

28th April 2010

Update on Assessor Accreditation

The Ministry of Health has recently completed the development work to establish an accreditation framework for health professionals undertaking assessments that may then result in applications for disability equipment and modification services.

The framework will introduce three levels of accreditation for access to Ministry funded equipment and modifications. These levels are:

- i) **Approved assessors** – allied health professionals whose existing graduate level training is considered relevant to assess for and recommend Ministry of Health funded equipment and modifications. This may also include other support personnel such as service co-ordinators working for organisations supporting people who have sensory loss.
- ii) **Credentialed Assessors** – specific service areas where additional training requirements will be necessary before clinicians can recommend Ministry of Health funded equipment and modifications. These services will include wheelchairs mobility and postural management, communication assistive technology, housing modifications and vehicle purchase and modifications.
- iii) **Service Accreditation** - specific service areas, primarily community health services can be accredited that allows DHB staff to undertake assessments for certain equipment items thereby reducing duplication of assessments and streamlining equipment provision.

Work is now commencing to implement the accreditation framework. This project is being led on behalf of the Ministry by Christine Howard-Brown, who will be supported by a working group. Membership of the working group will include representation from the EMS providers (Accessible and Enable New Zealand), District Health Board therapists and managers and other key stakeholders.

Implementation will occur in stages commencing with approved assessors and then credentialled assessors. A transition process for existing specialised assessors will be included within the implementation approach. It is expected full implementation will take up to one year to complete.

Further information will be available to assessors as work progresses including details of transition arrangements. If you have any immediate queries, please contact Christine by email chris.hb@paradise.net.nz or phone 021 439 775.