**Auckland Flooding State of Emergency**

**Whaikaha activity log summary**

**Last updated: 28 January 2023**

Whaikaha and providers are working together to support the work of many unrecognised but hard-working volunteers, including individuals and organisations, in our communities. It has been vital for the disability community and providers to have easy to access and relevant information.

**Community contacts and engagement**

* Staff were actively engaging with individual members of the community to answer questions and connect with appropriate people or services.
* We worked collaboratively with Blind Citizens New Zealand, People First New Zealand, and Deaf Aotearoa to get information in accessible formats quickly out to our communities.
* The previous COVID-19 Disability Response group reconvened via Zoom. This was an opportunity for Whaikaha to share messages and hear directly from the community what their concerns are, what is top of mind and requests around communications. Paula attend ed this to provide an update and will attend the follow up meeting Sunday at the same time.

**Service Provision**

Whaikaha staff were committed to working with the community to find solutions for any disabled person and their whānau who approached us, or we were notified of.

**Engaging with NASC**

* Whaikaha staff have remained in regular contact with Taikura Trust providing updates, answers to questions and support where possible. Taikura Trust commenced outreach calls from early Saturday morning, prioritising people in the most vulnerable situations. This provided us assurance people not accessing support from formal providers were safe. This engagement and outreach will continue throughout the state of emergency response.
* We arranged for an emergency alert code to be added to the Client Management System and will be able to extract information about those supported throughout the state of emergency.
* Other NASCs are on standby to assist their Auckland colleagues.

**Connecting Key Providers and Hosts**

* Whaikaha staff directly contacted key providers and IF hosts to assess the level of impact the flooding was having on their ability to provide support for disabled people and their families. Providers were doing outreach calls, and this was coordinated between Taikura to avoid duplication.
* We are pleased to hear from both Taikura and providers we have spoken with that there has been minimal impact on disabled people receiving supports. Where impact did occur providers worked together, along with Taikura to provide temporary solutions.

**Immediate support for disabled people**

* In situations where immediate support was needed, Whaikaha worked with our colleagues at Ministry of Health, Te Whatu Ora, ACC and Kāinga Ora to find appropriate solutions, ensuring that disabled people and their families are safe.
* Whaikaha worked with Whakarongorau Aotearoa early this morning to ensure the disability information line was available for community members. We then directed the community to contact the phone number or text line. Whakarongorau have provided support and answered questions from the community throughout the Saturday.
* We have been working closely with the Auckland equipment and modifications provider who stood up a team to respond and repair/replace equipment.
* We have chosen not to identify situations in this report to protect the identity of the disabled people and their families, however we are confident that everyone who we engaged with directly or indirectly now has the support needed or a solution is currently underway.
* We ensured all people who needed equipment such as wheelchairs as well as hospital beds for those people who have been relocated, received this equipment.
* We will work with the Ministries of Education and Social Development to get information about opening of schools and vocational services respectively on Tuesday.

**Civil Defence Centres**

* Taikura Trust staff were at the three Civil Defence Centres to provide support or connections to services for disabled people who were seeking assistance at the centres.

**Designated space on the Whaikaha website for up-to-date information.**

* Shortly after the state of emergency was declared the Whaikaha website had key contacts and information for the Deaf and disability community.
* Whaikaha took the lead with Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to ensure accessible information about support available was available.
* The website has been regularly updated and information in accessible formats included.

**Social Media**

* The Whaikaha Facebook and LinkedIn pages were regularly updated with important information for the community. It was regularly updated until 3.00am Saturday morning and resumed again at 6.30am Saturday morning.

**Whaikaha channels of direct communication**

* The 0800 number, contact@whaikaha.govt.nz inbox and our text services are being monitored by Whaikaha staff (normally Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm) for the community to contact us directly if they had any concerns.

**Staff welfare**

* Whaikaha staff in Auckland were contacted to establish they were safe and had everything they needed. Following this all staff are being updated daily. Key staff engaging directly with providers and the community were kept in regular contact with messaging and updates.
* Our Executive Leadership Team also met regularly and continue to keep in close contact with each other. The operations team stood up an emergency response team.

**Keeping the Minister for Social Development, the Minister for Disability Issues, and their offices updated**

* Throughout the past 24 hours, Paula has kept direct contact with relevant Ministers updating on our response and progress on specific situations. Information has been to Minister Williams’ office throughout the day relevant to the disability community for dissemination.

**Cross government and agency work**

* Whaikaha staff worked closely with MSD as part of our shared services arrangement around Health and Safety.
* We supported disabled people to find solutions to issues such as emergency accommodation, answering questions such as the assistance dogs being welcome at Civil Defence Sites, and linking up cross government support. We engaged with Te Whatu Ora, Kainga Ora, ACC and the Ministry of Social Development to find solutions to things such as emergency accommodation, support and answering questions.
* We have had constant communication with NEMA and the Auckland City Council Emergency Response Team to assist each other to communicate timely and effectively with the disability community.
* Everyone we engaged with were responsive and worked collaboratively to find solutions.