

## Equipment and Modification Services Information for Specialised Assessors

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### Increased demand for Ministry of Health funded Equipment and Modification Services in the Enable New Zealand region.

The Ministry of Health has significantly increased funding for Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) over the past few years. These increases have been made in response to rising demand and costs of service provision. EMS has a capped budget and expenditure needs to be carefully managed. Requests for access to funding for equipment, housing and vehicle modifications are now at a level well above the available budget.

Enable New Zealand will therefore make funding available for the following applications only:

- Common List equipment
- Urgent applications

The urgent application process has been in place since November 2008. This helps ensure that people with the most urgent need for services receive funding first. We do not expect the volume of urgent cases to rise significantly.

Enable New Zealand will consider urgent applications where this is supported by the Professional Advisor or Clinical Leader at the assessment service. Such applications must be forwarded by email to the following email address: [urgent@enable.co.nz](mailto:urgent@enable.co.nz). The request must note the reasons for urgency which must relate to immediate safety risks for the person or carers. Urgent applications will be processed as quickly as possible. Please note urgent does not mean 'instant'. Urgency is accepted for issues of extreme risk on a case by case basis. This process will be regularly reviewed aiming to meet the needs for exceptional cases.

This process can also be found on the Disability Funding Website, under 'what's new' [www.disabilityfunding.co.nz](http://www.disabilityfunding.co.nz).

Equipment which can be sourced from the Store will still be able to be accessed. All existing applications waiting to be processed will be rechecked to see if equipment is available via the Store.

Funding for Priority One and Two applications will be allocated as and when budget becomes available.

We recognise that longer waiting times may create difficulties for many of you and your clients and do appreciate your understanding and assistance in managing the budget that is available. We also ask for your support when considering the range of suitable options for your clients. It is important that all measures are taken to reduce overall budgetary pressures whilst at the same time ensuring that each person's essential needs are met in the most cost-effective way.

The Ministry of Health has an **Equipment and Modification Services' Improvement Programme** underway and one of the projects being undertaken is focusing on the prioritisation

of services. We hope that once a new system is introduced later in the year or early in 2010 the prioritisation of applications will be more transparent and fair, in the meantime the above measures need to be applied.

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