

April 2026 WRLG Monthly Meeting – Summary

Attendance & Opening

- **Attendees:** Attendees – Matt, Hemi, Kerry, Craig, Marg, Shane, Stephanie, Irene, Marty, Melanie, Renee, Chris, Amy, Lisa, Sue, Tom (from 1pm), Marlene and Tony NZSL, Robyn (admin)
- **Apologies:** Adrian, Ingrid
- **Karakia:** Kerry
- **Next month karakia volunteer:** Matt

General

- **Farewell Craig Bellis:** Craig has stepped down to focus on his mahi with People First. WRLG thanked him for his contribution and ongoing connection.
- **Purchasing system changes:** Matt is transitioning his funding to EGL and will report back on the process.

Upcoming Events & Celebrations

NZSL Week (First week of May 2026)

- Celebrates 20 years of NZSL as an official language
- Working group: Melanie, Hemi, Kerry
- Plans include:
 - “Pass-it-on” style video
 - Shareable resources
- **May Whanaungatanga activity:** Introduce ourselves in NZSL (Action: All)

Disability Pride Month – July

- Working group formed: Matt, Renee, Mel, Kerry, Hemi. Lead: Robyn
- Approx. \$500 budget available via Contract Group and any more to go through WRLG
- Action: Robyn to arrange first meeting

Next Steps Event Update

- Planning is progressing and scope has widened beyond school transitions to broader life systems (e.g. banks, power companies), aligning with EGL Mainstream First principle
- Focus areas include:
 - Free parking
 - Food vendor options
 - Stall spacing (feedback: ensure wide spacing)
- Artwork: Jonty (EGL participant) commissioned artwork for promotional materials

Health Project Update (Health NZ Waitaha)

- Report back on Disability Steering Group work plan (from August 2024 community meeting)
- Key developments:
 - Recruiting Deaf representatives (from wider community)
 - Youth and Aged Concern representatives added
 - Sunflower Hidden Disability program rolling out at Christchurch Hospital and across the South Island
 - Disability engagement embedded earlier in facility design
 - Work underway on capturing accessibility needs data (linked to NHI)

Community Feedback Highlights

- Positive use of brown wristband for learning disability
- Deaf community barriers in emergencies:
 - New ED buzzer system introduced (Action: Kathy to clarify access and awareness)
- Need for:
 - Clearer signage
 - Better information for allies/whānau
 - Accessible information formats (literacy acknowledged as a barrier)

Actions

- Kathy to follow up on buzzer access and patient experience data

- Members to send further Health NZ questions to Robyn

LifeLinks Update

- Julie Paalvast shared system changes
- Discussion on improving information flow to the disability community via DIAS
- Potential tools: newsletters, annual check-ins (work still needed)

Other Agency Updates

- Christchurch City Council: New "What's On Disability" tag launched <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/whats-on/programme/149>
- Environment Canterbury: Public Transport Network Review coming – multiple accessible submission options available [Public transport network review | Have Your Say](#)

Stats NZ Update

- Improved accessibility approaches (door-to-door, letterboxes, community events)
- Key discussion areas:
 - Data sovereignty and consent
 - Closing disability data gaps
 - Survey fatigue and power imbalance
 - Inclusion of carers/whānau
- Actions: Stats NZ to provide written responses to key questions and open EOIs for Disability Advisory Group involvement

Working Group Updates

Whānau / Family

- Champions Hui held at Parakiore

- Strong emphasis on community reach, whānau voice, and collaboration
- FLA collaboration strengthened; online May session planned with DSS

Disabled Group

- Speakers and collaborations for 2026 being finalised
- DSS changes a major focus
- Craig Bellis stepping down acknowledged and thanked

Next Meeting

Date: 26 May 2026