



February 2005

## Working towards a Single Core Benefit

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT PLANS TO INTRODUCE A SINGLE CORE BENEFIT IN 2007/08.

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### **What is the Single Core Benefit?**

The Single Core Benefit is about simplifying the benefit system so we can provide better, more individualised services to Work and Income clients. **No one will be financially worse off as a result of these changes.**

The Single Core Benefit will eventually replace the Unemployment Benefit, Sickness Benefit, Invalids Benefit, Domestic Purposes Benefit, and Widows Benefit. There will be extra payments for people both in and out of work, including the Accommodation Supplement, childcare assistance, hardship payments, and payments for people with disabilities.

New Zealand Superannuation, Orphans Benefit and the Unsupported Child Benefit will not be affected by the move to a Single Core Benefit. The emergency and youth benefits are also likely to remain separate benefits.

### **Why introduce a Single Core Benefit?**

Currently the services that clients can receive are determined by what type of benefit they are on and how long they've been on it. Under the new system, each client's individual income support, employment, education and training needs will be identified. They will then get Work and Income services to meet their needs, regardless of their benefit type or time on benefit.

There will also be a greater focus on working with clients to identify how they can work either now or in the future. People who have such serious health problems or disabilities that it would be difficult for them to consider work at all will continue to be exempt from any work expectations. We will link them to available support services.

The Single Core Benefit will be easier to understand than the current range of benefits.

### **What happens next?**

The development of the Single Core Benefit is in its early stages and won't be introduced until 2007/08. Over the next year we'll be talking with key people who can help us with this work. Work and Income clients will receive more information well in advance of any change.

### **Getting more information**

The following information is available on the Ministry of Social Development's website at [www.msd.govt.nz](http://www.msd.govt.nz) or by phoning 0800 559 009:

- A media release, and questions and answers
- The report that covers the work and the decisions that Government has made so far.