**Press Release**

**12 March 2015**

**“I Am Able” theme of this week’s Disabled Persons Assembly forum**

The Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA) is holding a two-day forum, this week in Wellington, to inspire change in the way people with disabilities see themselves and are seen by others.

Around one hundred people are at the two-day forum from across the disability sector. They include government officials, disability service providers, community organisations an as well as disabled DPA members from across the country.

The forum is being held on Thursday and Friday, 12, 13 March.

“Today we celebrated the progress we’ve made working alongside Government to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ( the Disability Convention), says Rachel Noble, DPA Chief Executive.

“We value the support of government to date however we note that now some of the impetus from them to implement the Disability Convention has dissipated.”

“We need to continue our work with Government to implement the Convention but also to build our own strength as a community and inspire the rest of New Zealand to get behind us as productive citizens.

“To start that momentum, tomorrow we will introduce our forum theme of *I am Able*.

*“I am Able*, acknowledges disabled people’s strength – our skills and abilities, our creativity and our problem solving ability. Our community is very strong in these attributes and many others.

Rachel says. “We need to claim our strengths right now so we can take our place as fully productive citizens of New Zealand.”.

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