



EMS Funding Contribution towards New Builds or Renovations

Construction of New Homes or Renovations

Planning towards the construction of a new home or significant renovations gives homeowners the opportunity to design layouts and features that will meet the needs of those living in the home, irrespective of age, stage, and ability. In most cases this can be done at very little additional cost to the homeowner, and minimise the need for costly retrofitting of disability modifications in the future. Occupational therapists have knowledge and experience of accessibility and universal design features, such as level entry into homes, circulating spaces, and easy to use bathrooms and kitchens. BRANZ (www.branz.co.nz) has many useful resources to support people to design homes and spaces which eliminate environmental barriers.

In some situations, the Ministry of Health will consider contributing towards the additional costs required to accommodate a person's disability needs where these are **over and above** standard features required in homes. The design stage gives home owners the opportunity to design features, such as wider hallways and doorways, bathroom and kitchen facilities, storage, heating and ventilation, car parking and fencing, in a way that meets the needs of those living in the home at minimal, if any, additional cost. An occupational therapist, who is also an EMS Assessor, works with the family and **accessable** to establish what additional costs are required to enable the disabled person to live in the home. These additional costs are itemised, compared with the standard cost of the item, and forwarded to **accessable** so that a contribution towards the homeowners building works, if any, can be determined.

Examples of Building Works and Features

Bathrooms

- Vanity (and plumbing to this) is a standard item required regardless of disability. Wheelchair accessible vanities are often available as a standard item at no additional cost. Long handled lever taps are readily available at no additional cost
- Shower (and plumbing to this) is a standard item required regardless of disability. A level access shower with a handheld shower can be considered at little or no additional cost at design stage. Heights for installation of mixer/slide rail can be considered at no additional cost. An EMS funding contribution towards 'screeding the floor waste' of a level access shower may be considered



- Toilet (and plumbing to this) is a standard item required regardless of disability. Alternative heights can be accommodated at construction phase at no additional cost
- An EMS funding contribution can be considered towards a handrail in the toilet and shower
- Ventilation is a standard item required as part of the building code regardless of disability
- Heating is a standard item required regardless of disability and can be considered at design and construction phase at no additional cost

Kitchens

- Bench and sink height, is generally custom designed and can be considered at design and construction stage with no additional cost. For example, the height of the kitchen bench can be designed to consider wheelchair accessibility and making it lower will incur no additional cost. Generally funding is not available for the provision of a lowered bench and sink
- Refrigerator is a standard item required regardless of disability, and the door hinge design can be determined at purchase stage at no additional cost
- Kitchen storage is generally custom designed and can be considered at design and construction stage with no additional cost. For example, the height of storage can be designed to consider wheelchair accessibility and making it lower will incur no additional cost. Generally funding is not available for the provision of a lowered storage, however an EMS funding contribution may be considered towards a pull-out pantry
- Oven and hob is a standard item, and separate bench top hob and under bench ovens are readily available at little or no additional cost. The height and positioning of these can be considered at design and construction stage at no additional cost

Ventilation is required to meet building standards regardless of disability. New homes will have insulation that will support easy heating via standard methods.

Hallway width can be considered at design and construction stage at no additional cost.

Level entry access can be considered at design and construction stage at little or no additional cost. An EMS funding contribution towards one main access with a threshold ramp (maximum height 20mm and length 450mm) or a level drainage grate of approximately 1 metre may be considered.

Doors 810, 860 or 910mm width are readily available as standard. Door width and position of the person's bedroom in relation to the bathroom and other rooms in terms of circulating space can be considered at design and construction stage at no additional cost. Provision of funding is not available for cavity sliders. Lever action door hardware and offset hinges are readily available at no additional cost.



- Circulating space throughout the home can be considered at design and construction stage and consider sufficient room for the equipment that is required for the person, for example wheelchair, mobile shower commode and portable seated hoist

Process for an EMS funding contribution towards new builds or renovations

The EMS Assessor completes an assessment and liaises with an EMS Advisor via an **EMS Advice Request** as early as possible during the design stage and:

- considers the essential disability related need and confirms that the specific item being recommended is essential
- confirms the person is eligible and meets the criteria for EMS funding, has an ongoing need for the solution and it will meet their disability needs for the next 2-3 years
- facilitates itemised quotes/invoices from the person to demonstrate the cost of the essential disability related need items. The EMS Advisor liaises with the EMS Assessor to determine funding criteria and items that can be considered to meet the essential need

Where the person has had modifications funded previously and the request is for the same type of modification Repeat Funding can only be considered where there are Genuine and Exceptional circumstances as per the EMS Housing Modification Manual Section 7. The decision about repeat funding is made by the Ministry of Health EMS Review Panel.

accessible compares the proposed costs against **accessible's** standard schedule of rates for similar items to determine the cost contribution amount, if any, subject to the outcome of the Ministry of Health Prioritisation Tool and an Income and Cash Asset test.

Once agreement has been reached about the scope and cost of modifications, a Cost Contribution process is used to provide the contribution towards the homeowners building works (refer to the **accessible** Cost Contribution Information Sheet). The EMS Assessor stays involved to Sign Off completion of the works to confirm the funded modifications meet the person's disability related needs, and **accessible** can complete the EMS funding payment to the person.