is being used during these wait times. This information is vital for understanding the housing issues for people with disabilities.

### Supported employment

Supported employment was an area that was identified as missing. There is concern that the current questions do not capture the current effects on employment for people with disabilities. The questions mostly cover employment from a functionality and physical access perspective. Services who provide supported employment services have reported a reduction in available jobs because of the COVID-19



pandemic. This is not due to the fact the more people with disabilities are unable to work, but rather the wider effects of COVID-19. Questions should be expanded to collect information on the availability, need and desire for employment.

### Health Services

In the survey, S.5 Health services, there are questions on access to services. This is unclear whether this includes services who would not fall under health, but the wider social sector. This needs to be expanded to include services focusing on employment, housing etc.

Again, there needs to be the addition of questions based on wait time. Reports from organisation's suggest that wait times are increasing for both an initial needs assessment and for ongoing support after. Wait times and overall access to services is a major impact on people with disabilities overall quality of life.

**END**

**For further, contact**

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