**28 May 2014**

**Press Release (pic at the bottom of the release)**

**Disabled Persons Organisations work alongside government**

The voices and experience of disabled people in New Zealand are reflected in the cross- government Disability Action Plan 2014 -2018, released today.

The plan sets out how New Zealand will prioritise the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

“The plan is a true collaboration between the six national New Zealand Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) and government,” says Brendon Murray, President of the Disabled Persons Assembly NZ.

The DPOs who worked on the plan are the Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) (the organisation that represents the interests of all disabled people) Blind Citizens NZ, Deafblind NZ, People First NZ (representing the interests of people with learning disabilities), Deaf Aotearoa and Ngati Kapo o Aotearoa (representing the interests of the Maori blind community).

Brendon Murray says this is the first time disabled people have had their views included in such a wide-reaching plan in a truly collaborative way. He says the process really did follow the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities statement outlined in Article 4(3). The article says the voice of disabled people must be present alongside government agencies developing legislation, policy and services impacting on disabled people.”

He says the disabled perspective is evident through-out the plan which outlines priorities to: increase employment and economic opportunities for disabled people, transform the disability support system, promote access in the community and ensure the personal safety of disabled children and adults.

The plan is posted on the Office for Disability Issues website [www.odi.govt.nz](http://www.odi.govt.nz)

Brendon Murray says, “Although the content of the plan was restrained by the resources available across the public sector the involvement of the DPOs will be on-going as the plan is implemented over the next four years.”

“DPO representatives will be part of both the governance and the working group structure as the plan is implemented,” he says, “which will help keep disabled people’s views to the fore as the plan is put into action.”

Brendon concludes by saying, “Being part of the on-going implementation process will teach the DPOs and government a lot about how to work effectively together. The better we get at that the more disabled people will be able to contribute to government disability policy.”

**ENDS**

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**The plan is posted on the Office for Disability Issues website:** [**www.odi.govt.nz**](http://www.odi.govt.nz)

**More about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities can be found on the DPA website:** [**www.dpa.org.nz**](http://www.dpa.org.nz)



**Brendon Murray**