

## Equipment and Modification Services - Information for Specialised Assessors

---

### Increased demand for Ministry of Health funded Equipment and Modification Services 2008/09 in the Accessable region

Over the past few years the Ministry of Health has significantly increased funding for Equipment and Modification Services on an annual basis. These increases have been made in response to increasing demand, increasing costs of service provision and improvements in technology. During the current year, Accessable, who, along with Enable New Zealand manage the provision of Equipment and Modification Services on the Ministry's behalf, has managed to catch up and fund applications for many people who have had to wait for these services. Unfortunately we are now experiencing demand that exceeds the available budget.

As this is a capped budget, expenditure needs to be carefully managed. Requests for access to equipment, housing and vehicle modifications are now at a level well above the available budget. Accessable will therefore make funding available immediately for the following applications only:

- **Common List or Standard List** equipment
- **Priority One** applications where the assessor has demonstrated the need for urgent service provision to meet the safety needs of the client and/or their carers.

It is important that only applications where the disabled person's needs are urgent and no other alternative support options are available, are allocated a Priority One rating. This will help ensure that people with the most urgent need for services receive funding first.

Applications where the need for immediate funding is not well documented by the assessor will be allocated a Priority Two rating. You and your client will be advised of any change in priority by Accessable. Funding for Priority Two applications will be allocated as and when budget becomes available.

We recognise that longer waiting times may create some difficulties for many of you and your clients and do appreciate your assistance.

We also ask for your support when considering the range of suitable options for your clients. It is important that all measures are taken to reduce overall budgetary pressures, whilst at the same time ensuring that each person's essential needs are met in the most cost-effective way.

The Ministry of Health has an **Equipment and Modification Services' Improvement Programme** underway and one of the projects being undertaken is focusing on the prioritisation of services. We hope that once a new system is introduced later in the year or early in 2010, the prioritisation of applications will be more transparent and fair but in the meantime the above measures need to be applied.