

## Trevor McGlinchey and Lisa Woolley both awarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours

NZCCSS members were delighted to learn that Trevor McGlinchey, Executive Officer, NZCCSS, and Lisa Woolley, Vice President, NZCCSS, Chief Executive Officer, Vision West Trust, both received an award in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours.



Trevor received a Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for services to Māori and the Community.

Trevor is Ngāi Tahu and has been the Executive Officer of the NZCCSS since 2007. He was a member of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group in 2018 and was on the reference groups for the Green and White Papers for Vulnerable Children. In 1986, he founded the Te Mahi o Waitaki Trust in Oamaru, a kaupapa Māori trust that developed and operated numerous social enterprises and community initiatives. He was managing director of the Trust from 1986 to 1998. Trevor is the Chair of Moeraki Ltd., a marae-based charitable company, and a past Chair of Te Ana Whakairo Ltd., a social enterprise based on Māori tourism. He is also a Trustee of Ngā Tangata Microfinance Trust.

Lisa was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to the Community and Governance. Lisa Woolley has been Chief Executive Officer of VisionWest Community Trust since 2001 and is the current Vice-President of NZCCSS. She has



been a member of a wide range of reference and advisory groups, including the Auckland Council Homelessness Plan, the Housing First Auckland CEOs Collective, and the Ministry of Social Development's Housing Assistance Reform Feedback Group. Lisa was also involved in planning Transform 18, an event to help faith-based organisations be part of community transformation.

The current President of NZCCSS, Ian Hudson, sent this message

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## A celebration of NZCCSS mission under COVID-19 lockdown

*Our love is not to be words or mere talk, but something real and active*  
(1 John 3:18)



March 25th saw all of our lives turned upside down when the whole country went into a Level 4 alert lockdown to stem the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic after it inevitably reached our shores (first reported case 28th February). Jump forward three months and as the Coalition Government has claimed, Team 5 Million has successfully brought this virus under control for now.

During this unprecedented lockdown, there were many shining lights delivering essential services. Among these lights were NZCCSS members who worked tirelessly to deliver essential welfare and social

services to vulnerable groups.

Earlier this month, the NZCCSS Secretariat put out a call to gather a selection of COVID-19 stories from our membership as part of a celebration of our members' work and their Christian Mission that is the driving force behind all their endeavours.

The NZCCSS Secretariat was pleased to receive a range of COVID-19 stories from members. While reading through these stories, alongside information received during the myriad of Zoom meetings held by the NZCCSS Secretariat during this period, we were struck by the similarities expressed in the

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## QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS



of congratulations on behalf of NZCCSS saying:

*"On behalf of the NZCCSS I want to acknowledge the fact that the Executive Officer, Trevor McClinchey and the Vice President, Lisa Woolley, both received recognition in the Queen's Birthday Honours announced recently. Trevor received the Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for services to Māori and the community, and Lisa was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to the community and governance.*

*We want to celebrate with both Lisa and Trevor these very much deserved honours and the associated recognition for the second mile service both of them have given to the community, not least of all, their significant contribution to the work of the NZCCSS.*

*May God continue to bless Trevor and Lisa, in the work they do and their whānau as well."*

## A CELEBRATION OF NZCCSS MISSION UNDER COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

way member services responded to the challenges posed by COVID-19. The following highlights some of these themes and is followed by the stories submitted from across NZCCSS' six denominations.

### Agile, dedicated and responsive to changing needs

*"In the days leading up to the COVID-19 lockdown it became evident that Aotearoa New Zealand had a significant population who are vulnerable to food insecurity. Within days food banks, community organisations, iwi and churches found themselves putting together food and care packs at a rate they had never experienced before."* – Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective

The speed at which NZCCSS welfare and social services were adapted and up and running within days of the lockdown is a testament to NZCCSS members' services' agility, commitment and responsiveness to the changing needs of the communities they serve. The lockdown magnified food insecurity among people already struggling to live on low incomes, who had limited ability to stock up on food, and who under lockdown would be unable to travel to a food bank to receive support.

The NGO sector was quick to identify this gap and began large scale food distribution a week ahead of

a national response to co-ordinate food distribution across the country.

Housing insecurity was another social issue highlighted by the pandemic. New Zealand already had thousands of people living in insecure dwellings and on the streets. Stopping the transmission of the virus required all New Zealanders to have a place to call home. A tough challenge, but one that was met by NZCCSS members working in collaboration with other community groups, government agencies and civil defence. To respond to these immediate needs, some services re-deployed workers to frontline roles.

A further layer of complexity was that some services lost volunteers and paid workers due to their age or health condition requiring them to self-isolate, but undeterred the issue was swiftly managed, often through the efforts of the remaining staff and new volunteers. In residential services, some workers made personal sacrifices to remain in the facility to support clients. These are just some of the ways our member responded to this unprecedented event.

### Creative and adaptable to new ways of working

*"The Wesleycare Chaplain conducted a number of bedside funerals using both*

*Skype and Zoom to enable family and friends spend precious moments with loved ones to say a final goodbye, filling an important void for families who are unable to have a normal funeral services due to Level 4 restrictions."* – Wesleycare

Effective social work relies on relationship building and human contact but faced with the reality of social distancing, NZCCSS members needed to find creative ways to continue to connect with clients and deliver their services across a wide spectrum of need. This creativity included the use of a wide variety of technology including texts, Zoom, and other platforms.

Some members purchased phones to distribute to clients to ensure connections could be maintained during the lockdown. In rest homes, technology was used to connect older people with family members.

Poignantly, we learn in one story about the use of Zoom by a hospital chaplain in a rest home to enable families to say goodbye to loved ones. Alongside all of this technology, human responses were also needed and NZCCSS members found a variety of ways to ensure people received essentials items and support throughout the lockdown period.

### Collaborative

*"Providing shelter for homeless and rough-sleepers was the challenge. This was achieved primarily through collaboration with a local motel used for emergency housing."* – VisionWest

NZCCSS members collaborated extensively across other community organisations, local businesses, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Oranga Tamarki, the Ministry of Social Development, local government, and Civil Defence.

These relationships formed a collaborative ecology that ensured New Zealanders were housed, received essential supplies and, where needed, received wraparound services, and that vulnerable children and families and whānau could continue to access social workers during this time.

The high level of trust, responsiveness, and collaboration many of our services experienced while working with government agencies, other community organisations, and businesses, together created an environment that was highly effective in delivering welfare and social services to different communities the length and breadth of New Zealand.

### Who stood out as needing support?

COVID-19 brought a level of vulnerability to everyone in New Zealand but there were some population

## A CELEBRATION OF NZCCSS MISSION UNDER COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

groups that stood out as needing support from NZCCSS members:

- Older people living in rest homes, retirement villages, hospitals and in the community needing social connection with friends and family alongside welfare supports (food, and medical supplies)
- Vulnerable children, family and whānau, needing a range of supports from social workers
- Single youth, adults and families in transitional housing, including those with mental or addiction challenges in need of wrap around services
- People made newly redundant by COVID-19 requiring welfare supports, counselling and financial hardship services
- Temporary migrants and refugees newly settled in New Zealand, often with language barriers needing support to navigate the social welfare system
- Sole parents without wider family support.

### Manaakitanga, compassion and care for those needing support

*Thank you so much for the food parcel, it is with so much gratitude that I receive this wonderful koha. Thank you so much and keep up the wonderful mahi.*  
– Catholic Family Support Services client. It is moments like this that we know we are **“Keeping Hope Alive”**.

It is heartening to read about the care and compassion shown to those needing the support of NZCCSS services during the COVID-19 lockdown, and about the extra mile workers went to ensure essential services were delivered, human connections were established within social distancing, and social supports continued to be provided across social work, budgeting and advocacy.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the work of those who have submitted their COVID-19 stories to be included in *Kete Kupu*, alongside those members unable to submit their stories due to time constraints. NZCCSS recognises the work of all of our members services in this celebration of our collective NZCCSS Mission under COVID-19 lockdown.

Compassionate  
Dedicated  
Creative  
Agile  
Collaborative  
Responsive to the demand of their communities  
Cultural responsiveness  
Social justice focused

# A snapshot of NZCCSS Members COVID-19 stories

## A Celebration of NZCCSS Mission under COVID-19 lockdown

## Presbyterian Support Central responds to needs during lock down

Enliven took the opportunity to celebrate kindness and creativity in its rest homes and retirement villages during COVID-19 Level 4 and Level 3.

“Enliven’s philosophy is all about supporting older people to have companionship, meaningful activity and fun in their lives,” says Enliven General Manager External Relations Alisha Kennedy.

“The historic lock down certainly meant we had to work differently, but the staff were determined to

make sure residents were not only safe and well, but happy, engaged and having fun too.”

Lots of activities were planned to reflect the change in circumstances. The recreation teams came up with more craft activities and boredom buster challenges such as word searches and puzzles.

Enliven also took the opportunity to launch its inaugural inter-home “Colour Your Day with Enliven” colouring-in competition, which was open to residents, their families and staff.

Prior to lock down Enliven fast-tracked the delivery of tablets to all its rest homes and retirement villages to enable video calling between the residents and their loved ones.

“The elders are often quite amazed at the technology available to them,” says Enliven Recreation Advisor Davina Solomon. “There was certainly no FaceTime or Skype around when they were growing up.”

Staff also took photos of residents holding hand-written messages which were then emailed to families. When the families responded with their own photo, these were



Longview resident Margaret video calling.

## PSC RESPONDS TO NEEDS DURING LOCK DOWN

printed and put on display in the residents' room.

"The residents loved it when they received a photo reply message," Davina says.

### Wellbeing Assistance Programme

During lock down, Presbyterian Support Central launched its Wellbeing Assistance Programme to further support families throughout the lower North Island who were dealing with complex and challenging situations.

For many, they were already in the lower income bracket, and lost their only source of income as a result of the lock down.

PSC recognised that many of these families relied on public transport

that wasn't operating during Level 4 to meet basic needs such as getting groceries and other essential items.

Given the support requests that were coming in, PSC mobilised to source and deliver items such as food, heating support and other essential things.

Volunteers also nominated themselves as dedicated 'caring callers', who phoned elderly people in the community on a regular basis to check if they were okay.

"A chat with someone can really brighten their day when you're feeling lonely," says Philanthropy Manager Jacqui Ritchie. "It was the perfect time to find out if there were any practical needs that people also needed assistance with."

As part of the programme, PSC distributed more than 200 care parcels to people in Wellington, Wairarapa, Horowhenua and Manawatu.

The programme was made possible thanks to funding from Tindall Foundation, St Johns in the City, Freemasons and Gilmours Wholesale Food, as well as our generous donors.

### Sharing resources

After receiving a request from Volunteer Central, based in Manawatu, Brightwater Home in Palmerston North donated use of its van during lock down so food parcels could be delivered to people in that region.

"When we heard from the group we were happy to offer the use of our van, or else it would have remained parked up at the home the whole time," Brightwater Home manager Christine Tester says.

"We're glad we were able to help make such a necessary project possible."

A system was created by the project group to ensure families in need in the community would have food, blankets and clothes.

After the orders were packed into delivery parcels, a volunteer driver



Alf Williams celebrates 59th wedding anniversary, Coombrae Home.

took the parcels out in Brightwater Home's van to distribute the welcome goods.

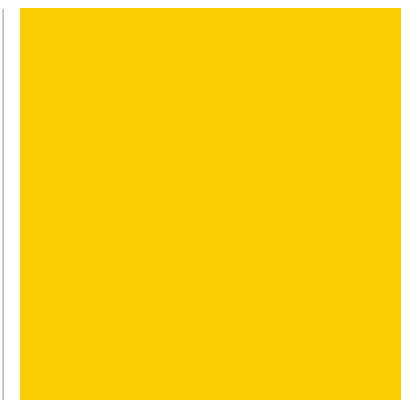
Many of the volunteers were those who normally donated their time to other roles in places such as hospitals, and were unable to continue that work during Level 4 and Level 3.

One of the parcel's recipients – who was looking after three grandchildren and three foster children during lock down, was especially grateful for the help.

"There are good people out there who are kind and want to care for others," she said.



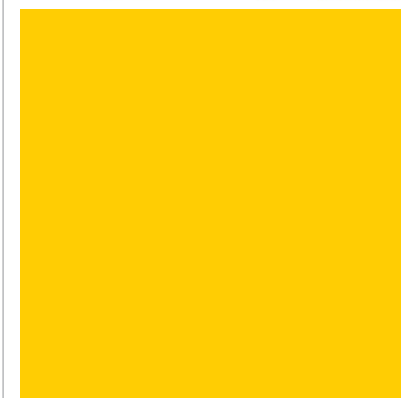
Brightwater van.



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# Catholic Family Support Services, Hamilton, Keeping Hope Alive



Catholic Family Support Services Hamilton was confirmed by Ministry of Social Development as an essential service during COVID-19 Alert Level 4. During levels 4, 3 and 2 the team worked tirelessly to provide wrap-around services to individuals, whānau and families struggling with the day to day pressures of family life, financial hardship, emotional and mental stresses. The financial mentoring team provided advocacy, budgeting advice and support while our family support team provided intensive social work.

The team has also worked hard preparing food parcels, personal hygiene packages, baby essential packages for many of our families and whānau in the community. This has been made possible because of funding from the Ministry of Social Development Awareness and Preparedness Grant.



We have also been fortunate to receive further funding from Wel Energy Trust (Hamilton) and Hamilton City Council to provide winter packages (clothing, blankets), care packages and cleaning packages to help our families and whānau through the next few months.

We have also been able to provide some financial relief to whānau and families, by contributing or paying for essential items and expenses for individuals, whānau and families in Hamilton. This has been made

possible because of the generosity of by Greenlea Foundation.

I would like to share a snap shot of the work being undertaken by my team: within a period of 3 days, CFSS staff assisted 33 new families, with a total of 133 individuals. Many families consist of 4 to 11 members living in one home. This has become the new normal for many families and whānau we are helping. The assistance provided ranged from food parcels, local general support, safe social connection and mental health support, personal hygiene packages and baby essential packages. In an email from one our grateful whānau in the community said: *Hi CFSS staff thank you so much for the food parcel, it is with so much gratitude that I receive this wonderful koha. Thank you so much and keep up the wonderful mahi. It is moments like this that we know we are "Keeping Hope Alive".*

# VisionWest Community Trust – Collaboration and Transformation

Collaboration and Transformation are two of the key words associated with VisionWest Community Trust and the COVID-19 event. Collaboration both between VisionWest Services and with other community groups was vital for us during lockdown. Transformation, usually a word applied to the whānau we work with, suddenly became necessary within our organisation as we grappled to respond to community needs within the restraints of lockdown New Zealand.

While three of our services

– Pātaka Kai (food service), Housing, and Home Healthcare – were deemed “essential” under the government’s definition, all services continued in some form or another. We were also aware of the vulnerability of whānau Māori during this time, meaning our Matapuna Whānau Centre was kept busy ensuring needs were met in a mana enhancing way through pre-packaging, deliveries to our local marae and Māori community as well as a call centre for Pātaka Kai.

*Continued p. 6*



Glen Eden Baptist Church.

## VISIONWEST COMMUNITY TRUST – COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION

### Pātaka Kai

From 26 March to 1 May (Level 4 dates):

- 4,800 food parcels packed and delivered
  - 18,000 people (including 8,000 children) fed
  - Over \$732,000 worth of food distributed
  - 2,200 volunteer hours recorded.
- This need has continued with over 1,000 parcels still being delivered most weeks.

COVID-19 saw a dramatic transformation in food distribution methods. No longer could whānau come onto the VisionWest Campus. Instead, parcels were packed on site by seconded VisionWest staff and delivered by volunteers from other community groups.

### Good News Story

Gina's story. One of the families I visited had two adults and 11 children. I went at dinner time; plates full of rice with about a tablespoon of corned beef stew. When they saw the food parcel, the eyes of the children lit up. One child, aged around seven, shouted, "Oh, there is a God." I saw some embarrassment on the parents' faces so I changed the subject, asking the children if they had heard of, "pay it forward." They smiled and said they had and that they will do

something nice for somebody else. They then said, "Thank you," over and over.

### Housing

Providing shelter for the many homeless and rough-sleepers in our community was the challenge confronting our Housing Service. This was achieved primarily through collaboration a local motel. Completed just before lockdown, the multi-apartment motel looked like it would sit vacant until things returned to normal. When the government asked the owners if they would allow it to be used for emergency housing, they willingly agreed. The resulting collaboration has been transforming for us all as we've seen the owners' graciousness and willingness to go the extra mile, and witnessed the joy of people housed, many after years of being homeless.

VisionWest has now filled 60 apartments at the motel. That's 60 whānau who were otherwise homeless.

### Good News Story

Rosemary had been living in temporary accommodation (friends, boarding houses, her car) for almost a year. Her children were living with their father. Although he and Rosemary shared custody, the

places Rosemary was living were not appropriate.

VisionWest were able to offer Rosemary place at a motel. She was checked in to a three-bedroom unit. When her Support Navigator and the motel owner showed her the room, she was so overwhelmed it looked like she'd collapsed on the couch. She was crying and said she can finally have her children with her again.

### Home Healthcare

During Level 4:

- 26,000 visits
- 4,500 clients supported
- 1,000 active Support Workers
- 2,564 clients contacted by phone for assessment
- 525 hours of additional phone support.

The challenge within Home Healthcare was to ensure all clients who needed care were catered for, at a time when a number of our Support Workers were unavailable – mostly because they were over 70 or immunocompromised. The willingness of those Support Workers who could work made the required level of care possible.

### Good News Story

Carmen's story. Last week I phoned one of our homecare clients, Margie.



Glen Eden Baptist Church.

Her husband, Graham, answered. I explained that I was checking in on him and Margie, he replied "Oh she's still on the correct side of the ground – above it." I wasn't too sure how to respond but then he started laughing along with Margie in the background.

Once Graham had handed the phone to her, Margie said, "Sorry, he has a very different sense of humour but that's how we have so far survived five years of courtship, 60 years of marriage, two of his heart attacks and now this lockdown – by choosing to be joyful. Now tell me, how are you dear?"

That day, Margie and Graham reminded me of the power of choice and that, even with all the restrictions, we are still free to be kind, caring, hopeful and joyful.

### Other Services

VisionWest's other services continued over lockdown utilising a variety of creative means. Eden Cottage, our Early Childhood Centre, and

our Education and Training Centre both transformed to online learning platforms.

Our Counselling and Budgeting Services, operated using Zoom or telephone to facilitate meetings. Having experienced a moderate demand over lockdown, these Services are already experiencing an increased demand post-lockdown. With news reports suggesting around 40% of New Zealand families are experiencing financial hardship post-COVID, this is not surprising.

### Looking to the Future

Collaboration and transformation will remain key to VisionWest's operation. For many whānau the "return to normal" is a long way off with financial and wellbeing challenges now a daily norm for many. The challenge for us is to remain flexible in both the way we deliver our services and in the way we collaborate with other community organisations and individuals.

# DCM answered the calls for COVID-19

When COVID-19 changed from an epidemic to an international pandemic, DCM, the organisation which supports people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Wellington, committed to finding new ways to support people holistically. As DCM's Michelle Scott explains, "we support people into permanent housing and then work with them to ensure that they are able to sustain that tenancy, and to thrive in all aspects of their lives. This means that our plans and supports sit across the key life domains – like income, physical, oral and mental health, addictions, criminal offending, life skills, whānau and relationships, cultural connections and wairua."

DCM calls the people they work with taumai, meaning to settle. This reflects the journey they set out on together – to become settled, stable and well.

Since January 2020, DCM has been monitoring Public Health and Ministry of Health advice. Prior to the announcement of the government's alert system, DCM had already established several initiatives,



Rob Sarich, from DCM's Outreach team, manning their 0800 number service for taumai from his home during the COVID crisis.

including purchasing phones for their taumai to keep in contact, and setting up an 0800 number for taumai to call DCM on. During lockdown, their key priorities became getting rough sleepers into emergency accommodation and supporting new residents in emergency housing, ensuring access to income for those who use DCM's Money Management Service and supporting vulnerable tenants to sustain their tenancies.

DCM's by-line is "together we can end homelessness" – this reflects both the organisation's commitment to this goal, and a recognition that they cannot do this alone. For years now, many, many people have supported DCM's vision. Never has this commitment been more evident than during the current COVID 19 crisis. Individuals, groups, organisations, the Wellington City Council, the government and government agencies - we really are doing this together.

For example, during lockdown, DCM has not been able to receive food donations directly from members of the community as it usually would. Others have stepped in and stepped up to fill this gap. When DCM put in a large order to purchase essential food supplies from New World Chaffers, the supermarket would not take any payment for the order and provided the full order as a donation. Other groups like Kaibosh, and many faith communities, including Ekta, a group of members of the Wellington Sikh community, have provided food directly or funds to purchase food.

Having the support of this broad community has made all the difference to DCM's taumai at this time. As DCM's Director, Stephanie McIntyre, reflected at the end of a very different Monday afternoon Foodbank session last month:

"It has truly been very moving to be able to support our taumai at this time. Today a number of people came to us for food support. We were able to send them away with a generous selection of canned and dried foods, fresh fruit and veges, bread, milk and frozen meals. But more than that, we reminded them that we are still here for them, that so much has changed, but DCM is only a phone call away.

As we spoke with taumai out in Lukes Lane, with spaces set up to ensure that we maintained and modelled safe distances, we asked them how things were going for them. People were in tears, they were so touched by the support and community that DCM continues to offer them."

## Whetū Paerangi Stars in the Distant Horizon

*Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi  
He toa takitini  
My strength is not as an individual  
But as a collective.*

*Whetū Paerangi* is a report prepared by Fred Astle, Head of Māori Development at VisionWest that views the COVID-19 pandemic management within VisionWest through Kaupapa Māori culturally centred lens.



*"During the COVID-19 crisis, the most profound impact for New Zealand have been in the areas of health and the economy. As New Zealand adapts to Alert Level 4 of the COVID-19 lockdown, it is important to note that the economic marginalisation due to social exclusion poses an added risk to health, especially of those who are most vulnerable."*

The report provides valuable insight into the cultural impact of alert level 4 level of the COVID-19 lockdown on 'vulnerable whānau Māori'. Read the report [here](#).

# The Selwyn Foundation. Reaching out to vulnerable seniors in lockdown

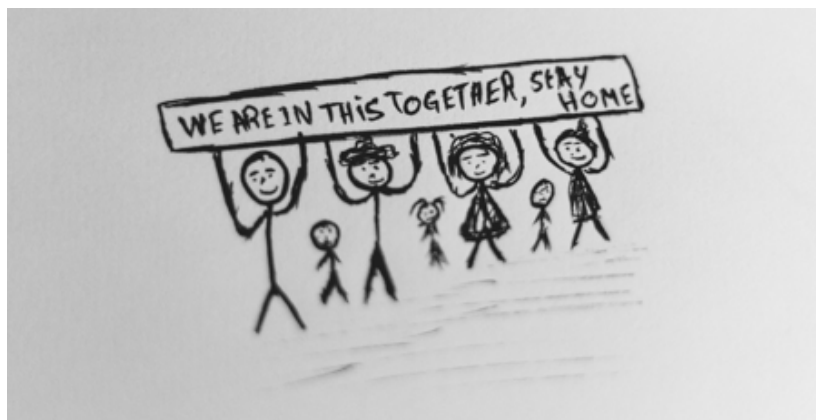
Since COVID-19 was first identified and began to affect our way of life in New Zealand, charitable trust The Selwyn Foundation has worked to support vulnerable older people living at home in the community and to help them get through this time of national emergency.

The Foundation's unique, integrated approach to the care of the individual – The Selwyn Way – was translated early on into a welfare response to the COVID-19 emergency through which Selwyn delivered support to seniors living on their own or who were otherwise vulnerable or at risk of becoming isolated.

A wide-ranging team of 'caring callers' was deployed to reach out each week to various groups within the Selwyn 'family', conducting friendly check-up phone calls to make sure people were well and that their needs were met (in terms of food supplies and medication, for example).

## They ensured that they phoned their guests every week.

To maintain contact with attendees of the Foundation's Selwyn Centres (community drop-in centres for older people hosted by Anglican parishes), the Centre coordinators and volunteers ensured that they



The Selwyn Foundation's 'Be well, be kind, be safe' web pages provided support services and resources to help seniors get through challenging times.

phoned their guests every week or more frequently as needed. By keeping in touch this way, not only were they able to monitor wellbeing and check that those living on their own continued to have support from family, neighbours or friends, but they were also able to provide helpful advice as well as a sense of connection and belonging – so important for seniors living alone. Where a particular need was identified, a defined protocol was then followed for any subsequent referrals for support that was required.

In addition, the coordinators organised virtual activities including newsletters, quizzes, puzzles and updates to keep everyone's spirits up, and helped with shopping and deliveries when necessary. Facebook,

WhatsApp and texting were used for those with smartphones, and coordinators also connected people with one another, so that individuals could similarly check in with their fellow guests.

This caring outreach ministry was overseen by the Foundation's Selwyn Centre Community Liaison and was greatly appreciated by the guests, who felt supported and reassured by this ongoing contact with their Selwyn Centre family.

The 'caring caller' service was also replicated for clients and their families who had previously attended Selwyn's dementia day centres prior to their temporary closure due to COVID-19, as well as for independent living residents of Selwyn's retirement villages. This helped in

identifying those who were more vulnerable or who could benefit from some extra assistance or navigational guidance to other support agencies.

During the lockdown, the Foundation's innovative telehealth offering focussed on reaching out to older people who had recently been discharged from hospital and were living on their own. Tenants of Community Housing Provider Haumarū Housing (a joint social housing initiative between Selwyn and Auckland Council) benefited from this service. It involved Selwyn telehealth nurses screening patients through a daily phone call to check on how they were recovering, and ensuring they had adequate support in place to help with their convalescence. Such telemonitoring is part of a suite of Selwyn services available to those living in the community, providing additional support for clients with long-term health conditions and peace of mind for families who can't be there to care for their loved ones.

The Foundation's range of 'virtual' assistance initiatives during the pandemic was completed by the launch of a dedicated 'Be well, be kind, be safe' section on its [website](#). Specifically designed to support the welfare of those aged 70+ during the

lockdown period, the webpages offer extensive resources to strengthen wellbeing, engagement and resilience, navigational information to support services and stimulating content and articles for 'boredom busting' whilst self-isolating at home.

## 'Be well, be kind, be safe.'

Although designed with the older person in mind, the web pages have something of interest for everyone, regardless of age, and have been developed by The Selwyn Institute (the learning arm of the Foundation), whose mission is to share practical knowledge and advice on ageing well. *(Since moving to a lesser Alert Level, these web pages have been renamed 'Looking towards a "new normal" in a COVID world' and help seniors make informed decisions and choices about their wellbeing in a post-COVID-19 environment.)*

While New Zealand may have to contend with the effects of COVID-19 for some time to come, the older people in the Selwyn 'bubble' are not on their own, but are part of a wider caring community that will continue to provide help, comfort and support as the nation recovers from the challenges of these unprecedented times.



# History Makers: Looking Back at Lockdown

By Ingrid Barratt

[First published by the Salvation Army in War Cry]

The level four lockdown of New Zealand was a moment in history that few will forget. Almost immediately, requests for welfare assistance began pouring in to The Salvation Army, which mobilised to meet the unprecedented need. We look back at how The Salvation Army became the heart of a nation in lockdown ...

As New Zealand went into level four at midnight on March 25, requests for help from The Salvation Army had already escalated by a third. In response, Salvation Army centres in our biggest cities organised into super-hubs, so food could be supplied and processed in bulk.

Frontline Salvation Army staff were deployed to work in food welfare. Family store managers stacked shelves, youth workers shifted pallets of groceries and accountants packed food parcels. Family Store trucks became a food delivery service.

Each region found creative ways

to meet people's needs. In Porirua, bread and vegetables were put outside every morning, and about 80 families picked up food per day.

'They're so grateful because it makes that huge difference without needing to ask for a food parcel,' says Major Pam Waugh, Central Division Secretary for Community Ministries.

Hamilton City Corps came up with a solution outside the box by creating a drive-through food bank. 'What has stood out for me is our amazing ability to mobilise,' says Corps Officer Captain Jenny Collings, who headed up the Hamilton hub. 'I've really learnt what our people are capable of, there was so much energy and responsiveness.'

## Texting by the thousands

With social distancing in place, many of the people who needed help could not

**'What has stood out for me is our amazing ability to mobilise ... I've really learnt what our people are capable of, there was so much energy and responsiveness.'**

access the Army – due to a lack of internet access or phone credit. So in a brand new innovation, a dedicated text number was developed. A team was put in place from all around the country, to respond to the thousands of texts and make welfare assessments.

In Auckland, which had the greatest need, 'it was a numbers game', explains Northern Division Community Ministries Manager Rhondda Middleton. In the last week of lockdown, 6419 text requests came in – with a whopping 4410 in the Northern region alone. In response, 2220 food parcels were packed and distributed within the week.

During the two months of March and April, over 16,000 food parcels were delivered throughout the country, according to a report from

the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit.

Perhaps the greatest challenge was maintaining the food supply to meet the demand. 'At times food supply was running extremely low,' recalls Major Shar Davis, Northern Division Secretary for Mission, who headed up the text initiative. 'But as is often the case, a donation or a delivery would arrive at the right time, enabling centres to get both fresh and pre-packaged food out to the thousands in need.'

## Needing the Army for the first time

During this time, The Salvation Army experienced an unprecedented jump in first-time clients – many were working in low-wage industries, had lost their jobs or were on zero-hour contracts.

Other low wage earners were able to get 80 percent of their income through the government subsidy, but it wasn't enough to make ends meet: 'If you earn minimum wage and your budget is stretched as far as it can possibly go, that 20 percent

that's missing makes a huge difference,' says Pam.

But the need wasn't always just financial, social support was also an essential part of the Army's response. Sole parents who didn't have wider whānau couldn't get to the shops, as children were not allowed in. 'We had a sole dad who received a food parcel and he was almost in tears because it meant he could provide for his family. Our driver who dropped off the food parcel was really affected because he was also a sole parent,' recalls Vikki Stevenson, Southern Division Community Ministries Manager.



PHOTOS: INGRID BARRATT



## HISTORY MAKERS: LOOKING BACK AT LOCKDOWN

The elderly were another major group of new clients. 'We had a lot of people who were worried about their elderly parents an hour or so away. The great thing was that as an Army, we were able to get people in their local area to check in and do their groceries for them,' recalls Pam.

### The new New Zealanders

But the overwhelming trend throughout the country was the plight of migrant workers. 'These people aren't just working to survive in New Zealand, they're sending money back home to support their families there,' explains Rhondda.

For migrants, the financial strain is compounded by the language barrier – which makes it almost impossible to navigate government systems – as well as anxiety for their home countries. 'They're very stressed about how to feed their family in New Zealand, but they're racked with anxiety about family in other countries,' adds Jenny.

Jason Dilger, operations manager at Waitakere Corps, sums it up: 'Our migrants are especially vulnerable. It really feels like God's work'.

### Life after lockdown

Throughout the country, a stand-out of the lockdown response has been collaboration with the community.

In Auckland, local food growers gave pallets and pallets of fresh food. New Zealand businesses and individuals donated in record numbers. The Army was able to collaborate with housing providers and other food banks, and charities shared their resources.

These new ways of working may be pointing towards a more collaborative working model in the long-term. The six Christchurch centres, for example, have been working as a single hub ever since the 2011 earthquakes.

'We see six centres, but the public only sees The Salvation Army,' explains Vikki. 'We have a warehouse and someone employed who does the food pick-ups, receives deliveries, handles the food products and makes sure the food parcels get packed.'

She adds that doing welfare assessments over the phone during lockdown also had surprising benefits: 'Our assessors are finding that people feel less pressured over the phone, so they can clearly ask the questions that address the underlying needs.'

Meanwhile, there is no sign that life after alert levels will slow down any time soon. The Salvation Army has estimated it will need \$10 million worth of food over the coming



year in order to continue meeting the high levels of need.

'The next wave of redundancies will impact, and we know that people in lower socio-economic groups take the longest to recover from a recession,' says Pam.

'We're going to continue to be responsive to the unknown,' adds Jenny. 'The challenge will be to mobilise, be creative, to be adaptive and continue to link arms with the community.'

By the time lockdown lifted on 28 April, our frontline staff were exhausted but still fighting the good fight.

As Rhondda says, it's just what we do: 'Even when we're tired, there's still a lot of laughter and joy. We are an Army and this is where we excel. We come in numbers, we do the mahi and we do it for our community.'

## Wellington Catholic Social Services Supporting former refugees during the lockdown

Support to overcome language barriers is one of the ways Wellington Catholic Social Services (CSS) are assisting vulnerable and isolated former refugees during the lockdown.

Families and single people who have been settled in New Zealand as former refugees make up around half the CSS social work caseload, and the CSS social workers have remained in contact with them through the COVID-19 lockdown.

Senior social worker Jess Harward says the lockdown has highlighted their increased vulnerability and isolation. 'Language can create a huge barrier to some families, and without the use of an interpreter, they are further isolated,' she says.

CSS funds interpretation services for former refugees. Accessing government and community services during the lockdown is more difficult for people with language barriers, so social workers have been engaged in setting up three-way conference calls with interpreters to enable former refugees to apply for assistance.

This has assisted with arranging health appointments, applying for Work and Income benefits, liaising with school around home learning, organising repeat prescriptions and



understanding what services are considered essential.

Social worker Eru Fox says that one of the challenges has been first finding out if former refugees fully comprehend what the COVID-19 lockdown means. One client had been isolated from her family for a month following a common cold, despite a doctor's appointment clearing her of COVID-19 concerns, due to fears and uncertainty about whether she might infect vulnerable family members.

Eru says just as we cannot see the COVID-19 virus, so too are New Zealanders often unable to see the invisible trauma experienced by many former refugee families who have come seeking sanctuary in Aotearoa New Zealand. 'We want our services to be a sanctuary for people to come and feel a sense of security, that they are being looked after.'

# A Community in crisis

## Presbyterian South Upper South Island provide vital support to people in need!



### Luis – Social Worker, Christchurch & North Canterbury

Luis is one of our Enliven Social Workers who is based in Christchurch and North Canterbury. Since the beginning of our nationwide lock down he has been working with other agencies, including Inspire Church, to deliver vital food parcels to vulnerable people located in remote areas throughout North Canterbury.

“I feel it is really important during times of crisis that our most vulnerable and isolated clients do not feel more isolated and vulnerable. In fact, it is during times like this that we should step up to a different level and become more engaged.”

Luis has delivered more than 50 food parcels to families and older people in Waiau, Hurunui, Cheviot, Amberley, Waiapara, Culverden, Hanmer Springs, Hawarden and Waikari.

### Trish – Enliven Manager, Nelson

Trish and her team in Nelson have been phoning Enliven members daily to help maintain social connection and check on their health and well-being. Kathleen, a member of our Enliven Totara club for elderly frail in Nelson, is a keen puzzle enthusiast. Unfortunately lock down has prevented her from getting any



new puzzles. Trish, knew Kathleen was struggling and quickly came to the rescue. Trish biked over and delivered two new puzzles to help Kathleen get through these final weeks in lock down. Kathleen was absolutely thrilled and the two had a lovely catch up, albeit from a safe 2m distance.

### Suz – Presbyterian Support Manager, Ashburton

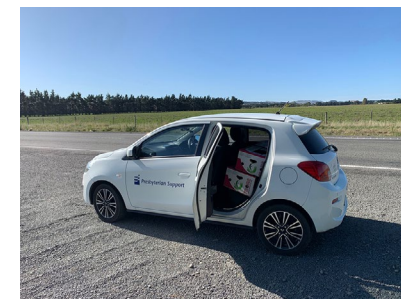
With our country in lock down many of our most vulnerable people are struggling to access vital food supplies. Thanks to Suz, and her awesome team, our small Ashburton



food bank has been providing essential groceries for our clients in need during this time. Due to the current lock down requirements we are unable to collect donated goods so are now relying on financial contributions to continue this important work. Those who wish to support this fantastic initiative are warmly encouraged to donate via our website.

### Family Works Team

Our dedicated Family Works team have been delivering helpful resources, distributing grocery vouchers and providing remote counselling support to vulnerable families, children and youth, via online video chat and phones. Although it has been an adjustment, using technology to connect with our clients, a number of people have reported they enjoyed the experience. Single mum, Jane\*, really appreciated the helpful resources our staff sent her to provide some activities for her to do with her children. The lockdown



helped to strengthen their relationship as they spent more time together enjoying Les Mills fitness classes on TV One and learning to cook. One of our younger clients also confirmed that she enjoyed her new online sessions with her counsellor. She said she felt comfortable because she could wander around her house and even stay in her PJ's. Although many of our families are experiencing increased stress and anxiety at this time our team have been working harder than ever to help support their varied needs

# Digital visiting at WesleyCare

Like the rest of New Zealand, WesleyCare, Christchurch Methodist Mission's 108-room facility offering hospital, rest home and palliative care, is in lockdown. WesleyCare is a bubble. Unfortunately, to protect the health and safety of the residents, many of whom are at increased risk of coronavirus, their loved ones are not part of the WesleyCare bubble.

Some WesleyCare Residents were unaware of the coronavirus risk and unable to fully understand the changes made to keep it at bay. Visitors were the highlight for many Resident' and life in lockdown can be isolating.

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**"We needed to innovate and adapt how we could enable this to happen."**

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WesleyCare senior management balanced the need for social distancing with the need for residents to have face-to-face communication with their loved ones. It was essential to maintain these relationships for Residents as connecting with each other, especially those we love, is essential for well-being.



WesleyCare Resident using Skype to show his picture folder to his daughter. Glenda Marshall, dressed in her personal protective equipment, assisting.

Pauline Ng, Operations Manager, said, "We needed to innovate and adapt how we could enable this to happen." Pauline went on a mission to purchase some tablets and research what social media platforms and online communities Residents' families were using.

"Many Residents admit to not being the most tech-savvy, leaving it

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**"Many Residents admit to not being the most tech-savvy."**

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to their children and grandchildren to simplify technology for them. We knew that new technology would be a point of tension and anxiety for some of our Residents."

Annie was the first WesleyCare Resident to experience digital visiting under lockdown. She received a Skype call from London which lasted for more than an hour during which time Annie was able not only to talk to but also see her son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren.

Mabel, has limited speech, and

during her first digital visit with family she was beaming when she saw her husband and daughter. David, Mabel's husband, asked if Mabel could see her lovely curtains in their house, and Mabel's smile got even brighter. David was so happy he called management to personally thank them for the chance to connect with Mabel in this way.

Olive was confused on her first Skype call with her family. Olive could hear the familiar voice of her daughter, but not see her. Olive's therapist was on hand to help her, and explain what was happening. Olive overcame her fear of the technology and was able to enjoy her digital visit with her daughter.

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**"We are very thankful this can be arranged. My family had a great Skype chat with Hilda, Mum and Grandma, yesterday."**

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Margaret Widdup chatted to Hilda Widdup on Skype recently. Margaret said, "We are very thankful this can be arranged. My family had a great Skype chat with Hilda, Mum and Grandma, yesterday."

Residents are learning and embracing this new technology, and Pauline believes that digital visiting should become a regular way of staying in touch with family. "I hope most Residents will continue to use the tablets after lockdown to connect with loved ones far away and overseas, something that was rare previously."

This technology has also made it possible to offer digital bedside funerals over this difficult time. Jill, one of the WesleyCare Chaplains, has become very tech savvy and has conducted a number of bedside funerals using both Skype and the popular video conferencing service Zoom. These digital services enable family and friends to spend precious moments with their loved one to say a final goodbye, filling an important void for families who are unable to have a normal funeral service due to Level 4 lockdown restrictions.

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**"I hope most Residents will continue to use the tablets after lockdown to connect with loved ones far away."**

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# Kore haikai Zero Hunger Collective

In the days leading up to the COVID-19 lockdown it became evident that Aotearoa New Zealand had a significant population who are vulnerable to food insecurity. Within days food banks, community organisations, iwi and churches found themselves putting together food & care packs at a rate they had never experienced before. No access to food in schools, the closing of fruit and veggie markets, restrictions from shared meals, isolation due to health vulnerabilities pushed those who were on the edge of food insecurity into a very difficult place. NZCCSS & the Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective, alongside their partners worked hard with government to give voice to that reality and foster better supply chains and resources. That hard work has paid off.

**Within days food banks, community organisations, iwi and churches found themselves putting together food & care packs.**

## **That hard work has paid off.**

For the first time ever the COVID recovery budget included expenditure towards food insecurity solutions and the establishment of MSD's Food Secure Communities team. While this remains a limited contribution towards the extra mahi being done by community food organisations, it is a sign that Food as a Basic Human Right and that the hard work done by the community sector is being recognised by government. The funding in the COVID recovery budget is not enough but it is a contribution towards what will be needed to enable our communities to be food secure. There are three sets of funding

1. help with the transition for Civil Defence right now Community Food Transition Grants: due 8 June.
2. To assist with meeting the extra COVID demand over the next year period which Community Food Response Funding: closes on 5 July.

3. to assist with collaborative ventures that are focused on creating food secure communities for the long term Food Secure Communities Grants.

## **Food as a Basic Human Right and the hard work done by the community sector is being recognised by government.**

In addition to that MSD are investing in local food mapping and collaborative ways forward to move away from a food parcelling dependent system of community food distribution. Kore Hiakai will play an integral role in this. The development of our Principles of Mana Enhancing practice of Food Distribution tool will enable local organisations to champion best practice. This will highlight fostering collaborative ways forward for community solutions to food security.

Alongside the Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective two other organisations have been identified as part of the MSD partnerships in moving towards a food secure Aotearoa.

**kore hiakai**  
Zero Hunger Collective



NZ Food Rescue Alliance as an umbrella group for food rescue and the NZ Food Network, an offshoot of KiwiHarvest, who are building a logistics and infrastructure system to enable food that would otherwise go to land fill to be redistributed from producers into the community food distribution system, and to enable collective bulk buying across our sector.

There is still much to be done to enable Aotearoa to be fully food secure. These measures are about solving the issues immediately in front of us. Collectively Kore Hiakai are striving to enable the structural systems change that would reduce, and perhaps eliminate, food insecurity so that none might go hungry in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**There is still much to be done to enable Aotearoa to be fully food secure.**

## **A snapshot of NZCCSS Members COVID-19 stories**

**A Celebration of NZCCSS Mission under COVID-19 lockdown**

# Locked down, staying safe and living strong

*There's an unremarkable two-storied building in Hamilton's CBD that is currently witnessing a remarkable change for its residents. Just prior to the country going into lockdown in late March, twenty-seven men and two minders ushered in a new era for the Hamilton Christian Men's Night Shelter. It was no longer a "night-time only" affair; the men were encouraged to remain on the premises during the daytime. Just days later, a state of emergency was declared. Some men reunited with family and their beds at the night shelter were quickly filled again so that by lockdown a full complement was in place.*

The men range in age from their twenties to their early seventies; most are in their thirties or forties. Many of them have tamariki in the world outside the lockdown and two have mokopuna. Most have mental health and/or addiction issues, some serious. Three walked out during the first week – one was extremely unwell – and all of them have struggled to cope with the restrictions of the lockdown.

Joanne, the Manager, has encouraged open discussions and full information sharing since the beginning. Outbursts and incidents associated with the men's fragile mental states were potentially a major impediment to successfully completing lockdown. Many of them operate routinely on a hair trigger.

Through continuing discussions, they have been encouraged to acknowledge the differences between 'shelter-life' and 'prison-life.' The

men have come to appreciate that being locked down is not just a "homeless" issue, that "we are all doing it hard" and they are just as determined as staff and volunteers to get through without getting sick. A whānau spirit has developed and is nurtured by both Joanne and the men themselves. Some think that four weeks is too long and many don't want the lockdown extended.



Beef roasts

They just want to find work, get a house and get on with the rest of their lives. The lockdown is blocking that.

All the men are up and about by 9.00 a.m. each day. There is "a sameness" about their days, with not a lot to help them pass the time. Wifi access means those with smart phones can access social media and the internet. Some make use of



Lemon stir-fried Chicken

the recently donated weightlifting equipment and conversations are taking an increasingly philosophical turn as the men contemplate their circumstances and their futures. Some of them enjoy writing songs, especially rap; another would love to carve, if only he had the means. Joanne has noted a significant reduction in the number of mental health related outbursts. Some of



Scones and muffins

the men are clear about the reason – good, nutritious kai, cooked by qualified chefs and supplied seven days per week by Methodist City Action.

The shelter, unwittingly perhaps, demonstrates the thrust of Otago research that draws strong relationships between regular, nutritious food and lessened likelihood of agitated, anti-social behaviour. The men themselves note the calming, comforting effects of a full belly; it is "massive", they say, "more effective than the pills!" There is no way to be sure about how much difference good kai makes, but if it in any way helps these men, some of whom have roamed freely for years, to sit tight, stay home and stay safe, it has done much more than simply fill a culinary gap. We may have lightened Joanne's load a little, but our efforts pale into insignificance in the face of the strength of character displayed by these men.

# Agile, Adaptive, Supportive Accommodation Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

Brian has been sleeping on the streets for nine years and has no place to call home. He has struggled with mental health issues and addictions for most of his adult life. He is disconnected from his own family and considers others that live on the streets as his family now. They are the ones he sees most often and he is strongly connected with them.

Brian heard about the COVID-19 and Alert Level 4 from one of his fellow street dwellers. They talked about how they would stay at home, when they don't have one? How were they going to survive and keep themselves safe?

## How were they going to survive and keep themselves safe?

When Level 4 lockdown was announced, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development quickly identified motel accommodation to ensure that everyone had a safe place to live during the lockdown. The Ministry then asked experienced organisations to coordinate a new service: supporting people experiencing homelessness to move into a motel unit and then provide

them with ongoing support during the lockdown.

The Christchurch Methodist Mission (CMM) and Lifewise responded quickly. CMM's Housing First Team and Lifewise's Merge Community and Street Reach Teams transported people to the motels, provided them with food and phones so that key workers were able to provide ongoing support.

In the last four weeks, Lifewise has housed over 53 people, like Brian, in Auckland, and seven in Rotorua. During this same period, CMM have housed over 70 people in Christchurch and 10 people in Blenheim. Key workers in these regions, some of whom have lived experience of homelessness, keep in contact with them, providing any necessary support they need. Now the key workers are exploring long-term housing options with these people who have been newly housed.

## In the last four weeks, Lifewise has housed over 53 people.

John Murray, Acting Head of Mission says, "Lifewise ensures enough food is available and that



**"This is about ensuring some of our most vulnerable people are kept as safe as possible from COVID-19 and helping to stop its spread."**

those housed have the ability to stay in contact with friends and whānau."

CMM Housing First Manager, Nic Fleming, says it is really important for the city's homeless not to be forgotten during the lockdown. "This is about ensuring some of our most vulnerable people are kept as safe as possible from COVID-19 and helping to stop its spread."



## It's time to Unite for the recovery

Thank you Aotearoa. We made it to Alert Level 1. We united against COVID-19, and came through. And now it's time to unite for the recovery.

**Buy local**  
Buying local supports the people who are doing their best to support us. Buy local to support nearby New Zealand businesses, and jobs for the future.

**Buy NZ-made goods**  
Buying goods made in New Zealand means you're supporting local jobs and the economy. It's a chance to experience the quality, design and style of our goods. Put simply, buying NZ-made keeps money in the country and helps local businesses thrive.

**See NZ**  
See all over New Zealand. Now's a great time to take a break from the city and see the beauty of the country. You'll see our cities, coast and farmland. It's amazing what can be seen from the comfort of New Zealand - sometimes even only a few kilometres away. Another way to better the getting away for a bit, getting to know our culture, the landscape, and helping local businesses get back on their feet.

**Continue to contact trace**  
Let's do our best to keep track of where we've been and who we've seen to assist with contact tracing if it's required. Businesses should help customers to keep track of where they've been by displaying the NZ COVID Tracer app QR code.

**What happens at Alert Level 1?**  
At Alert Level 1, everyone can return without restriction to work, school, sports, and domestic travel, and you can get together with as many people as you want. Contact a health care provider for more information. It's important that we keep basic hygiene measures in place, including washing your hands, and coughing or sneezing into your elbow.

**The Golden Rules of Alert Level 1**  
The COVID-19 pandemic still exists globally, even if it has been stamped out here in New Zealand. To keep COVID-19 at bay, we all need to keep practising great hygiene by following these Golden Rules:

1. If you're sick, stay home, don't go to work or school, don't socialise.
2. If you're worried you might have the virus, see your doctor or health professional for advice.
3. Wash your hands with your hands, soap, and water for 20 seconds.
4. Sneeze and cough into your elbow, and regularly disinfect shared surfaces.
5. If you are sick, help health authorities to self-isolate you as much as possible.
6. If you are concerned about your wellbeing, or have underlying health conditions, work with your GP to understand how best to stay healthy.
7. Keep track of where you've been and who you've seen to help contact tracing if needed. Use the NZ COVID Tracer app as a handy way of doing this.
8. Businesses should help people keep track of their movements by displaying the Ministry of Health QR Code for contact tracing.
9. Stay vigilant. There is still a global pandemic going on. People and businesses should be prepared to act fast to stop up Alert Levels if we have to.
10. People will have had different experiences over the last couple of months. Whatever your feeling - it's okay. Reach out to others. Be kind to yourself.

**All your support, in one place**  
If you're dealing with the fallout from COVID-19, and need some help, visit [UniteForRecovery.govt.nz](https://www.uniteforrecovery.govt.nz) to get the support you need. You'll find information about the funding, jobs and financial support available to see you through. It's everything that's available to help Kiwis to get back on their feet and thriving again - all in one place.

[UniteForRecovery.govt.nz](https://www.uniteforrecovery.govt.nz)  
New Zealand Government



# 2020 Wellbeing Budget: Rebuilding Together

NZCCSS Policy Watch Budget Special looked in some detail at the 2020 Government Budget.

Read the full analysis on our Policy Watch [web page](#).

NZCCSS supports the direction of the \$50 billion COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) fund at the centre of Budget 2020, and its focus on job creation and saving, public housing, food security, apprenticeships and training. All of these budget priorities will have an immediate impact on the wellbeing of families, whānau and communities during these uncertain times.

Community social services, including our NZCCSS members, were essential workers during the lock down distributing food, supporting homeless people into transitional housing, and delivering a range of other supports to vulnerable families. Many social workers and care workers made a personal sacrifice to live in a range of residential facilities.

Budget 2020 has recognised the critical role of community and NGO services but there is real trepidation across the community NGO sector that the level of this funding will not match the magnitude of the demand that will rise alongside

unemployment numbers. Treasury has predicted a rate of 9 percent by September 2020.

*“...With the coming waves of unemployment and hardship the need for a strong, capable community and social services sector has never been more apparent. The lack of government financial support for the sector over many years has negatively affected the ‘social infrastructure’ the sector provides. An ongoing process for increasing funding and building up sector capability is required to ensure community and social service organisations are well positioned to meet the increasing needs.”* – Trevor McGlinchey, Executive Officer, New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services

At a time when more New Zealanders will be looking to government for a Jobseeker benefit, NZCCSS is disappointed that Budget 2020 excluded any significant increase to benefit levels or the abatement rate recommended by the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG).

*“NZCCSS is disappointed that the structural change that is needed in the welfare system has not been implemented. The Budget has maintained the benefit status quo, with only small increases in income. As a result of this lack of change many more New Zealanders will be impacted by poverty and hardship,”* said McGlinchey. *“If the Welfare Expert Advisory Group’s recommendations had been implemented whānau would need less support as they would be self-sufficient and more able to engage positively with their communities.”*

Read NZCCSS full media release [here](#).

## Community-based sector

*“There’s a tsunami of need coming towards our services over this next phase and we’re going to need ongoing support. In the emergency phase, food and housing have been of utmost importance but we are now coming into a recovery phase where alongside food and housing, we are seeing more requests for financial mentoring, counselling and employment services.”* – Lisa Woolley, EO Vision West, Vice President NZCCSS

The dedication of the community-based NGO sector to the wellbeing of children, families and whānau has never been clearer than during the COVID-19 lockdown. NZCCSS members worked tirelessly to distribute food to families, to support homeless people into homes into temporary accommodation, and worked effectively alongside national and local government.

All of this happened at the same time as delivering services for older people, tamariki and children, families, as well as to those impacted by family violence and mental health issues. As we slowly return to a level of normality, constrained by the knowledge a second wave of this virus remains a threat until a vaccine is found, the demand for food, budget advice, and housing continues. This demand will only increase as job losses continue in response to the COVID-19.

Government’s investment in the community sector has significantly improved, with some new spending across four years, the question is:



Will it be sufficient to address the tsunami anticipated as wage subsidies run out and unemployment levels rise to approximately 9 percent by September 2020?

Last year, Social Services Provider Aotearoa (SSPA) released an independent report by Martin Jenkins which found that “government-contracted social services for children and families were being under-funded by \$630 million a year”. This indicates a serious shortfall between what services are provided and what are paid for. NZCCSS shares the concerns raised by SSPA’s Executive Officer Brenda Pilot, that while the funding to the NGO sector is welcome, *“it’s a long way short of the additional funding needed to ensure the sustainability of the sector. whilst the around the need for more sustained funding of the community sector to ensure its sustainability”*.



# The Kia Kaha, Kia Māia, Kia Ora Aotearoa: COVID-19 Psychosocial and Mental Wellbeing Recovery Plan



The Ministry of Health (MoH) is calling for feedback on a *Kia Kaha, Kia Māia, Kia Ora Aotearoa – COVID-19 psychosocial and mental wellbeing recovery plan*.

This document provides a national approach to supporting the mental and social wellbeing of New Zealanders in the COVID-19 recovery period.

MoH previously published a provisional psychosocial response plan for COVID-19 Alert Level 4. That plan provided guidance to assist agencies involved in planning, coordinating and delivering psychosocial interventions and mental health and addiction services. The new plan provides a framework for actions to support whānau and communities to adapt and thrive next 12 to 18 months. It draws on the directions for mental wellbeing that were laid down in *He Ara Oranga: Report*

*of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction.*

It is a 'living document' that we will continue to review as we assess the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

MoH is inviting feedback via an [online survey](#) on the following questions:

1. Do the vision, principles and focus areas in the plan resonate with you?
2. In what ways does your organisation see itself contributing to the focus areas in the plan?
3. What do you think the critical factors to ensure success of this plan?
4. What positive examples of actions to support mental and social wellbeing are you aware of?
5. Do you think there is anything missing from the plan?

Feedback due 15 June 2020.

## Kete Kupu Word Basket

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