



## Education Report: Release of the Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline – He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau

<b>To:</b>	Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education		
<b>Cc:</b>	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
<b>Date:</b>	18 October 2022	<b>Priority:</b>	Medium
<b>Security Level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>METIS No:</b>	1297651
<b>Drafter:</b>	9(2)(a)	<b>DDI:</b>	9(2)(a)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Susan Howan, Associate Deputy Secretary Strategy and Implementation, Te Pae Aronui	<b>DDI:</b>	04 4632839
<b>Messaging seen by Communications team:</b>	Yes	<b>Round Robin:</b>	No

### Purpose

1. This Education Report informs you of the intended release of the third edition of the Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline – He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau by Whaikaha, Ministry of Disabled People planned for the week of October 24 and asks you to agree to the release and to approve and sign the joint Ministerial foreword with the Minister of Disability Issues (Hon Poto Williams).

### Summary

2. The third edition of the Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline – He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau (the Guideline) has been informed by the latest local and international research on autism. It was developed in consultation with the Living Guidelines Group (LGG) made up of autism specialist researchers, clinicians, educators, community service providers, and government agencies including the perspectives and language preferences of autistic people, te ao Māori experts, and Pacific Peoples experts.

3. The Guideline provides an opportunity to better understand and communicate best practices for supporting autistic people and their families and whānau. It also provides a framework for improving services based on the latest available current evidence for provision of support. The Guideline acknowledges the whole of a person's life and is intended to provide guidance on Autism for both children and adults in New Zealand.
4. The main revisions of the guideline include:
  - a. Changes to terminology to be more strength-based and include the word 'takiwātanga' which is the Māori term for autism
  - b. Inclusion of te Tiriti o Waitangi
  - c. Recommendations on supplementary topics that were developed by the Living Guidelines Group (LGG) since the last review in 2016
  - d. There is a supplementary paper that will provide guidance to tertiary providers to effectively support autistic students in tertiary education.
5. The communications plan for the release will be led by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled people. They have asked you to approve and sign the Ministerial foreword together with the Minister of Disability Issues (Hon Poto Williams).

#### Recommended Actions

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6. The Ministry of Education recommends you:
  - a. **note** that the Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline – He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau (third edition) is planned to be released on the week of the 24th of October, with the communications being led by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.
  - b. **agree** to sign the joint Ministerial forward together with the Minister of Disability Issues (Hon Poto Williams) thus enabling the release of the Guideline (Annex 1).
 

Noted
  - c. **note** you will be invited to a release event and blessing led by Whaikaha
 

Agree

 Disagree
  - d. **agree** that the Ministry of Education will release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you and will link to the published guideline on the education counts and Inclusive Te Kete Ipurangi websites.
 

Noted



Sean Teddy  
Deputy Secretary  
Te Pae Aronui

18/10/2022



Hon Jan Tinetti  
Associate Minister of Education

23 /10/2022

Agree / Disagree

## Background

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7. Following the release of the first (2008) edition of the New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline (the Guideline), the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education agreed to establish a 'living guideline' process to provide regular updates where new, significant research has emerged.
8. Every year since 2009, a supplementary topic has been identified for a deep dive into the evidence which is then critically reviewed by the LGG and collated into a report. These topics and any new recommendations are subsequently built into updates of the Guideline. The second edition of the Guideline was released in 2016 and the third edition of the Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline – He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau (the Guideline) is planned to be released the week of October 24, 2022.
9. The Guideline provides an opportunity to better understand and communicate best practices for supporting autistic people and their families and whānau. It also provides a framework for improving services based on the latest available current evidence for provision of support. The Guideline acknowledges the whole of a person's life and is intended to provide guidance on Autism in both children and adults in New Zealand.
10. The review of the Living Guideline was funded by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People was established on 1 July 2022 and will now lead this work in partnership with the Ministry of Education. Appraisal of the evidence, formulation of recommendations and reporting are independent of the Ministries.
11. Whaikaha has developed a joint Ministerial foreword for your agreement (Annex 1) that signals your approval of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Guideline. Whaikaha are also leading the media release and the blessing of the Guideline.

## Updating the Living Guideline

12. The Guideline is informed by the latest local and international research on autism. This research is then appraised and discussed with the Living Guidelines Group (LGG). The Guideline was written by Marita Broadstock (INSIGHT Research Ltd) who is contracted to undertake the research, update the guideline, and support the LGG (refer Annex 2 for membership).
13. One main topic area in the Guideline is updated each year. This year a supplementary guideline on the effectiveness of services, supports, accommodations, interventions, or programmes delivered to address the needs of autistic students in tertiary education has been created.
14. The supplementary guideline will be of practical use to Tertiary Providers when developing their Disability Action Plans and implementing the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice. During its development and testing, the Ministry worked with Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

## **Other changes to the 2022 Guideline**

15. The Guideline has a new title - "Aotearoa New Zealand Autism Guideline. He Waka Huia Takiwātanga Rau." The Māori title means "A vessel for housing our many precious taonga"
16. A major focus of this year's revision has been the shift to use of more strength-based language from a neurodiversity perspective informed by terminology guidance developed by autistic New Zealanders led by autistic researcher Dr Ruth Monk.
17. Also included are Māori perspectives including the term takiwātanga -a term for autism, developed by Keri Opai meaning "in my/his/her own time and space". This term is already used by many Autism groups and is gaining acceptance across New Zealand.
18. The update of the language in the guideline strengthens the inclusion of te Tiriti o Waitangi considerations, and includes Good Practice Points (GPPs) in the Māori perspectives chapter.
19. The Guideline strengthens the use of the Enabling Good Lives principles. Enabling Good Lives is an approach to supporting disabled people that offers greater choice and control over the supports they receive. The LGG developed a new good practice point capturing the goal of supports from a neurodiversity perspective.

## **Communication and Release of the Guideline**

20. Communications for the release of the third edition will be led by Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled people. The Whaikaha ministerial team will facilitate liaison with the Education ministerial team. This will include:
  - agreeing any suggested changes to the Guideline foreword from you and the Minister of Disability Issues (Hon Poto Williams) (Annex 1)
  - an invitation to participate in a blessing for the Guideline to be led by Whaikaha.
  - the Guideline will be published on the Whaikaha website
  - details of the Media release from Whaikaha.

## **Next Steps**

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21. Once the Guideline is available on the Whaikaha website the release will be communicated to Ministry staff and key stakeholders in the education sector.
22. A link to the updated guideline will be added to the Education Counts website and the Inclusive website on Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI).
23. The Ministry has developed an autism terminology checklist to reflect the Guideline. The updated terminology replaces language focused on deficits and difficulties with language focused on strengths and students' interests. Ministry websites will be updated to reflect language changes and changes will be communicated to Ministry staff and key stakeholders.
24. The Ministry will work with the recommendations outlined within the supplementary paper on the effectiveness of supports for autistic students in tertiary education.