# Ministry of Social Development logo

# Principal Advisor Engagement

# Disability Support Services

## Our purpose

**Manaaki tangata, Manaaki whānau**

We help New Zealanders to be safe, strong and independent

## Our commitment to Māori

As a **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** partner we are committed to supporting and enabling Māori, whānau, hapū, Iwi and communities to realise their own potential and aspirations.

## Our strategic direction



## Our Values



## Working in the Public Service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āianei, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki. He kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna i runga i āna hononga ki a ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka tautoko mātou i te kāwanatanga manapori. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hapori, ā, e arahina ana mātou e ngā mātāpono me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui i roto i ā mātou mahi.

In the public service we work collectively to make a meaningful difference for New Zealanders now and in the future. We have an important role in supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi.  We support democratic government. We are unified by a spirit of service to our communities and guided by the core principles and values of the public service in our work.

## The outcomes we want to achieve

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| New Zealanders get the support they require | New Zealanders are resilient and live in inclusive and supportive communities | New Zealanders participate positively in society and reach their potential |

## We carry out a broad range of responsibilities and functions including

* Employment, income support and superannuation
* Community partnerships, programmes and campaigns
* Advocacy for seniors, disabled people and youth
* Public Housing assistance and emergency housing
* Resolving claims of abuse and neglect in state care
* Student allowances and loans

## **He whakataukī\***

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| --- | --- |
| Unuhia te rito o te harakeke  Kei hea te kōmako e kō?  Whakatairangitia, rere ki uta, rere ki tai;  Ui mai ki ahau,  He aha te mea nui o te ao?  Māku e kī atu,  He tangata, he tangata, he tangata\* | If you remove the central shoot of the flaxbush  Where will the bellbird find rest?  Will it fly inland, fly out to sea, or fly aimlessly;  If you were to ask me,  What is the most important thing in the world?  I will tell you,  It is people, it is people, it is people |

\* We would like to acknowledge Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri Trust for their permission to use this whakataukī

## Position detail

### Overview of position

The Principal Engagement Advisor is accountable for the over-arching engagement strategy and supporting engagement strategies with key population groups and priority cohorts. The Principal Advisor leads the planning, integration, management and delivery of the complex internal and external engagement programme for the Disability Support Services (DSS) Taskforce.

The Principal Advisor is responsible for providing strategic advice and guidance to design, enable and support the delivery of a comprehensive engagement approach for the Programme. This role will, throughout the programme, provide recommendations on key strategic choices the Programme will require to manage and deliver effective engagement.

**DSS Review Programme**

The DSS Group has been established to ensure fairer access to disability support services in New Zealand, ensuring those with the greatest needs receive quality support services. The DSS business group is comprised of DSS operations, a dedicated taskforce to deliver the DSS Review Programme and oversee the transition of DSS from Whaikaha into MSD, and an organisational health and capability uplift programme.

The Group is responsible for the delivery of DSS services to disabled New Zealanders. It also leads the DSS Review programme which will provide the capability uplift required of DSS to deliver better services and outcomes, and ensure the sustainability of DSS into the future, including appropriate commercial management of DSS contracts, procurement and finances.

The DSS Review Programme has been established to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review into DSS that:

* provide disabled people with certain and consistent access to DSS, no matter what their circumstances or where they live in New Zealand
* prioritise funding for disabled people with the highest needs, and those who would benefit most from early intervention support,
* ensure that Enabling Good Lives (EGL) principles are put into practice
* ensure that the long-term sustainability of DSS is strengthened to provide disabled people and carers with services that are both fair and affordable.

The Programme workstreams include:

* Policy and data - provide advice on future eligibility approaches and system settings
* Designing the future changes to DSS contracting and procurement and aligning with other systems
* Transition and integration of DSS operations from Whaikaha into the Ministry of Social Development
* A Prorogramme Management Office (PMO) will provide overall programme coordination, reporting, and communications.

### Location

National Office

### Reports to

Engagement Delivery Lead, PMO, Taskforce

## Key responsibilities

Engagement leadership

* Proactively work with programme workstream leads and others on the development of engagement strategies and plans, implementation, and sustainability, and provide advice on the most effective approaches, pre-empting possible issues.
* Ensure engagement activities across the Programme are coordinated to avoid any potential conflicts, ensure the Programme engages effectively to gain buy in and overcomes resistance from kaimahi, people who use our services, partners, advisory and reference groups, Māori as tangata whenua, Pacific, cross-government partners, media and all stakeholders.
* Develop engagement plans and processes, including the schedule and overall engagement project timelines and develop relationships across the programme and the business to ensure programme engagement is synchronised with wider DSS activity.
* Develop and ensure the effective implementation of the organisational engagement strategy and approach for the programme.
* Lead the centralised engagement accountability and function in the programme that works with the Leadership Team, Service Delivery (including regional commissioners and their teams), and the Transformation Office to create and support the development of effective programme engagement.
* Provide expert advice and guidance to programme leaders on the strategic approach to engagement.
* Support the design, development, and implementation of engagement monitoring across the programme to build insights, identify and manage potential opportunities or risks.
* Provide strategic advice as well as immediate and tactical advice.
* Lead the internal and external engagement programme, including the delivery of internal engagement sessions including speakers, invitations and communication, event briefs, project plans, budgets and run sheets.
* Develop and monitor project plans and advise on content.
* Keep up to date with new engagement technologies and provide advice to DSS on ways these could be used.
* Help to develop the engagement skills and expertise of others in the programme.
* Support DSS’s communication of engagement progress with Ministers.
* Work with managers and the Engagement, Communications and Change Lead to manage the procurement of services needed to deliver a successful engagement process.

**Programme management**

* Ensure all engagement strategies, plans, projects, and initiatives are aligned with the programme’s strategy, as well as the overall direction and priorities of the programme.
* Work closely with the programme Communications team in developing effective engagement material for a range of audiences and purposes.

Stakeholder and relationship management

* Work closely with workstream engagement leads to ensure engagement sessions are fit for purpose and reflect the local perspective and priorities.
* Foster positive and co-operative working relationships with the Programme leadership team and other managers and business units
* Maintain a client focused approach and ensure all requests for information and services are managed and responded to in a timely way.
* Build strong and effective internal networks and relationships across the wider Ministry and with key external stakeholders.
* Lead a consistent and co-ordinated approach to managing stakeholder relationships at all levels.
* Deliver stakeholder engagement planning in alignment with the communications strategy.

Risk management

* Develop key strategies to manage issues and risks as they arise, anticipate new issues and risks, or change in status of risks, and plan for risk areas that cannot be avoided.
* Keep the Engagement, Communications and Change Lead and senior managers and governance groups informed of any issues and risks impacting on DSS’s reputation and advice on how these will be mitigated.

Team support

* Provide cover for the Communications, Engagement and Change Lead and others within the wider team when required.
* Identify and act on personal learning and development opportunities.

## Embedding te ao Māori

* Embedding Te Ao Māori (te reo Māori, tikanga, kawa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi) into the way we do things at MSD/DSS.
* Building more experience, knowledge, skills and capabilities to confidently engage with whānau, hapū and iwi.

## Health, safety and security

### Employee

* Understand and implement your Health, Safety and Security (HSS) accountabilities as outlined in the HSS Accountability Framework.
* Ensure you understand, follow and implement all Health, Safety and Security and wellbeing policies and procedures.

## Emergency management and business continuity

* Remain familiar with the relevant provisions of the Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plans that impact your business group/team.
* Participate in periodic training, reviews and tests of the established Business Continuity Plans and operating procedures.

## Know-how

* Tertiary qualification in a relevant discipline or equivalent operational experience.
* Extensive and demonstrated experience in leading strategic engagement programmes including effective stakeholder mapping and strategic advice on priority stakeholders/populations/cohorts.
* Significant experience in designing, leading and delivering successful engagement strategies and tactics
* Proven experience in influencing, negotiating and mediating where there are differing views to ensure the best possible engagement approaches to meet outcomes.
* Deep understanding of the needs of diverse communities and leading programmes that ensure everyone has a voice
* Proven experience in balancing different types of engagement to ensure a thorough and wide-ranging consultation and integration process
* Experience in effective engagement with Māori, Pacific, other ethnic groups and disabled.
* Substantial experience creating productive working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and developing strong stakeholder engagement.
* Extensive experience with developing a positive atmosphere that encourages building engagement capability within your team and organization.
* Demonstrated ability to work in environments where things can shift, move or change quickly and the ability to adapt your approach to ensure engagement success.
* Experience working with senior leadership, with strong judgement and intellectual flexibility and confidence providing expert advice.
* Deep understanding and experience in the public sector environment and the role, duties and expectations of public servants.
* Strong understanding of the political environment and the implication for the Ministry including reputational risk.
* Proven project management experience, particularly in the management of multifaceted, complex and multi-stakeholder projects within the public sector.
* A demonstrated commitment to the provision of quality services and delivery of results.
* Strong understanding of and ability to implement accessibility requirements for engagement, including NZSL translation services.
* Excellent understanding of and ability to implement tikanga for engagement.

## Attributes

* Strong influencing skills.
* Strong relationship and engagement skills.
* Excellent skills in critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
* High level of organisational and environmental awareness.
* Strong mathematical and statistical analysis skills with a focus on quality and accuracy
* Strong problem solving and decision-making skills.
* Exercises sound judgement and political sensitivity.
* Excellent research, numerical, planning and organisational skills
* Organisational and environmental awareness.
* Ability to think strategically with a view of future requirement.
* Highly effective communication skills.
* Flexible, adaptable and pragmatic.
* Strong client focus.
* Establishes a high-performing culture.
* Welcomes and values diversity and contributes to an inclusive working environment where differences are acknowledged and respected.

## Key relationships

### Internal

* Communications and Engagement Leaders
* Disability Support Services leadership
* Engagement Delivery Lead, Taskforce
* Programme Director, Disability Support Services
* Senior leaders across DSS
* Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha leaders and communications team
* Ministers’ Offices
* Communications and Engagement Team
* Media team
* Regional offices
* Other DSS staff as appropriate

### External

* Social and disability sector government agencies
* Disabled people
* Disability sector – including NASCs, EGL sites, Hosts, peak bodies and providers
* Unions
* Diverse range of stakeholders including Māori, Pacific and disabled communities

## Other

### Delegations

* Financial – No
* Human Resources – No

### Direct reports – No

### Security clearance – No

### Children’s worker – No

Limited adhoc travel may be required

**Position Description Updated:** June 2025