



## **New Draft Hearing Application Form Update**

### **For Hearing and Hearing Assistive Technology Accredited Assessors**

The services of a Professional Advisor – Hearing have been utilised by accessible and Enable New Zealand, at the request of the Ministry of Health. This decision was made in response to suggestions from Specialised Assessors that both providers have more specialised input into reviewing hearing equipment applications.

Both providers have been working together on a number of aspects related to Hearing and Hearing Assistive Technology. One of these is to improve the information received in applications, as the existing generic Complex Equipment applications forms have not been suitable for the specific information required. The purpose of the form is to enable people to access Ministry of Health Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) funding. The intention is to gain a greater understanding of the needs of the person and the most appropriate equipment that is recommended and subsequently provided.

We sent out a draft Hearing Equipment Application form last year requesting feedback from Specialised Assessors for Hearing and Hearing Assistive Technology. The New Zealand Audiological Society (NZAS) and Hearing Therapy Services kindly offered to coordinate the dissemination of the form for comment. Following this feedback, we have further developed the form, which is now posted on the accessible and Enable New Zealand websites.

This form remains in draft to provide the opportunity for further comment and feedback before the final version is created.

We are requesting a copy of the audiogram and COSI to be attached with all applications to provide a full picture of the person's needs.

Please note the section on the draft form where the level of technology is to be specified and that further information needs to be provided if a high technology instrument is specified. This is in order to meet the Ministry of Health requirement to ensure that cost effective equipment is provided based on the essential needs of the client. This concept aligns hearing applications with other more high cost EMS funded equipment such as wheelchairs where much more detailed information is required when more complex / high technology equipment is being requested.

You may be surprised to learn that hearing equipment now makes up approximately 20% of the total EMS spend across equipment, housing modifications and vehicle modifications (based on expenditure figures in 2007/08). This is an increase over previous years and shows a growth in both the number of applications and the average cost of applications.

Where you have any comments about the form once you have started using it, please send an email to [moh@accessible.co.nz](mailto:moh@accessible.co.nz). Please ensure the subject line includes "Feedback on Hearing Equipment Application form". Feedback is due by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

We look forward to working closely with you to ensure people with hearing impairment have their needs met in an timely and effective manner.