



Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Decision

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Confirming the Scope of Community Connectors Beyond 1 October 2023

Portfolio **Social Development and Employment**

On 7 June 2023, the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee:

- 1 **noted** that 500 Community Connector full-time equivalents (FTEs) are funded until the end of the 2022/2023 financial year through the Care in the Community response;
- 2 **noted** that the current scope of Community Connectors is to support people impacted by COVID-19, and people impacted by recent North Island weather events;
- 3 **noted** that Budget 2023 approved funding for 100 Community Connector FTEs until the end of the 2024/2025 financial year and a further 65 Community Connector FTEs in regions impacted by January flooding and Cyclone Gabrielle until the end of the 2023/2024 financial year;
- 4 **noted** that in May 2023, the Minister for Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance agreed to a transition plan which continues contracts and maintains the current scope for all 500 Community Connector FTEs from 1 July 2023 until 30 September 2023;
- 5 **noted** that Cabinet agreement is required for the scope of Community Connectors from 1 October 2023;
- 6 **agreed** that from 1 October 2023, the scope for Community Connectors will be to provide short-term support to individuals, families and whānau, to prevent and minimise the impacts of hardship;
- 7 **noted** that the above scope includes Community Connectors providing a broad range of supports, including ensuring people can access physical and mental health services, supporting direct provision of food, assisting access to culturally appropriate services such as kaupapa Māori supports, and helping people to access employment;
- 8 **noted** that the broad scope will allow Community Connectors to continue supporting individuals, families and whānau who have been impacted by the January floods, Cyclone Gabrielle, or COVID-19;
- 9 **noted** that while Community Connectors will have flexibility to shift to local and regional priorities as they emerge, their capacity to respond to new urgent national priorities will be limited;

- 10 **noted** that Ministry of Social Development Regional Commissioners and social sector providers will continue to work together as partners to determine regional priorities with Community Connectors;
- 11 **noted** that placement of Community Connector FTEs is subject to insights from across government, and discussions with Ministry of Social Development Regional Commissioners, iwi, and social sector providers;
- 12 **noted** that an outcomes-focused evaluation of the Care in the Community welfare response to COVID-19, including outcomes achieved by Community Connectors, is underway, and findings are expected in December 2023;
- 13 **noted** that the Ministry of Social Development will provide a report to the Minister for Social Development and Employment and the Minister of Finance by November 2024 on implementation, impacts and outcomes of the Community Connector programme, which will inform any future investment decisions.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon Carmel Sepuloni (Chair)
Hon Kelvin Davis
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall
Hon Kiri Allan
Hon Andrew Little
Hon Peeni Henare
Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan
Hon Willow-Jean Prime
Hon Jo Luxton

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of the Chair
Officials Committee for SWC