April 2024

Please find attached DPA’s submission on with Parole (Mandatory Completion of Rehabilitative Programmes) Amendment Bill.

## Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

Noho ora mai,

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# Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly

**We work on systemic change for the equity of disabled people**

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a not-for-profit pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation run by and for disabled people.

We recognise:

* Māori as Tangata Whenua and [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](https://www.archives.govt.nz/discover-our-stories/the-treaty-of-waitangi) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
* disabled people as experts on their own lives;
* the [Social Model of Disability](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/guidance-for-policy-makes/) as the guiding principle for interpreting disability and impairment;
* the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) as the basis for disabled people’s relationship with the State;
* the [New Zealand Disability Strategy](https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/) as Government agencies’ guide on disability issues; and
* the [Enabling Good Lives Principles](https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/), [Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Action Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan), and [Faiva Ora: National Pasifika Disability Disability Plan](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/5E544A3A23BEAECDCC2580FE007F7518/$file/faiva-ora-2016-2021-national-pasifika-disability-plan-feb17.pdf) as avenues to disabled people gaining greater choice and control over their lives and supports.

**We drive systemic change through:**

**Rangatiratanga / Leadership:** reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally.

**Pārongo me te tohutohu / Information and advice:** informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people.

**Kōkiri / Advocacy:** supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society.

**Aroturuki / Monitoring:** monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people.

# The submission

Tēnā koutou ki ngā tangata tika,

Ma wai ra e taurima

Te marae i waho nei?

Ma te tika, ma te pono

Me te aroha e

*Who will tend*

*To the marae here?*

*Truth, honesty*

*And love will.*

**1. Introduction**

DPA supports the provision of rehabilitative programmes for offenders; however we do not support making it so that an offender who has not completed a rehabilitative programme must not be considered by the Board for parole. For this reason, DPA opposes the Parole (Mandatory Completion of Rehabilitative Programmes) Amendment Bill.

DPA supports the Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections Hōkai Rangi principle outlined in the Disability Action Plan[[1]](#footnote-2) working in partnership with others to achieve better reintegration and rehabilitation outcomes for tāngata whaikaha Māori/disabled people.

**a) Rehabilitative programmes for all disabled**

DPA supports rehabilitative programmes for disabled people both during imprisonment and in post-prison environments through promoting the better management of health issues, better communication about any support needs prisoners might have either when transitioning back into the community or transferring to another prison, increased physical accessibility within prisons, improved accessibility of rehabilitative programmes, and a better understanding amongst Correctional staff and other stakeholders about the wider impacts of disability.

Ensuring that post-release supports are adequate and that there is a choice of services for former prisoners provided according to Enabling Good Lives principles are the other keys to the successful rehabilitation of disabled ex-offenders.

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| **Recommendation 1:** that the Bill be withdrawn. |
| **Recommendation 2:** that rehabilitative programmes for disabled people in prison and post-prison environments are more comprehensive and provided according to Enabling Good Lives principles as outlined in the Disability Action Plan |

**b) Equity for disabled people**

As many people enter prison with pre-existing impairments, acquire a disability or have undiagnosed conditions or impairments while in prison, it is important that quality disability support services are available for ensuring both better wellbeing outcomes and effective continuity of care while reintegrating back into the community.

While both Māori and non-Māori are impacted by disabling conditions or impairments, there are wide disparities in terms of their experiences with 50.9% of Māori in prison identifying as disabled[[2]](#footnote-3).

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| **Recommendation 3:** that an additional level of care be included in the rehabilitation programme to identify and support people with undiagnosed conditions or impairments. |
| **Recommendation 4:** that the rehabilitation programme for tāngata whaikaha Māori include the Hōkai Rangi: Ara Poutama Aotearoa Strategy 2019-2024 and the Disability Action Plan |

1. Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections. (n.d.) *Disability Action Plan 2023 – 2027 Introduction.* <https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/strategic_reports/disability_action_plan_2023_2027/introduction>  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections. (n.d.) *Disability Action 2023 – 2027 Introduction.* <https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/strategic_reports/disability_action_plan_2023_2027/introduction> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)