



Submission to the Governance and Administration  
Committee on the Local Government (Community  
wellbeing) Amendment Bill 2018

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**Trish Grant  
Director of Advocacy  
IHC New Zealand Inc  
PO Box 4155  
Wellington**

Tel: 04 472 2247



## **Introduction and key points**

1. The well-being of people with intellectual disability and their families is inextricably linked to the wellbeing of their communities.
2. IHC strongly supports a purpose of local government being “to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities” and therefore welcomes the reinstatement of the four aspects of community well-being in the Local Government Act 2002.
3. The Bill is an opportunity to promote community wellbeing that is inclusive and takes into account the rights, needs and views of people with intellectual disability and their families. An inclusive definition of community well-being:
  - will contribute to the well-being of people with intellectual disability and their families as community members as well as offering a way to address inequities and reduce disparities;
  - be consistent with New Zealand’s obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD)

## **IHC**

4. IHC was founded in 1949 by a small group of parents who wanted equal treatment from the education and health systems for their children with intellectual disabilities, within their local communities. The IHC of today is still advocating for the rights, welfare and inclusion of all people with an intellectual disability. We work towards all people with an intellectual disability leading satisfying lives and having a genuine place in their community, throughout their lives.

## **Defining community well-being with reference to the wellbeing of people with intellectual disability**

5. IHC believes in people with intellectual disability having a say in their lives and living, learning, working and enjoying life as part of a community.
6. We note that the constitution of community as set out in schedule 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 focuses on territorial area rather than the people who, in common understanding of the term, make up a community. Community well-being should be defined and assessed with reference to the experiences and views of all those living within a community, including those with intellectual disability who can be marginalised or not included in public policy and decision-making.
7. Having an accessible and inclusive community and feeling like they are welcome and belong is central to the well-being of people with intellectual disability and their families.

8. The principles underpinning Enabling Good Lives<sup>1</sup>, which is the new approach to supporting disabled people that underpins the transformation of the disability support system currently underway, also reflect the importance of belonging in a community to the wellbeing and quality of life of people with disabilities.
9. Enabling Good Lives is based on the principles of co-design, mainstream first, ordinary life outcomes, being person-centred and mana-enhancing. It is about people having greater choice and control over the supports they receive, so they can plan for the lives they want. A core idea of Enabling Good Lives is that people live in varied communities and that some communities may need to do things differently to suit their specific circumstances and preferences. A primary focus will be assisting disabled people and their families to access and contribute to community-based options, supports and services.
10. There is a synergy between Enabling Good Lives and reinstatement of the 4 aspects of community well-being. Communities that have strong social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes are more likely to enable people with disability, and their families, to have true choice and control.

#### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD)**

11. New Zealand ratified the UNCRPD in 2008. Article 19 of the Convention sets out the right to live independently and be included in the community. It provides:

*'States Parties to the present Convention recognise the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community....'*

12. Reinstating the 4 aspects of community well-being is consistent with New Zealand's international obligations because, properly applied, it will help the Government to facilitate the full inclusion and participation of people with disability in their communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz>