



Annual Report for the Advocacy National Director

AGM Wednesday 26th June 2019

Kia Ora Koutou,

In my last AGM report I wrote of the many opportunities ahead for the organisation regionally and nation-wide in extending its reach to more New Zealanders in need of advocacy. At that time I said that I had great anticipation for writing my report this year, when many of these opportunities will have been realised or commenced. Let me start my report this year by saying that the 2019 Financial Year did not disappoint.

The past year has seen significant developments and progress for The Personal Advocacy and Safeguarding Adults Trust, not the least of which is the partnership and broadening of work signified by the new name of our organisation. Thank you for your contributions and patience on this journey.

Partnership with Safeguarding Adults Collective

As my colleague Sue Hobbs will soon outline, the past year has seen the partnership of the Personal Advocacy Trust with the Safeguarding Adults Collective. There was a natural synergy between the two organisations, both of whose work focuses on promoting and protecting the health, wellbeing and rights of all New Zealanders.

The Advocacy work of the Trust will continue uninterrupted and unaffected by this partnership, and all enrolled members will continue to receive lifetime advocacy support. The Advocacy Support the Trust offers, and the Safeguarding Adults response are two distinct but related service streams of the partnered organisation, with different budgets, staff, and emphases. Though the regional areas of implementation for the Safeguarding Adults response are currently limited, the Trust has an exciting position in leading this important work nationally and in to the future.

We are very grateful to the IHC Foundation for their grant to progress the partnership, and to Foundation North for additional funding for a Safeguarding Coordinator in Auckland.

Supported Decision Making work with Ministry of Health in Mid-Central

The Disability Sector Transformation has been prototyped in Mid Central since 1 October 2018. This prototype is known as Mana Whaikaha, and differs from previous transformation demonstrations in Christchurch and the Waikato in that all people eligible for Disability Support Service Funding in the Mid Central region are included; previous demonstrations had selective participants.

As part of this prototype we have held a contract with the Ministry of Health to provide Support for Decision Making. Supported Decision Making is included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and is an important safeguarding tool. It is a process that builds relationships, and provides the necessary supports, communication and time to enable a person with a decision making impairment to make their own decisions about their life.

Supported Decision Making has always been a component of our Advocacy work, but this contract signals the first time that the importance of this work has been fiscally recognised by the Government. We have had a two-month extension to our initial contract which now finishes at the end of August. We will be working with the Ministry of Health to co-design a framework and approach which will be part of a wider tender process later in the year.

We have learned much in this undertaking, and in the year ending 31 March 2019 we supported 10 people under this contract, and employed two people as Supporters for Decision Making.

Short-Term Advocacy and the Rangatira Fund

Building on last year's first steps, the Trust has continued to provide short term advocacy support to non-enrolled members of the Trust. Typically these are people that are experiencing a crisis and have no other supporters, or whose other supporters have a conflict of interest. This work is funded by the payment of an hourly rate for advocacy support, either by the individual and their whanau, or through the Rangatira Fund.

The Rangatira Fund was originally established through a donation by the JR McKenzie Trust to extend advocacy support to those whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent them accessing services. This enabled the lifetime enrolment of several members, but then became fully subscribed. The Rangatira Fund has now been repopulated through the generous donation of a philanthropic organisation (who has requested anonymity) at the beginning of 2019. The fund is now being applied to provide short term advocacy support to eligible people across New Zealand, removing the financial barrier to advocacy.

We welcome any further donations to the Rangatira Fund or the Trust to continue this work.

Survey Results

In 2018 we sent out a Survey to the membership and their families to find out what we are doing well and what we can improve. Some of the key findings of that Survey include that:

- 91% of family said that the Trust satisfied the reason their family member was enrolled
- 83% of members said they feel safe to talk to their Advocate about their worries
- And 93% of members feel their Advocate treats them with respect.

One family member said "I cannot stress enough how helpful (the advocate) has been," while another said "thanks for being there."

The Survey also revealed that we could improve our communication with families, including advising parents and siblings when visits are scheduled with their family member. This is something we are actively working to improve, and thank you for the feedback.

Advocacy Training and Professional Development

This year staff have continued to utilise the online Professional Development platform 'Open Future Learning' to study topics such as Supporting and Understanding Communication, Self Determination and Supported Decision Making. In conjunction with online modular learning our team have attended National Training days, with presentations from experts working in the field on key topics such as Supported Decision Making and Challenging Behaviour. We are grateful for the high level of engagement from staff and other agencies and are committed to continued delivery of quality training opportunities.

Advocacy Delivery and Trust Administration

Whilst we have had eight new enrolments in the last financially year, overall our membership numbers continue to decrease as the membership ages. We are working to raise the profile of the organisation and engage with other organisations and young parents, particularly in Transition Expos, Special Schools, and throughout the New Zealand Disability Support Network.

Overall we find that our membership enjoys a high standard of living and quality of life, and we recognise that lifelong advocacy is a valuable preventative safeguarding tool. Unfortunately, our Advocates have at times also been required to intervene and correct situations of compromised

human rights. We look forward to working with the Safeguarding Adults team to ensure a comprehensive response is put in place for our members and other Adults at Risk.

Many of our members enjoy secure Discretionary Trust administration in addition to their advocacy support. Trustees administer funds with simple yet robust application procedures, and our members have utilised Trust funds for furniture, holidays, plumbing bills and the employment of an Activities Companion, among other things.

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In the past year our team has grown from eleven staff members to now number 17.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Team of Advocates who are champions for and in behalf of our membership, who work tirelessly to help our members achieve the best possible outcomes in life they can. Thank you to Gemma Claire, Kaeti Rigarlsford, Sally Hartley, Jennifer Shaw, Gail Bingham, Wendy Rattray, Irene Glennie, Lynne King, Patrick Doherty, and Marion Bayley. Thanks also to outgoing staff member Joy Ward.

I'm also grateful for Jennifer Shaw, Dawn Coronno and Jenni Anderson for stepping in to the shoes of Supporters for Decision Making, and for their patience with an evolving understanding and process.

Gail Bingham has worked as our Team Leader to keep our team of individual Advocates around the country unified and our practice consistent. As a side note, Gail is also an expert detective.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Johanna Lloyd this past year in her capacity as Administrator. She is highly efficient and enthusiastic, and a great glue for the team.

And I have had the privilege of calling Sue Hobbs my colleague; she has a wealth of knowledge and connections, and I find myself taking notes as we work together.

Without the contributions of all staff members this year we would not have been able to make the significant progress we have made this year on our Strategic Priorities.

Thank you also to our accountant Les Buttimore and our auditors BDO for their work in overseeing the Trust's financial statements. We look forward to working with Bernie Higgins in our upcoming Actuarial Review.

Thank you to our tremendous Trust Board who work as volunteers to govern our organisation. They bring incredible expertise and passion to their work, and we all benefit as a result. Thank you in particular to Barney Cooper, our Trust Chair who has gone above and beyond.

And thank you to our membership and their families across the country for your continued and ongoing support.

Nga Manaakitanga,



Erika Butters
National Director
The Personal Advocacy and Safeguarding Adults Trust