



## **IHC Submission: Budget Policy Statement 2019**

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## **1. Key points and recommendations**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Budget Policy Statement 2019.

IHC supports the introduction of a Wellbeing Outlook in Budget 2019 and the Government's focus on improving the intergenerational wellbeing and living standards of all New Zealanders.

We have seen and endorse the submission and recommendations made by CCS Disability Action that the Budget Policy Statement and the Wellbeing Budget needs to include:

1. Budget initiatives to address the labour market and educational disadvantage disabled people face.
2. An increase in the government transfers to disabled people through a higher disability allowance (with no restrictions on what it can be used for) and higher disability-related income support.
3. A substantial increase to the rate of the Child Disability Allowance.
4. A focus on improving the mental wellbeing of disabled people, including disabled young people.
5. Provisions to ensure that all mental health initiatives are accessible for, and meet the needs of, all disabled people.
6. A commitment to ensure mental health initiatives are designed in conjunction with disabled people, especially those initiatives that specifically target people under 24-years-old.

People with intellectual disability experience some of the greatest inequities and poorest health, social and economic outcomes of any population group in New Zealand.

We make this submission to call for more explicit attention and visibility to be given to people with intellectual disabilities, and their families and whānau, to ensure they are not left out or behind in any of the five priorities in Budget 2019.

## **2. About IHC**

IHC advocates for the rights, inclusion and welfare of all people with intellectual disabilities and supports them to live satisfying lives in the community.

IHC was founded in 1949 by a group of parents who wanted equal treatment from the education, health and social service systems for their children with intellectual disability. Today IHC is still striving for these same outcomes and is committed to advocating for the rights, welfare and inclusion of all people with an intellectual disability throughout their lives.

We support people with intellectual disability to lead satisfying lives and have a genuine place in the community as citizens. We believe that the foundations for inclusion of people with intellectual disability in society are built on integrated support to families of children with intellectual disability.

Underpinning our work is the principle that intellectually disabled children and young people are part of the community of all children and young people – they are entitled

to full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children and young people<sup>1</sup>.

### **3. IHC's overall response**

#### **3.1 Inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the four capitals**

IHC supports the Government's move to use a wellbeing approach in the Budget process. The description of the wellbeing approach "enabling people to have the capabilities they need to live lives of purpose, balance, and meaning for them" aligns closely with IHC's mission and beliefs. IHC believes in people being treated with respect and dignity; having a say in their lives; living, learning, working and enjoying life as part of a community; having support to meet their goals and aspirations; being part of a family.

However, to ensure it applies to all New Zealanders, we ask that greater consideration be given to how the wellbeing approach applies to people with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau, and the extent to which their living standards or quality of life are reflected in the wellbeing indicators.

For example, we note that human capital is defined as the skills, knowledge, and physical and mental health that enable people to participate fully in work, study, recreation and society more broadly. People with intellectual disability face barriers to each of the key elements of wellbeing linked to human capital: employment; income and social connections.

- Based on overseas estimates (New Zealand does not collect impairment specific employment data) people with intellectual disabilities have the lowest employment participation rates within the disabled population.
- Most people with intellectual disabilities who have paid work are in part time employment. In 2017 nearly three quarters of people in paid work who use IDEA Services were working less than 15 hours per week.
- 43% of young people with disability are not in education, employment or training, four times the rate for non-disabled young people.
- Children with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty than their non-disabled peers.
- People with intellectual disability have significantly poorer health outcomes than people without intellectual disabilities.
- Males with intellectual disabilities have an average life expectancy of more than 18 years below the life expectancy for all New Zealand males and females with intellectual disabilities have an average life expectancy almost 23 years below the life expectancy for all New Zealand females.
- People with intellectual disabilities are more vulnerable to mental health conditions than the general population.

Similarly, in relation to social capital, people with intellectual disability face significant, daily barriers to participation in education and community and to developing social connections. People with intellectual disabilities can be vulnerable to violence and abuse with very few avenues for assistance or redress, which is compounded by the lack of publicly funded independent advocacy. For example, the 2013 Disability

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Survey (the latest Disability Survey) showed disabled people are more likely to experience violent crime, compared to non-disabled people: people with disabilities aged 15 plus were 2.3 times more likely to have been the victim of violent crime in the previous 12 months, and people with disabilities aged 15 to 44 were 4.2 times more likely, than non-disabled people.

Unless steps are taken to include people with intellectual disabilities and their families in the Living Standards Framework and ensure their experiences are reflected in indicators of wellbeing there is a real risk that, as a population group, they will be left behind.

### **3.2 Inclusion in the Budget 2019 priorities**

*Creating opportunities for productive businesses, regions, iwi and others to transition to a sustainable and low emissions economy.*

IHC strongly supports the focus on providing opportunities to sustainably grow and modernise our economy. We anticipate that people with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau are likely to be a group particularly vulnerable to negative impacts of climate change such as the disruptions caused by extreme weather events or rising sea-levels.

We submit that sustainable and low-emissions economy should also be inclusive and value the contributions of all.

People with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau should be explicitly included and made visible in this Budget priority.

*Supporting a thriving nation in the digital age through innovation, social and economic opportunities*

The digital age and technological development offer much potential to improve the wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau. However, especially if people with intellectual disabilities do not receive the appropriate support to participate in the digital world, the digital age may also exacerbate their levels of loneliness and being left out.

People with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau should be explicitly included and made visible in this Budget priority.

*Lifting Māori and Pacific incomes, skills and opportunities*

Lifting the incomes, skills and opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities and their families and whānau should also be a priority.

*Reducing child poverty and improving child wellbeing, including addressing family violence*

Many children with disabilities do not have the material resources and income they need to realise their rights, including those to develop to their full potential and participate in society on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers.

Children with disability are more likely to live in low income families. Data from the 2013 Disability Survey (the latest available) shows:

- 34 % of disabled children living in families that earn under \$50,000 a year, compared to only 24 % of non-disabled children.
- an estimated 17% of carers of children with disability were unemployed.
- 30% of disabled children lived in one parent households, compared to 17% of non-disabled children.

Estimates from the 2013 Disability Survey also suggest that children with disability were less likely, in the previous four weeks, than non-disabled children to have had music, art, or other similar lessons; played a team sport; done other physical activity such as swimming or gymnastics; visited friends; or been away on holiday in the past 12 months.

IHC submitted on both the Child Poverty Reduction Bill and the initial Child Wellbeing Strategy. Both of these submissions are available on the [IHC website submissions page](#) and set out in more detail why it is important to have a focus on children with disabilities and their families and whānau in this Budget priority. We will continue to work with the Child Poverty and Wellbeing Units in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and would also be pleased to provide more information to the Treasury should that be useful.

*Supporting mental wellbeing for all New Zealanders, with a special focus on under 24-year-olds.*

We strongly endorse the point made in the CCS Disability Action submission on Budget Policy Statement 2019, that people with disabilities are rarely included in discussions surrounding mental health and wellbeing.

We draw your attention to the fact that young people with intellectual disabilities<sup>2</sup> are six times more likely to develop a diagnosable disorder than those who do not have intellectual disabilities.

It is critical that young people with intellectual disabilities are made visible and included in this Budget priority and able to take part in designing mental health initiatives targeted at them.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Budget Policy Statement 2019. We do not wish to speak to this submission but would be happy to provide clarification or more information if required. Please contact Andrea Jamison [andrea.jamison@ihc.org.nz](mailto:andrea.jamison@ihc.org.nz) in the first instance.

More information about people with intellectual disability is attached as Appendix 1.

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<sup>2</sup> See CCS Disability Action submission on the Budget Policy Statement 2019. Please note “intellectual disabilities” is the term used by IHC and “learning disabilities” is the term used by CCS Disability Action to describe the same population group.

## Appendix 1: Who are the population of people with intellectual disabilities?

People with intellectual disabilities are a diverse group with a wide range of skills and abilities. Having an intellectual impairment means it is harder to learn new things and understand complicated information; support may be needed with everyday activities and that the impairment is evident from birth or childhood and affects someone for their whole life.

There are over 90,000 people with intellectual disabilities (2 per cent of the population) in New Zealand.<sup>i</sup>

- Children with intellectual disabilities make up 5 per cent of the children's 0-14 population.
- Adults with intellectual disabilities aged 15-44 make up three per cent, and those over 45 make up one per cent of the adult population.
- Māori and Pacific people have higher than average disability rates after adjusting for differences in ethnic population groups.
- There are more males living with intellectual disability, both as children and adults.
- Between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of people with intellectual disability also have autism.
- People with intellectual disability are the largest group using Ministry of Health (MoH) Disability Support Service's,<sup>ii</sup> with around half identifying intellectual disability as their primary disability. Many of this group also have a physical disability.

In the future it is likely there will be increased numbers of people with intellectual disability due to:

- Increased in survival rates for pre-term babies and in numbers of people with high and complex needs.
- Increased in awareness and identification of autism spectrum disorder, foetal alcohol syndrome along with a growing number of syndrome specific conditions being identified.
- The ageing population which means, as with the general population, people with intellectual disability living longer.

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<sup>i</sup> Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Disability Survey 2013*

<sup>ii</sup> Ministry of Health, Demographic report on clients allocated Ministry of Health's Disability Support Services as at September 2016 – released July 2017.