

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2006



This issue includes:

- **CAROLYN'S CORNER**
- **FUNDING FOR MINISTRY P2 & P3 APPLICATIONS**
- **TIMEFRAMES FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS/COMMUNICATIONS**
- **OVERVIEW—TENDER PROCESS**
- **PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY TEAM**
BY WYNNE DONOVAN
- **NEW MINISTRY APPLICATION FORMS (ELECTRONIC)**
- **2006 IN REVIEW**
- **2007 ACCESSABLE OPEN DAY**
- **HOLIDAY SEASON HOURS**

Carolyn's Corner www.accessable.co.nz

This year has seen many changes and upgrades to the **accessible** website

- Our Home Page now features direct links to any new information that has been added to our site.
- You will have noticed a label like this **New** appearing along-side various links. This is to indicate to you that the particular link is new or has updated information
- We have also changed the way in which we communicate with you about our website. In the past we have informed Assessors and Case Managers of any changes or updates via an **accessible** Newsletter. In June 2006 we began emailing Assessors and Case Managers each time new information became available on the website.

I would like to thank all of you who have provided us with positive feedback regarding these e-mail notifications. It has been pleasing to see the increase in our website statistics over the last 6 months indicating that you are indeed visiting the website more.

If you don't have an e-mail address registered with us and would like to receive this information via e-mail here is what you can do!

Ministry Assessors can email Judy Denaro at Enable NZ;

judy-anne.denaro@enable.co.nz

ACC Assessors or Case Managers can e-mail Carolyn Peat at **accessible**: info@accessable.co.nz

Funding for Ministry P2 and P3 Applications

The Ministry of Health has informed **accessible** that funding is to be released for Priority 2 and Priority 3 applications that were received prior to and including 30th June 2006. The process to complete this is rather complex as we must ensure that the equipment, housing alterations, driver assessments or vehicle purchase/modifications are still required.

Assessors will receive the usual letters for these applications asking for confirmation that the requested equipment or modification is still required. On receipt of this information orders to purchase or confirmation of trial are completed. Audiology clients will also receive letters to take to their audiologist to begin to trial their hearing aids.

If you have clients with waiting list applications before 1 July 2006 on the waiting list and have not received this letter by 18 December 2006, please send an email to Carolyn Peat on info@accessable.co.nz and request follow up.

accessible Contact Information

Freephone 0508 001 002, Phone 09 620 1700

Facsimile 09 620 1702, Email info@accessable.co.nz

P O Box 27 804 Mount Roskill, AUCKLAND 1440

Timeframes for Processing Applications/Communications

It may be helpful to Assessors to follow this process to assist with timeframes for processing of Ministry of Health funding applications.

As you know, the timeframes for processing Ministry of Health funding applications at **accessible** are within 2 - 4 weeks of receipt.

- **accessible** sends out an acknowledgement letter to say the application has been received and loaded into the system; this takes about 1 week.
- The Assessors can then note the acknowledgement date and the application # M0111111 in their diaries so that they can keep a track on timeframes. From that point you can follow up if you have not received any progress on the application within 3 - 4 weeks.
- **accessible** also processes all communications received within the same timeframes, i.e. within 2 - 4 weeks of receipt, e.g. notification to purchase equipment as trial was successful, replies to queries, new add-ons, replacements etc. This should also help with your tracking of timeframes.

Hot Tip, some very clever Assessors have been using the acknowledgement letter to fax to **accessible** advising that trial successful please purchase+

New Ministry Application Forms (Electronic)

accessible has been working to create brand new more user friendly Forms. A considerable number of Assessors expressed how they would love to be able to fill out the Application Forms on their computer screens, so with this in mind we have spent the last few months working on and developing Microsoft Word versions of our Ministry of Health Application forms.

We hope to release Electronic versions of the Standard and Complex Equipment Application Forms in early 2007, followed closely by the Housing Modifications Form. The electronic form can be filled out on your computer then printed Once the required signatures have been collected then it can be faxed to us. When these forms are ready for release we will also provide an instruction sheet to assist in navigating around the forms.

For those Assessors that do not have access to a computer we have created Non PC versions of the same forms that can be written onto and then faxed to us. This is an exciting new development for us and we hope you will enjoy using the new forms when they are released next year.

Overview – Tender Process

As part of the effective management of the equipment budget for the Ministry and our contractual obligations to ACC **accessible** is committed to the cost effectiveness around the purchase and provision of equipment.

At timely intervals, **accessible** invites suppliers to express an interest in the tenders for either Standard Equipment or Preferred Suppliers of shower/commodore and a variety of wheelchair types.

Our evaluation panels consist of not only our Professional Advisors, members of the purchasing team, technicians and contracted repair agencies but also Assessors who are currently working within the industry. The expertise of this group of people ensures that the equipment that is ultimately selected, will meet the needs of many clients.

This approach also assists us in being able to reissue a high percentage of returned items and allows a quick and efficient turn around of this reissue equipment. You will find the information about Standard Equipment (Ministry) Standard List Equipment (ACC) and Preferred Supplier (Ministry and ACC) equipment on our website.

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Professional Advisory Team: By Wynne Donovan

2006 has been a very busy and rewarding year with several interesting points to note.

We commenced the new ACCESS service at the end of August and this has been an exciting project to be involved in. We look forward to working with everyone in 2007 to continue to assist Assessors to provide wheelchair and seating solutions for their clients.

The Housing team have worked together with the Child Development Teams around processing of applications for children with behavioural support needs and have appreciated the ability to have an ongoing dialogue with Assessors involved in these often complex cases. To further this and share the 'learnings' they are having a meeting this month to continue discussions around developing clearer processes for future applications.

Members of the team have created training opportunities for Specialised Assessors in Auckland and Northland. I have also completed the Wheelchair and Seating training modules with Seating to Go to gain a stronger understanding of these specialised items.

The Professional Advisory Team is also growing and by early 2007 we will have a new full time Professional Advisor who will join the team in their new offices at **accessible**. Watch this Space!

2006 in review

Another year has just flown by and as we write this it is only 20 more days until 2007. We thought that you may like to know some interesting facts about the 2006 year for **accessible**.

Tenders for the Preferred Supply of wheelchairs and shower commodes were completed and implemented successfully and we wish to thank those Assessors who were involved in the evaluation process.

New Specification forms for both Standard and Complex Shower/Commode chairs were developed by the Professional Advisory team, reviewed by Ministry Assessors and launched for use with applications. It was great to receive positive feedback and we implemented these suggested recommendations to ensure that the forms meet the needs of the Assessors for their clients.

accessible was 6 years old in July 2006 and we had 37 team members having started with only 18 in July 2000. After a review of resources required for the new financial year and to ensure we maintain our service levels we move to the 2007 with a team of 46 team members.

The average number of faxes par month has moved from 15,000 pages per month to approx 20,000 pages and this does not count the emails that are managed directly by team members.

The number of ACC or Ministry of Health delivery dockets processed in the warehouse per week now averages 370 and reflects 620 pieces of equipment leaving the warehouse each week.

In addition to the 620 items leaving the warehouse each week 490 items are returned and refurbished each week (Total = 1110 items per week)

This has created challenges for us and we are now in the process of: extending the offices and re-configuring the warehouse. We have also worked to create more space for Rehab Servicing to accommodate the rise in the number of repairs required by clients. We have now co-leased the unit at the rear of our building and Rehabilitation Servicing have moved into these new premises.

These changes will allow for **accessible** to better manage the increase in volumes of equipment items, housing modifications and equipment repairs while maintaining and improving our services levels. We are very excited, and looking forward to this project being completed early in 2007.

In the meantime, we are working very hard to ensure that the construction noise is kept to a minimum and that all the phone extensions remain the same as we move team members around the offices that are being renovated.

We have also had great feedback about the Ministry funded Access Clinics that we commenced this year and would like to thank all those involved.

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2007 accessible Open Day

Once all the renovations have been completed and all our teams are settled into their new working areas we are planning to have an **open day** where you will have an opportunity to come and have a look at our wonderful new office spaces and the revamped warehouse area.

We look forward to showing off our new place and to meeting you and other people who have supported us throughout the 2006 year. Details of our **open day** will be posted on the website in the New Year.

Holiday Season Hours

Friday 22 December 2006

8.00 am to 12.00 midday

Monday 25 December and Tuesday 26 December 2006

Closed except for emergency repairs (please see contact details below).

Wednesday 27 December - Friday 29 December 2006

8.00 am to 4.30 pm

Monday 1 January and Tuesday 2 January 2007

Closed except for emergency repairs (please see contact details below).

Wednesday 3 January 2007

Normal working hours resume

For emergency repairs to equipment during the holiday period please phone Rehab Servicing on 027 236 4558.
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The **accessible** and Rehab Servicing teams would like to wish you a Happy Holiday Season and we look forward to assisting you in the New Year.

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