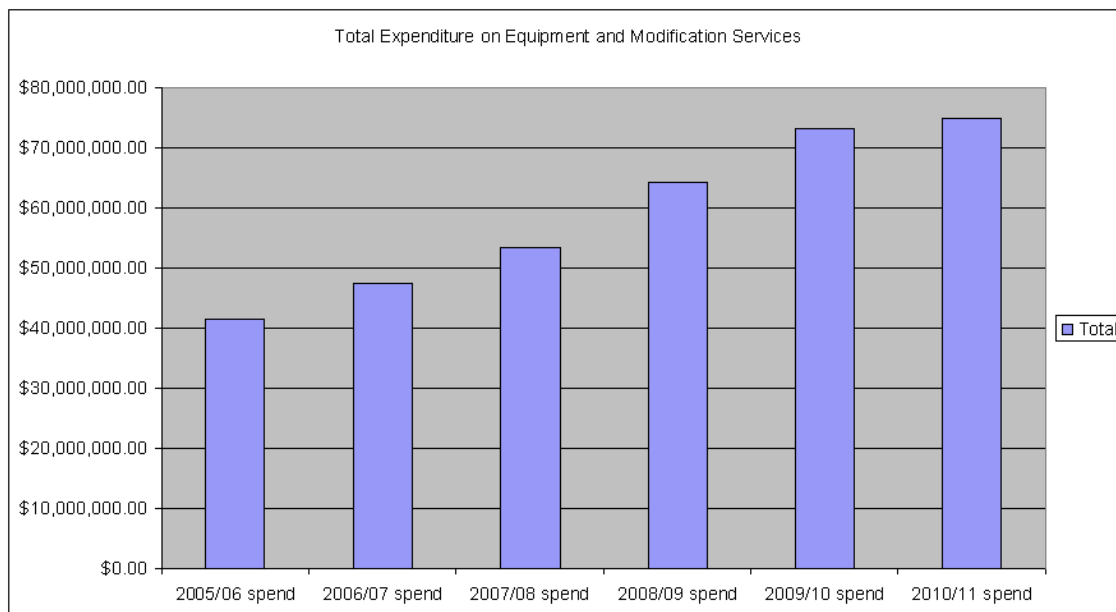


# Disability Support Services

## Priority One Applications for Equipment and Modification Services

5 December 2011

Over the past few years the annual budget for Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) has been increased significantly. The graph below shows that expenditure on equipment and modifications increased from just over \$40m in 2005/06 to \$75m in the last financial year.



Even with regular the budget increases, the demand for services in this financial year has already exceeded the available year to date budget allocation. As applications for equipment and modifications must be managed within the current annual budget for these services, all requests for equipment and modifications for disabled people cannot be met immediately.

An increasing number of applications for all equipment (complex only) and modifications therefore need to be waitlisted as the budget cannot be overspent. It is essential for EMS Assessors to carefully consider the disabled person's needs and the reasons for supporting an application for funding so that those who have the most urgent need for services can get them in a timely way.

### Demand for services

Until recently, more than 95% of applications were submitted by EMS Assessors as Priority 1. As the demand for services appears to be under the most pressure in the Enable New Zealand region, the professional advisory team at Enable New Zealand, in conjunction with a small group of EMS Assessors, has met to rethink the application process and developed some initial indicators for considering an application as a Priority 1.

### Priority 1 Indicators

We, along with professional advisors from Accessable and Enable New Zealand, have now undertaken further work on these indicators and these will be nationally introduced from **11 December 2011**.

Indicators for Priority 1 access to complex equipment, housing modifications and vehicle modifications and/or purchase are attached for your information. The examples are given as a guide to assist EMS Assessors with the prioritisation of applications. They are not an exhaustive list - please contact the professional advisory teams at Accessable or Enable New Zealand if you need further advice about the prioritisation of a particular application.

The links to the documents outlining the Priority 1 Indicators and the examples provided are on the Accessable and Disability Funding websites.

### **EMS Priority One Form**

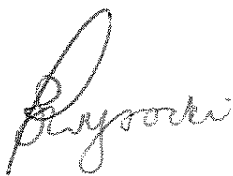
This new form replaces the current *Consideration of Risk Form* and priority guidelines. From 11 December 2011 onwards the new form must be used for all applications submitted for complex equipment, housing modifications and vehicle purchase and modifications which EMS Assessors wish to be considered as Priority 1. This new process requires the EMS Assessor to seek their Professional Leader / Clinical Supervisor's confirmation of the application meeting the P1 indicators in order for the application to be progressed for P1 funding.

All applications that are not considered to be Priority 1 will be Priority 2 and no additional documentation is required about their priority. The links to the new EMS Priority One Form are on the Accessable and Disability Funding websites.

### **Further demand management work**

The Ministry is continuing to work with EMS Assessors to explore ways of managing service demand without compromising assessor's clinical integrity or the needs of disabled people. In addition, a trial of a new prioritisation tool has been undertaken in several areas over the past twelve months. This trial has been formally evaluated and we are currently looking at whether the tool could be introduced nationally to make sure that people with the highest need for equipment and modifications can get them first. We will keep you informed about progress with this new tool over upcoming months.

Accessable and Enable New Zealand have also increased the availability of equipment items on the Ministry of Health Equipment List. Approved applications for items which are either refurbished or available for re-issue, or are included on the Equipment List, will be processed within the standard four week timeframe (and in many cases before this).



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