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IHC comment on Healthy Homes Standards

IHC welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed Healthy Homes Standards for heating, ventilation, moisture ingress, drainage and draught stopping.

IHC's mission is to advocate for the rights, inclusion and welfare of all people with intellectual disabilities and support them to live satisfying lives in the community.

This comment from IHC is focussed on the rights of people with intellectual disabilities and why the development of standards is such an important part of improving and safeguarding their wellbeing, including belonging and participating in their communities.

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

Men and women with intellectual disability live, respectively, 18 and 23 years fewer than the general population, and people with intellectual disabilities have two times the rate of potentially preventable deaths. Given the links between housing quality and good health, having standards that improve the quality of rental properties is particularly important for people with intellectual disability.

People with intellectual disability are likely to be life-long beneficiaries and are over represented in poverty and low income statistics. This means people with intellectual disability are unlikely to have the income or asset base to afford to buy their own home in the current housing market. They are likely to rent their home.

Similarly, children with disability and their families are also more likely to be living in rental properties because children with disability are more likely to live in low income families. Data from Statistics New Zealand's 2013 Disability Survey¹ shows:

- 34 % of disabled children living in families that earn under \$50,000 a year, compared to only 24 % of non-disabled children
- 17% of carers of children with disability were unemployed²
- 30% of disabled children lived in one parent households, compared to 17% of non-disabled children.

¹ Statistics New Zealand. (2014). *Disability Survey: 2013*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

² CCS Disability Action *Submission on the Child Poverty Reduction Bill 2018*. Page 9. Retrieved from <https://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/assets/resource-files/Submission-on-the-Child-Poverty-Reduction-Bill.pdf>

We therefore ask that the rights, needs and circumstances of people with intellectual disability and their families, across the lifespan, be actively considered in the development of Healthy Homes standards.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you if there anything further we can help with.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish Grant', with a stylized, cursive script.

Trish Grant
Director of Advocacy