

# Hon Nicky Wagner

## Minister for Disability Issues



16 June 2015

**Media Statement**

## **New Zealand a world leader on disability issues**

Disability Issues Minister Nicky Wagner says the release of the Government response to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reaffirms New Zealand's position as a world leader on disability issues.

As part of the Government response, Ms Wagner also announced the formation of a new interagency Disability Data and Evidence Working Group.

“New Zealand first reported to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2011 and I am pleased that our record on disability issues puts us in a good position to respond to the Committee's recommendations,” Ms Wagner says.

“New Zealand's world-leading reputation on disability issues means we are held to a high standard. I believe we are meeting that standard, but there is always more we can do to improve lives of disabled people.”

The Government has responded to recommendations from the UN Committee along with similar recommendations from the Independent Monitoring Mechanism, the body set up to monitor New Zealand's progress against the UN Convention.

“Particular areas where New Zealand is doing well include development of the Disability Action Plan, involving disabled people in decision making and taking steps to increase employment for disabled people.

“Last week, I represented New Zealand on disability issues at the United Nations. One of the big issues raised is how to increase, and make better use of, data on disabled people.

“This is why part of the Government response includes the establishment of the Disability Data and Evidence Working Group.

“The Working Group will focus on the type of data and evidence required to ensure services and supports best meet the needs of disabled people in New Zealand,” Ms Wagner says.

## **Notes for editors**

The Working Group, jointly facilitated by the Office for Disability Issues and Statistics New Zealand, will comprise representatives from: government agencies, Disabled People's Organisations, NGOs, and universities and research institutes carrying out research on disability.

Government response to the UN: [www.odi.govt.nz/what-we-do/un-convention/monitoring-implementation/2014-review.html](http://www.odi.govt.nz/what-we-do/un-convention/monitoring-implementation/2014-review.html)

Disability Data and Evidence Working Group: [www.odi.govt.nz/what-we-do/better-evidence](http://www.odi.govt.nz/what-we-do/better-evidence)