

Briefing to the Incoming Minister

Seniors

November 2023



Te Tari Kaumātua
Office for Seniors



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

New Zealanders Aged 65+



869,000 in 2023

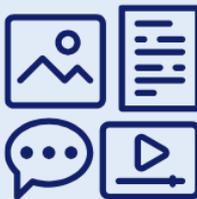


1,338,000 by 2043



13%

experience disadvantage across multiple of the following domains:
health, housing, finances, accessibility, social participation



Up to
25%
are digitally excluded



65.7%
live in a home they own
or partially own



1 in 4
are in paid employment

11 Permanent Staff

Led by a Director



Te Tari Kaumātua
Office for Seniors

\$2.658 million

2023/24 Budget

Contents

The Seniors Portfolio.....	2
The Office for Seniors	2
Appropriation	3
Context: Older New Zealanders	4
Financial security and economic participation.....	5
Housing.....	7
Healthy Ageing and Access to Services	8
Participation and Social Connection.....	10
Accessible environments	12
Government Responses.....	13
The Better Later Life Strategy	13
Office for Seniors Programmes	14
Age friendly Cities and Communities	15
The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing.....	15
The Older Workers Employment Action Plan	17
Strategic Communications.....	17
Links to Other Portfolios	18
SuperGold Card (Social Development and Employment Portfolio).....	18
Aged Care Commissioner (Seniors and Health Portfolios).....	18
Tackling Elder Abuse (Various Portfolios)	18
New Zealand Superannuation and income support (Social Development and Employment Portfolio)	19
Healthy Ageing Strategy (Health Portfolio)	20
Dementia/Mate Wareware Action Plan (Health Portfolio).....	20
Mahi Aroha: Carers Strategy Action Plan 2019 – 2023 (Social Development and Employment Portfolio)	20
Accessibility Legislation and Disability Strategy (Disability Issues Portfolio) ..	20
Emerging Issues	21
Decisions that require early attention	21
Key Contacts	21

The Seniors Portfolio

The Seniors portfolio was established in 1990 to advocate across government on issues that impact older people. You oversee the Government's strategy for our ageing population and representing the interests of older New Zealanders within Government. In many instances this involves working with your Ministerial colleagues to leverage outcomes for older people through other portfolios.

This briefing provides an overview of your portfolio and summarises immediate issues and potential focus areas. It explains how the Office for Seniors – Te Tari Kaumātua (the Office for Seniors) and the Ministry of Social Development – Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora (MSD) support you.

We can provide you with further information and advice on any topic in this briefing. We are looking forward to working with you and discussing the most effective ways we can support you, your priorities, and responsibilities.

The Office for Seniors

Administered by MSD, the Office for Seniors has 11 staff led by a Director.

The Office for Seniors supports your portfolio by:

- > advising on the rights and issues of older people
- > coordinating responses to ageing population issues across government
- > leading and coordinating responses to population ageing by local Councils and communities
- > raising awareness about issues experienced by older people
- > supporting your advocacy for older people and understanding of the issues they experience.

Stakeholder Engagement

Your role involves extensive engagement with older people and a broad range of stakeholders that have input into policy and outcomes for older people.

To support you, the Office for Seniors maintains and regularly engages with sector networks and manages a range of communication channels, including:

- > the Office for Seniors website
- > sector appropriate social media channels
- > a newsletter distributed every other month to more than 440,000 unique email addresses for those currently receiving NZ Superannuation
- > a sector-specific newsletter sent to more than 1,300 stakeholders
- > face to face presentations at local and national events
- > regular key leader engagement across the sector.

Support from MSD

The Office for Seniors is located within MSD, which provides all corporate services except the Office's communications function. The Minister for Social Development and Employment directs most of MSD's work - including delivery of services such as NZ Superannuation.

The Office for Seniors works closely with several groups within MSD:

- › The International, Disability, and Generational (IDG) Policy Group develops policy and advice on retirement income and social policy issues. IDG can support your portfolio and provide policy advice on critical issues at the direction of the Minister for Social Development and Employment.
- › MSD Service Delivery administers NZ Superannuation, the Veteran's Pension and other benefits. They manage the SuperGold Card scheme, which offers concessions and discounts for seniors.
- › The Māori, Communities and Partnerships (MCP) Group contracts providers to deliver community programmes, including the Elder Abuse Response Services and Building Financial Capability, and a programme to prevent elder abuse.

Appropriation

You are the appropriation Minister for the following departmental appropriations within Vote Social Development:

Promoting positive outcomes for seniors

This appropriation is limited to providing information and facilitation to protect the rights and interests of older people, to promote local community involvement in senior issues, and ministerial services.

In the 2023/24 financial year this is \$2.658 million.

You are the appropriation Minister for the following non-departmental appropriation within Vote Health (and supported by the Ministry of Health):

Aged Care Commissioner

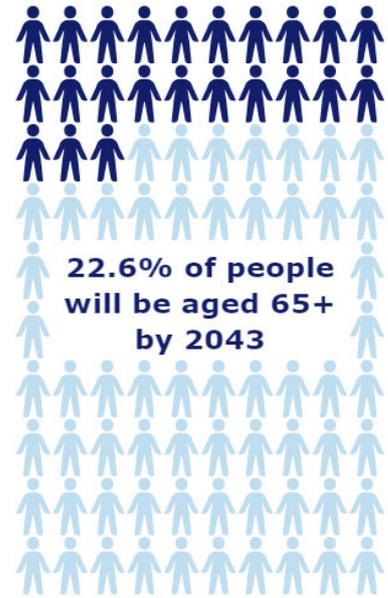
This appropriation is limited to the functions of the Aged Care Commissioner.

In the 2023/24 financial year this is \$2.023 million.

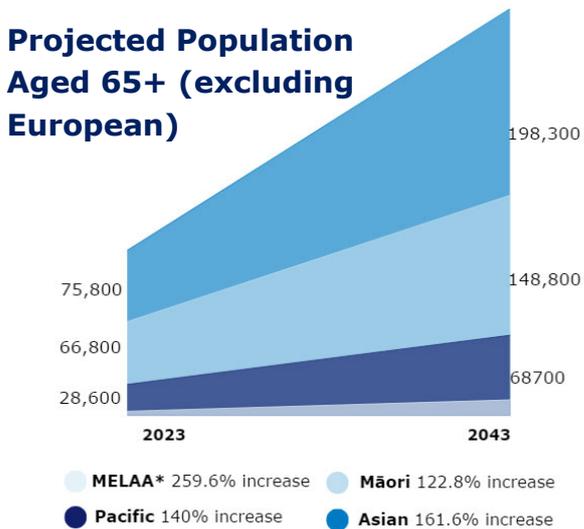
Context: Older New Zealanders

Compared to other developed countries, New Zealand’s population is relatively young. However, as is the case in much of the world, below replacement birth-rates and growing life expectancy mean it is ageing.

Currently, 16.9 percent of the population is aged 65+. Within two decades this will have grown to 22.6 percent; more than the proportion aged under 15. Much of the growth in the older population will be driven by those aged 75+, who will grow from 7.4 percent currently to 12.4 percent in 2043.



Our older population will be more diverse



Our older population is becoming more ethnically diverse, although it will remain less so than the total New Zealand population. For Māori and Pacific populations this increase has been driven by increases in life expectancy. For older Asian people it is likely due to net migration.

A more diverse older population may have different aspirations and needs as they age. Diversity includes differences in religion, philosophy, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical abilities, mental health, physical health, genetic attributes, personality, and behaviour.

Experiences of later life

Universal access to NZ Superannuation and the public health system combined with high historic home ownership rates have made New Zealand a good place to age. Older people report higher subjective wellbeing than other age groups and less absolute or relative material deprivation. For many, later life affords an enhanced opportunity to spend time with family, contribute to their community and pursue leisure activities.

But later life is not uniform. Disparities arise both in later life and across the life course. A minority of older New Zealanders will not experience the later life their peers expect. Recent research found 33 percent of older people experienced vulnerability in at least one area of their life, and 13 percent experienced it across multiple.

* MELAA – Middle Eastern/Latin American/African

Financial security and economic participation

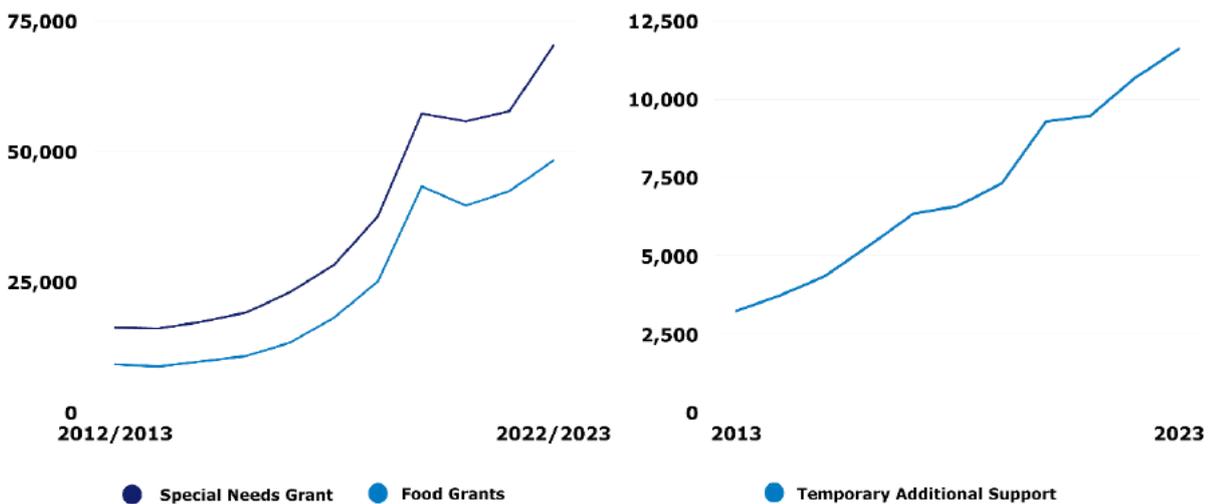
As New Zealanders age we want to enjoy an adequate standard of living and need sufficient income, assets, and support to do so. As a cohort, older New Zealanders are more financially comfortable than other age groups. They are less likely on average to report experiencing absolute or relative deprivation.

Some older people experience difficulty or precarity

Whilst NZ Superannuation and Veterans Pension provides a stable income source, 40 percent of people aged 65+ have virtually no other income and another 20 percent have only a little more. Older women (especially those who are single), Māori and Pacific peoples are over-represented within these groups. Women reaching the age of NZ Superannuation entitlement are on average financially worse off than men and are more likely to report financial reasons as their primary motivation for being in paid work.

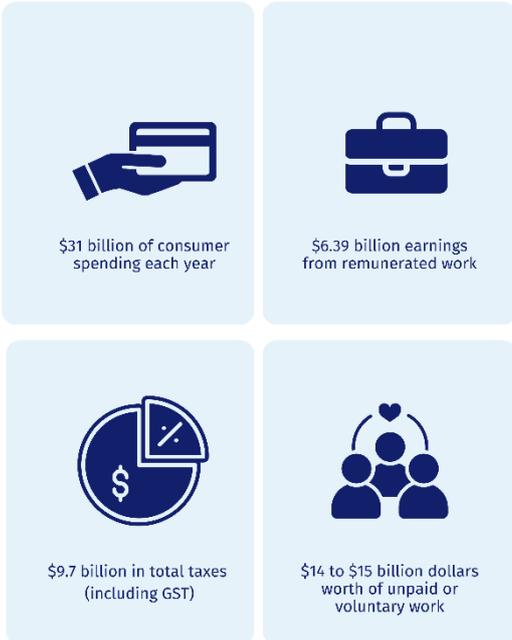
The number of older people receiving supplementary financial assistance from MSD has been steadily increasing, well ahead of population growth. This could reflect an increase in need and/or increased availability or awareness of assistance to older applicants. Community organisations have recently reported an increase in older people accessing food banks and similar support.

Supplementary Assistance for Recipients 65+



Older people’s economic contributions are significant

Public discourse on the role of older people in the economy can unduly focus on the fiscal implications of NZ Superannuation. But the picture is more nuanced and older people as a group make substantial economic contributions to New Zealand as paid and unpaid workers, consumers and taxpayers.



Our workforce is ageing

Older workers (generally referred to as those aged 50+) form a significant and growing proportion of the labour force but are far from homogenous. Labour force participation rates for those aged 65+ are increasing. Over the next two decades, workers aged 65+ will grow from 7 percent to 8.5 percent of the labour force.

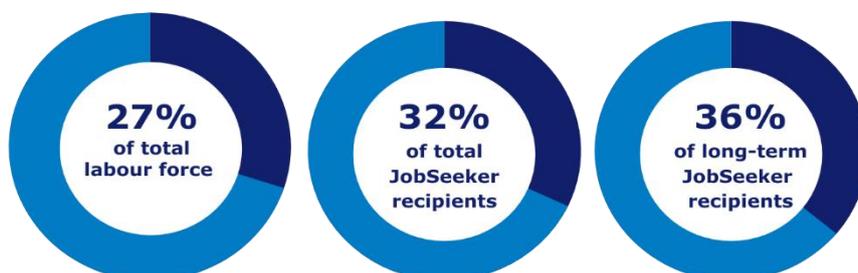
Older workers’ motivations for participation vary. For some, working helps meet increased cost of living or boosts retirement funding. Work can provide mental stimulation, a sense of connection and a way to contribute to society. The health benefits of continuing to work in later life are well established.

Retaining older workers in the workforce helps capture their skills and experience. Multigenerational workforces have been shown to be more productive.

Not all experience good labour market outcomes

It’s not always easy for older workers to find or stay in employment that suits their needs, with some facing barriers such as lack of flexibility, discrimination and a mismatch of skills/experience to the available roles. Research indicates that although older workers are less likely to lose their jobs as a result of economic conditions, those that do on average spend longer out of the workforce and have lower rates of pay when they return to work. Older workers who are eligible (aged between 50 and 64) are over-represented as recipients of unemployment support, and especially as long-term recipients.

Older Workers Aged 50 – 64



Housing

Older people have high rates of home ownership compared to other age groups. Mortgage-free home ownership provides a financial base for many older New Zealanders. It also likely contributes to the stability and sense of connection to community that many older people report.

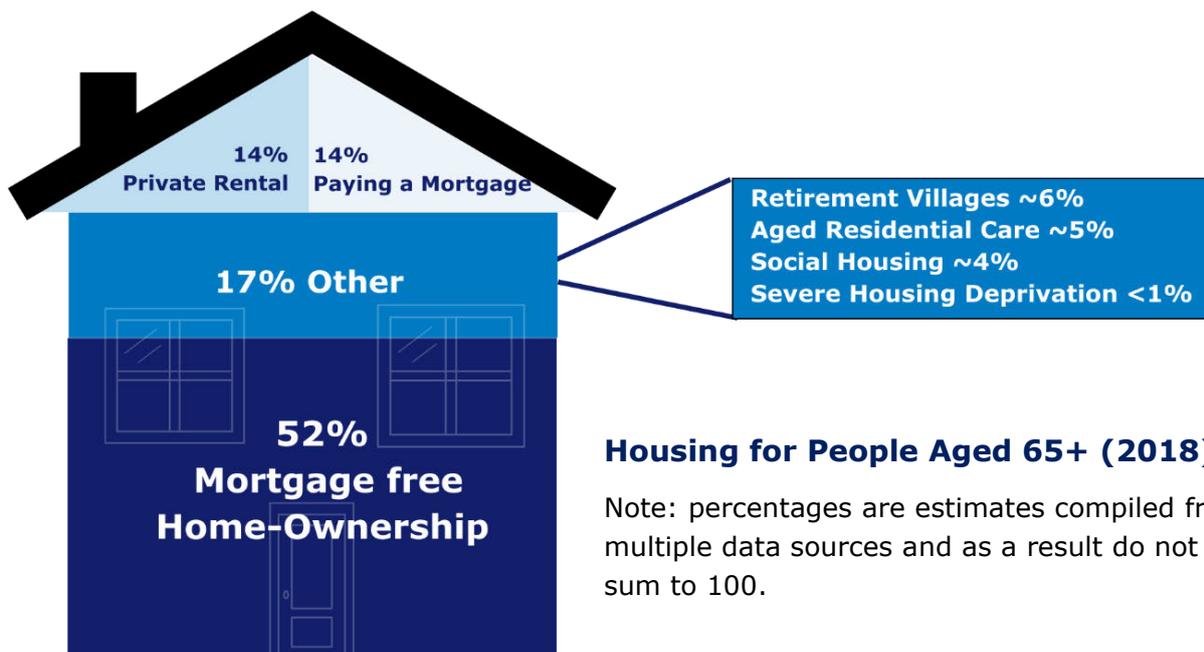
More people are entering older age paying a mortgage or renting



Rates of home ownership among older people have been steadily decreasing. The proportion of those aged 65+ still paying a mortgage has increased from 6.8 percent in 2004 to 14 percent in 2018. Home loan debts for this cohort totalled \$23.4b in 2022, up from \$16.9b in 2019.

For some older homeowners, particularly those relying on NZ Superannuation alone, meeting the costs associated with home ownership, such as council rates, insurance and maintenance can be a challenge.

An increasing number of older people are living in rental accommodation. High and fluctuating rental costs can be a challenge for older people on fixed incomes, and research indicates older renters experience a range of poorer wellbeing outcomes as compared to homeowners. Current bank lending practices and the limited ability of many older people to earn employment income means home ownership is out of reach for many of those renting in later life.



Housing for People Aged 65+ (2018)

Note: percentages are estimates compiled from multiple data sources and as a result do not sum to 100.

The number of older people receiving the Accommodation Supplement has been steadily increasing and totalled 49,851 people in June 2023, a 17 percent increase since March 2018. Similarly, the numbers of older people on the social housing register are growing steadily, while the supply of social housing ring-fenced for older people (largely Council “pensioner housing”) is reducing as a result of transfers to Homes and Communities - Kāinga Ora or Community Housing Providers (although existing tenants have their tenure guaranteed). Homelessness has become the top ranked reason for people aged 50-64 to be on the public housing register, followed by inadequate or unsuitable accommodation.

Increasing numbers of older people face housing challenges

With reducing rates of home ownership in the future, more older people may face a range of housing issues, including affordability, accessibility, insecurity of tenure, quality, location or homelessness. These issues can have a significant impact on wellbeing as we age, and there is likely to be increasing demand for suitable housing as well as housing assistance. We know older people can face discrimination in the housing market and find it difficult to navigate complex rental processes that are often online.

Many of these housing issues relate to the state of the wider housing market and national housing stock and are likely to require large-scale, long-term solutions. Changing the housing market in this way will benefit a broad range of groups. For example, more accessible housing is important for older people as well as those with disabilities.

Healthy Ageing and Access to Services

As we age, we are more likely to develop chronic health conditions that can have a significant and lasting impact on our quality of life. Access to health care services is vital to monitor those with chronic health conditions and prevent others from developing chronic health conditions.

There are a wide range of support services available that enable older people to live independently for as long as they can, and older New Zealanders make greater use of health sector resources than other age groups. They are more likely than the all-ages population to have visited their GP, and less likely to have an unmet need for primary healthcare. The already significant proportion of health sector expenditure on older people will continue to increase with the ageing of the population.

Home and Community Support Services and Aged Residential Care

Home and Community Support Services (HCSS) provide household tasks and personal care assistance to those who need extra support to be able to live independently. Part of the aim of HCSS is to support older people to “age in place” – remaining in homes where they have established community links.

Aged Residential Care (ARC) facilities provide long term care for people who can no longer live independently, even with support. The level of care and services offered by residential care providers varies depending on the type of facility, including rest home care, age related hospital care, dementia care and psychogeriatric care.

The ARC and HCSS sectors are experiencing various challenges including funding and workforce shortages. The ageing population means pressure on these sectors is set to continue. Actions are underway to support nurses’ training and registration, attract international staff and address pay disparities. The Ministry of Health is in the process of reviewing the funding model for ARC, which the sector claims does not make sufficient allowance for longer term maintenance and investment in facilities (among other issues).

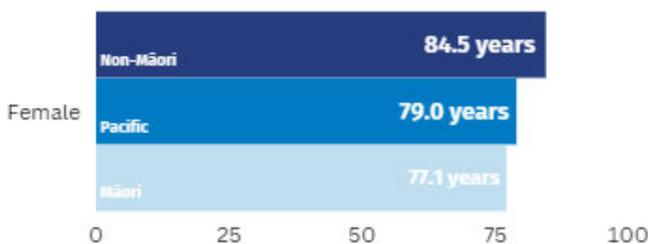
Mental health issues can lead to other poor outcomes

Mental health is just as important as physical health and can be overlooked in older people. Stigma and a lack of awareness can make it difficult for older people to get the help they need. Mental health conditions among older people such as depression and anxiety can contribute to poor physical health, social isolation and financial hardship which can directly affect multiple areas of a person's life and their ability to reach out for help.

There are significant disparities in later life health outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples



Life Expectancy at Birth (2017 – 2019)



Overall, New Zealanders are living longer, healthier lives. The significant growth in the number of Māori and Pacific peoples aged 65+ is partly a result of increasing life expectancy for these groups.

Although the life expectancy gap is narrowing, disparities in health outcomes across ethnic groups remain significant. Older Māori and Pacific peoples have higher rates of chronic diseases (heart disease, stroke and diabetes), higher rates of hospitalisation, lower rates of

accessing healthcare compared to other New Zealanders. Health disparities experienced by Māori and Pacific peoples are a result of multiple complex issues such as socioeconomic disadvantages that can make it difficult to access health care, housing and afford healthy food.

Participation and Social Connection

Being connected and having meaningful relationships with family, whānau, and our wider community is critically important for our wellbeing as we age.

Attitudes towards older people are largely positive

In 2021, the Office for Seniors commissioned research to better understand individual views on how we value age, our outlook as we age, age-related discrimination and our preparedness for an older population. Most respondents (81 percent) had great respect for older people, while 50 percent of respondents considered older people to be an asset to society. Only around 10 percent saw older people more as a burden.

However, negative stereotypes were more prevalent when respondents were asked what they thought of older people. Respondents described older people as slowing down, wrinkled, frail and having health issues.

Many older people are highly active in the community

Large numbers of people aged 65+ report that they have the right amount of contact with friends and family and are engaged with at least one community or social group. Many older people volunteer; 31.6 percent of those aged 65+ in a June 2018 survey. Research has found older people who volunteer rate life as more worthwhile.

Older people play a crucial role enabling others to live and participate in their communities. Those caring for someone else (including those with an illness or disability as well as children) are older, with over 20 percent of carers aged 65+.

Some older people report loneliness, and actual rates may be higher

Older people can experience loneliness (a mismatch between desired and actual levels of social interaction) and social isolation (having no or limited contact with others). Social networks for those aged 65+ are more likely to consist solely of family members, as compared to other age groups. There can be many reasons for this; moving to a new home, loss of friends and loved ones, and access issues, lack of mobility or illness can all contribute to reduced social interaction.

Many older people live alone, and we expect this number to increase. Living alone does not necessarily lead to loneliness or social isolation, but it can increase the risk. For some cultures, living away from family or broader community can contribute to a lack of access to appropriate social and cultural support.

Both loneliness and social isolation can contribute to poor mental and physical health outcomes. Widely publicised international research puts loneliness on par with other significant health risk factors such as smoking.

Large numbers of older people are digitally excluded

Digital technology has changed our lives significantly in recent decades, with many government agencies and businesses moving activities online. The COVID-19 pandemic fast-tracked this trend and amplified the importance that digital communication has in our daily lives. Beyond accessing services, a growing body of research indicates that digital engagement can play a significant role in improving social outcomes and individual wellbeing.

Many older people do not have access to a device or internet connection, or may lack the skills, confidence and trust to access services and information online safely. A 2019 study found that 14 percent of those aged 65+ did not have access to the internet, rising to 35 percent of those aged 75+.

COVID-19 is still impacting some

The removal of final COVID-19 public health measures after winter 2023 means the pandemic has receded as an issue for most New Zealanders. The overwhelming majority of COVID-19 hospitalisations and deaths were among older people and risks remain, particularly those with disabilities or underlying health conditions.

Community groups report that some older people have been slow to return to activities following the disruption and uncertainty of the COVID-19 period. Some groups report that volunteer numbers (made up largely of older people) have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Accessible environments

Accessibility is our ability to engage with, use, participate in and belong to the world around us. It includes physical elements such as the design of local places and facilities, as well as transport and connection to the natural environment. It includes broader concepts such as ability to access information and participate actively in a full range of social, political and commercial activities.

More work needs to be done to make our environments accessible

There is limited understanding and awareness of what accessibility looks like and the benefits of improved access. This is demonstrated by limited training and knowledge of universal design and of how to make places, spaces, services and goods accessible to enable all people to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. Accessibility applies to everyone and the needs of older people and other groups can overlap. For example, even and well-lit footpaths and public transport that is frequent and easy to navigate supports the mobility of older people as well as parents with prams and many others. Environments that have been designed to include and be comfortable for older people are good for the whole community.

It is important to remove access barriers to enable all people to participate fully in their communities and help to prevent social isolation.

Rates of disability increase as people age

According to the 2013 Disability Survey, 59 percent of people aged 65+ have one or more disabilities, with 49 percent of adults over 65 having a physical disability compared to only 7 percent of adults under 45. This group is likely to grow as New Zealand's population continues to age. Similarly, a group of people with long-term disabilities are increasingly moving into older age.

Considering how health and social services work together to support older people who lose capacity while enabling them to maintain as much independence and autonomy as possible will become increasingly important.

Climate change and emergency response

The effects of climate change, as well as extreme weather events and other emergencies, can have disproportionate effects on older people. These include the health impacts of temperature changes, job losses in climate-exposed sectors and loss and damage to housing and community infrastructure.

Government Responses

The Better Later Life Strategy

Better Later Life – He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034 (the Strategy) was launched on 1 November 2019. To support its overarching vision of older New Zealanders living valued, connected and fulfilling lives. The Strategy identifies five key areas for action to guide the work of central government, local government, iwi, NGOs, and the wider community:



Achieving financial security and economic participation



Promoting healthy ageing and improving access to services



Creating diverse housing choices and options



Enhancing opportunities for social connection



Making environments accessible

Approximately 1,000 people participated in workshops, hui and whānau conversations to support development of the Strategy. The Office for Seniors received 699 submissions on two formal consultation documents. This high level of public engagement has continued since the Strategy's release.

Implementing the Strategy

The Better Later Life - He Oranga Kaumātua Action Plan 2021 – 2024 (the Action Plan) supports the implementation of the Strategy. It sets out 35 government actions with a focus on three priorities: employment, housing and digital inclusion.

The Government committed \$1.965 million over four years in Budget 2021 and a further \$3.103 million over four years in Budget 2022 to implement the Strategy and Action Plan.

With the current Action Plan implementation period coming to an end, we are currently working on developing priorities for a further Action Plan to be implemented from 2025.

We would appreciate an early opportunity to discuss your intentions for the Strategy.

Assessing Progress

Progress against the Strategy and Action Plan is monitored by a Ministerial Steering Group. The Minister for Seniors leads this group, and invites

participation by Ministers with portfolio responsibilities that align with priorities within the Strategy. A Cabinet update is mandated every two years, with the next report due by the end of this year.

The Office for Seniors publishes a set of statistical indicators to assess progress against the Strategy.

Office for Seniors Programmes

The Office for Seniors was allocated funding through Budget 2022 to deliver three programmes in support of the Better Later Life Action Plan.

Senior Enterprise Pilot

The Office for Seniors is working with five providers around the country to pilot different approaches to supporting older entrepreneurs (those aged 50+) to start sustainable businesses. The providers each target different demographics within their regions, and are taking different approaches to supporting them in their business journeys. The programme is supporting up to 80 prospective entrepreneurs. A robust evaluation process concluding in mid-2024 will deliver insights in to how best to support older people into business.

Homeshare Pilot

Homeshare is a model for shared living that is well established in the US, UK and Australia but has only previously existed at small scale in New Zealand. It involves pairing an older homeowner who has a spare room with another adult homesharer. In exchange for sub-market rent, the homesharer agrees to provide help around the house. This can help support the homeowner to remain in their home in later life, while both parties benefit from the companionship the relationship provides. Homeshare placements are supported by an agency to ensure they run smoothly and both parties are safe. The Office for Seniors is working with Age Concern Auckland to pilot homesharing in Auckland.

Digital Literacy Training Programme

The Office for Seniors has been operating its award-winning digital literacy training programme nationwide since 2019. Earlier this year, we contracted six providers to support a further 5,000 older people to get online during the period 2023 to 2025.

The programme focuses on equipping older people with a base level of essential digital skills to enable them to get online in a way that is safe and useful to them. Providers take a range of teaching approaches and deliver their programmes in multiple languages to accommodate the needs of diverse participants.

Age friendly Cities and Communities

Age friendly is a movement developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to encourage communities to develop their physical and social environments to support the wellbeing of older people.

New Zealand is an affiliate of the WHO's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. The Office for Seniors leads this programme and is responsible for promoting and fostering an age friendly approach and reporting annually to the WHO on progress. The national programme includes:

- > establishing and building a national network of age friendly city and district councils. There are currently 31 members. Several of these are members of the WHO Global Network of Age friendly cities and communities
- > administering the Age friendly fund grants scheme. Since 2018 we have distributed \$619,000 to 53 grant recipients. Grants assist communities (including local government and community organization recipients) in developing or delivering an age friendly plan
- > providing advice, support and toolkits on topics such as developing an age friendly plan, urban planning and becoming an age friendly business
- > supporting and disseminating research and best practice.

The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

In December 2020, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution to declare 2021 to 2030 the Decade of Healthy Ageing. It targets four action areas:

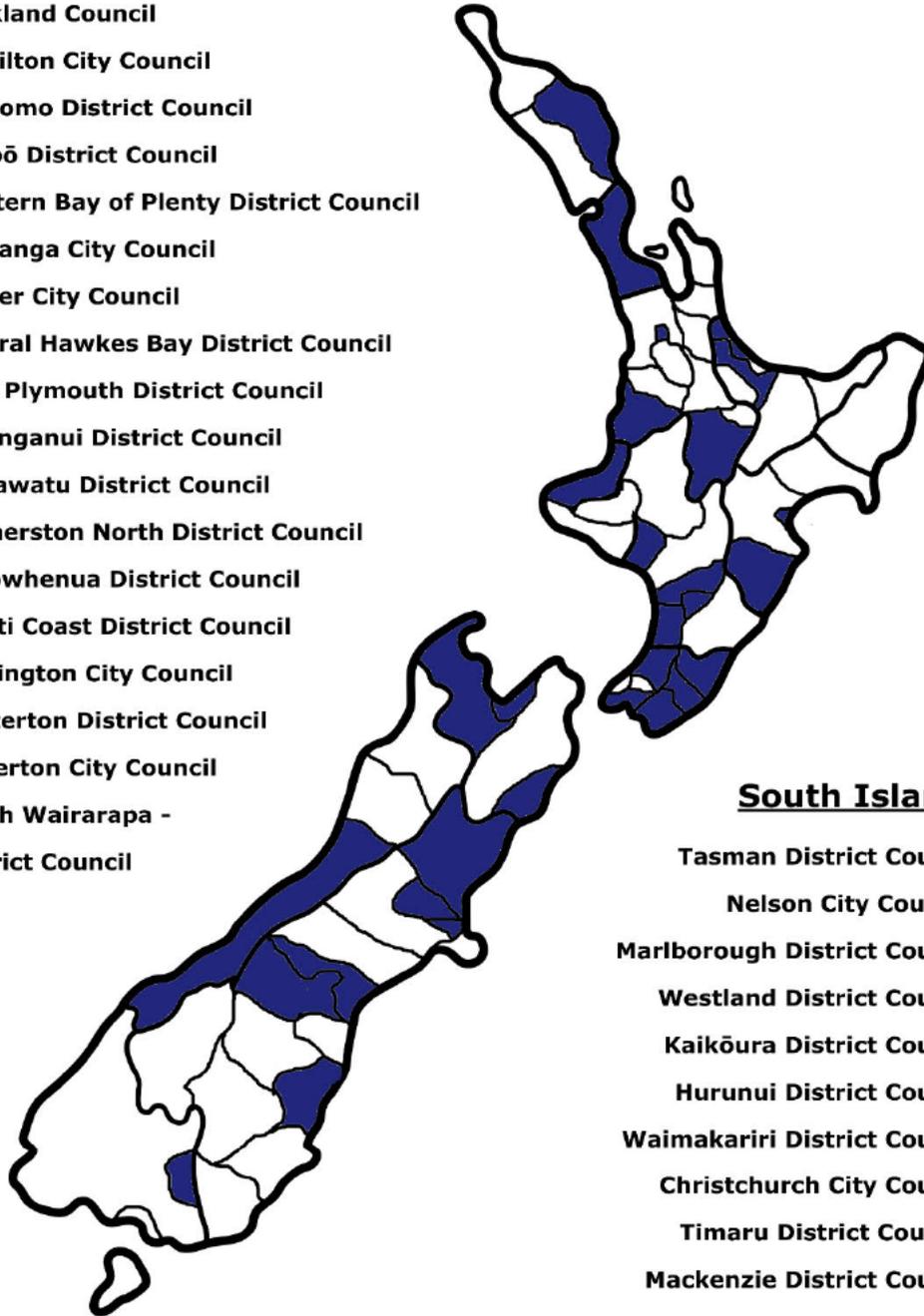
- > combatting ageism - changing how we think, feel and act towards age and ageing
- > age friendly environments - facilitating the ability of older people to participate in and contribute to their communities and society
- > integrated care - integrated care and primary health services that are responsive to the needs of the individual
- > long-term care - providing access to long-term care for older people who need it.

The Office for Seniors is working with the Ministry of Health to develop our response to the Decade of Healthy Ageing, following the completion of a stocktake of cross-government actions. Much of this work is being progressed through the Better Later Life and Healthy Ageing strategies. The Office for Seniors is working to promote awareness of and encourage participation in the Decade among a broad range of community stakeholders.



North Island

- Whangārei District Council
- Auckland Council
- Hamilton City Council
- Waitomo District Council
- Taupō District Council
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council
- Tauranga City Council
- Napier City Council
- Central Hawkes Bay District Council
- New Plymouth District Council
- Whanganui District Council
- Manawatu District Council
- Palmerston North District Council
- Horowhenua District Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Wellington City Council
- Masterton District Council
- Carterton City Council
- South Wairarapa - District Council



South Island

- Tasman District Council
- Nelson City Council
- Marlborough District Council
- Westland District Council
- Kaikōura District Council
- Hurunui District Council
- Waimakariri District Council
- Christchurch City Council
- Timaru District Council
- Mackenzie District Council
- Waitaki District Council
- Gore District Council

The Older Workers Employment Action Plan

The Older Workers Employment Action Plan was launched in 2022 as part of the Government's Employment Strategy to improve employment outcomes for all New Zealanders. It sets out 11 actions to support older workers (aged 50 and over) who need or want to work, to have sustainable employment that fulfils their needs and aspirations and contributes to their overall wellbeing.

Action areas cover:

- > training, upskilling and educating
- > preparing for, finding, and staying in work
- > supporting employers and planning for older workers' role in the economy and the future of work.

We would appreciate an early opportunity to clarify the government's approach to population employment action plans, and to discuss your priorities for older workers' employment issues.

Strategic Communications

The Office for Seniors is responsible for developing and implementing strategic communications on issues relating to older people that are focused on behaviour-based outcomes. To do this we make use of our own channels such as newsletters, social media and our website, as well as public media channels and direct engagement with older people and stakeholders.

Current activities include the annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day campaign and associated year-long activity, promoting the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing, expanding the Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand network and encouraging the use of enduring powers of attorney. The Office for Seniors works to counter ageism in society and the negative representation of older people in the media.

Links to Other Portfolios

A significant part of your role is promoting action on and accountability for older people's issues in the policy, services and practice of other portfolio areas. This work includes influencing your fellow Ministers and community stakeholders to support the needs and issues of older people. The Office for Seniors supports you in this advocacy, as well as working directly with other government agencies on initiatives relevant to older people.

SuperGold Card (Social Development and Employment Portfolio)

The Minister for Social Development and Employment is responsible for the policy and appropriation for assessing entitlement and issuing the SuperGold card. In the past, responsibility for promoting, enhancing and delivering information about the SuperGold and Veteran SuperGold cards, and enlisting businesses to provide discounts to SuperGold cardholders has been delegated by the Minister for Social Development and Employment to the Minister for Seniors. You may wish to consider these arrangements as part of any discussion of Ministerial delegations.

There are 839,556 SuperGold cardholders. 5,847 SuperGold business partners offer discounts through 11,163 business outlets nationwide.

New Zealand Transport Agency - Waka Kotahi funds off-peak public transport discounts for SuperGold Card holders.

Aged Care Commissioner (Seniors and Health Portfolios)

The Aged Care Commissioner role was created in 2021. The role of the Commissioner is to monitor how well the health and disability system responds to the needs of older people. Aged care services within the Commissioner's remit include needs assessment, rehabilitation and home and community support services as well as care delivered in aged residential care facilities.

The role is located within the office of the Health and Disability Commissioner. It complements the work of other agencies whose work covers different aspects of older people's well-being, such as the Office for Seniors, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the Human Rights Commission and the Ombudsman.

You are responsible for appointment and oversight of the Aged Care Commissioner and for the appropriation that supports the position, which sits within Vote Health (administered by the Ministry of Health).

Tackling Elder Abuse (Various Portfolios)

One in 10 older people in New Zealand experience elder abuse. Most abuse is unreported and is most often perpetrated by a family member.

The Office for Seniors works with Te Puna Aonui and MSD to reduce the prevalence of elder abuse and to ensure those experiencing abuse are well supported. MSD has an Elder Abuse Response Service (EARS), which includes a free national helpline that triages support to regional providers. Between July 2022 and June 2023, the helpline received over 4,500 contacts (calls, SMS and email). Data strongly indicates older people are reluctant to report abuse, with most contacts by concerned third parties.

MSD is leading a work programme to better understand, prevent and respond to elder abuse.

Since 2017, the Office for Seniors has led national awareness activities on elder abuse. Our

campaign usually leverages World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (15 June), with resources used on various channels throughout the year to promote awareness and direct enquiries to the helpline.

In 2022, the Office for Seniors in partnership with Te Puna Aonui funded 11 organisations to progress elder abuse prevention initiatives and began piloting regional elder abuse networks.

**ELDER ABUSE
IT'S NOT OK**
SPEAK OUT 0800 326 6865
support@elderabuse.nz | text: 5032



New Zealand Superannuation and income support (Social Development and Employment Portfolio)

MSD is responsible for the policy and administration of NZ Superannuation payments for all New Zealand citizens and permanent residents aged 65 years and over who meet residency requirements. Veteran's Pension is an alternative pension paid at the same rate as NZ Superannuation to a person with qualifying military service. 94 percent of New Zealanders over the age of 65 (more than 880,000 people as at June 2023) receive NZ Superannuation. This costs around 5 percent of GDP and is forecast to reach up to 7.7 percent by 2060.

Additional income support

Anyone receiving NZ Superannuation or the Veteran's Pension is entitled to the Winter Energy Payment. Subject to eligibility criteria, other available support includes the Accommodation Supplement, Disability Allowance and Hardship Assistance. Community Services Cards, rates rebates and support to meet costs associated with Residential Care are also available. People aged 65+ who are ineligible for NZ Superannuation or the Veteran's Pension may be eligible for an Emergency Benefit (subject to being ordinarily resident and a test of income and assets).

Healthy Ageing Strategy (Health Portfolio)

The Healthy Ageing Strategy 2016 sets the strategic direction (until 2026) for the delivery of services to people into and throughout their later years. The Strategy's vision is that older people live well, age well and have a respectful end of life in age-friendly communities. Progress made in the first two years of the strategy include improved remuneration, training and employment conditions for care and support workers in aged care, and initial work on a National Framework to improve consistency and quality for HCSS.

Dementia/Mate Wareware Action Plan (Health Portfolio)

The Dementia/Mate Wareware Action Plan was published in May 2020 and updated in September 2021. It is a sector-led plan to improve the health, independence and quality-of-life of all New Zealanders living with dementia. Budget 2022 included \$12 million over four years to implement the Action Plan. It has four objectives to deliver by 2025:

- › Reducing the incidence of dementia mate wareware
- › Supporting people living with dementia mate wareware and their family and whānau, and care partners/supporters to live their best possible lives
- › Building accepting and understanding communities
- › Strengthening leadership and capability across the sector.

Mahi Aroha: Carers Strategy Action Plan 2019 – 2023 (Social Development and Employment Portfolio)

The Mahi Aroha: Carers' Strategy Action Plan 2019-2023 (Mahi Aroha) is led by the Minister for Social Development and Employment. Mahi Aroha is a cross-agency action plan, with multiple government agencies and the NZ Carers Alliance contributing to its implementation.

Accessibility Legislation and Disability Strategy (Disability Issues Portfolio)

The New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016 to 2026

The Disability Strategy and Disability Action Plan (2019-2023) guides policy and service development across government and provides an important mechanism to progress the rights and opportunities of disabled people. Development of the next Action Plan under the Strategy is underway.

The Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill

The Accessibility for New Zealanders Bill aims to accelerate progress toward a fully accessible New Zealand through the identification, removal and prevention of accessibility barriers. We look forward to an early opportunity to clarify the Government's position on the current Bill.

Emerging Issues

Part of the role of the Office for Seniors is to monitor the overall situation of the older population and identify emerging issues that might affect older people. These could be progressed through the Seniors portfolio or drawn to the attention of other Ministers or government agencies.

Decisions that require early attention

Below is a list of the key actions and decisions we would like to discuss with you in your first 100 days as Minister for Seniors, in addition to your key priorities.

What	Date expected
s9(2)(f)(iv)	

Key Contacts

Simon MacPherson, Deputy Chief Executive, Policy, MSD

s9(2)(a)

Diane Turner, Director, Office for Seniors

s9(2)(a)

Harry Fenton, Acting General Manager, International, Disability, and Generational Policy, MSD

s9(2)(a)



New Zealand Government