



Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan
Minister for Disability Issues

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Government increases support to disabled people

Budget 2023 increases support for disabled people to access disability services and continues our crucial transformation of disability support services.

“Budget 2023 will provide \$863.6 million to help ease cost pressures on Government disability support services,” Priyanca Radhakrishnan said.

“This support will ensure we can meet price increases due to inflation and increases in service volumes due to demand. This includes a demand for individualised funding, which gives disabled people more control over the support they receive.

“Today’s announcement adds to the Government’s record investment in supporting disabled people.

“Our disability system supports over 2.2 million days of care in residential care, and the equivalent of 4.9 million funded support hours through individualised funding.

“Up to 120,000 people access disability support services that include equipment, vehicle, and housing modifications.

“Last year the Government established Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People. Budget 2023 provides investment that continues support for this new Ministry which is transforming the disability support system,” Priyanca Radhakrishnan said.

Total Mobility

Budget 2023 also makes half price fares for Total Mobility services permanent.

“Total Mobility is a bespoke transport service for people who are unable to use public transport due to an impairment.

“Making this half price permanently is another measure to help disabled people deal with cost of living pressures,” Priyanca Radhakrishnan said.

Ending the Minimum Wage Exemption

The Government will end the discriminatory Minimum Wage Exemption (MWE), which allows disabled people to be paid less than the minimum wage, by mid-2025.

“This unfair exemption currently affects about 800 disabled people who are legally able to be paid less on the basis they’re perceived to be less productive,” Priyanca Radhakrishnan said.

“Some disabled people in New Zealand are paid under the minimum wage and that needs to end. We will start this work immediately.

“This Government made a manifesto commitment to replace MWE permits with a wage supplement, ensuring all disabled people receive at least minimum wage.

“Under the Wage Supplement, approximately 800 disabled people will have their wages increased to minimum wage. This will support some disabled people to shift off the benefit into paid employment and decrease their reliance on the welfare system,” Priyanca Radhakrishnan said.

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