

Disability Support Services

Overview of the EMS Prioritisation Tool

The new Prioritisation Tool decides who gets Ministry funding for equipment and modifications, based on the disabled person's need and their ability to benefit from the proposed equipment or modifications.

The questions asked as part of the Prioritisation Tool focus on the person's current need, the risks if equipment or modifications are not provided, and their ability to benefit from the equipment or modifications. An important part of the new Prioritisation Tool is the 'Impact on Life' questionnaire which asks people to identify the impact of their disability on their lives. It gives the person, and where appropriate, their family or whānau, an opportunity to have a 'voice' in the assessment process. The Impact on Life questionnaire is available in eight languages including New Zealand Sign Language, and has been produced in braille, audio and large print.

A group of practising clinicians helped to develop the Prioritisation Tool with a great deal of input from disabled people.

Use of the Prioritisation Tool by trained assessors (mainly occupational therapists and physiotherapists) will be the same across New Zealand; it will help to clarify expectations and remove the need for waiting lists.

The Prioritisation Tool is being introduced in stages and will be used nationally by August 2014.