

March 2026 WRLG Monthly Meeting – Summary

Date: 31 March 2026

- Apologies: Robyn, Chris, Ingrid, Sue
- Attendees: Lisa, Shane, Marg, Tom, Matt, Hemi, Marty, Mel, Irene, Kerry, Amy, Craig, Steph
- Karakia: Hemi
- Next karakia volunteer: Kerry

1. Key Discussion: DSS Update (Rachael Burt)

Rachael Burt and Jane (DSS) joined online to present and answer questions

Key DSS Messages

- Move to more holistic, person-directed planning, drawing on learnings from EGL sites
- Shift from “money first” to planning for a good life, then resourcing it
- New Outcomes Based Indicative Range (OBIR) tool aligns with EGL principles
- Eligibility criteria and assessment timeframes remain unchanged
- Plans are flexible and can draw on supports beyond DSS
- Funding plan is about purpose, not just purchases
- Hosts move to a tiered support model from April
- Inflation is built into the OBIR tool, though GST inconsistency between hosts remains unresolved
- No change to NASC boundaries; complaints can go to NASC or DSS

WRLG Role

- First priority: understand the new system clearly ourselves
- Then support the community with accurate, plain-language information
- Avoid sharing unverified information on socials
- Develop planning workshops and peer-based support with EGLC and Lifelinks

Action:

- EGLC collaboration project (Lisa, Matt, Marty, Chris)
- Share DSS Q&A through newsletter and socials with accurate links

NZSL Week (4–10 May 2026)

- Theme: **“A legacy in our hands”**
- Possible WRLG involvement:
 - Work with Deaf Aotearoa
 - Deaf person to teach NZSL signs (including for limited hand function)
 - Social media posts on NZSL history, Deaf culture, and Deaf+

2. Current consultations

Key Concerns

- Lack of accessible consultation formats following repeal of the Plain Language Act
- NZTA and other consultations difficult or impossible for many disabled people
- Risk of discrimination when access barriers prevent participation

Actions

- Engage DPA, CSS Disability Action, Human Rights Commission
- Joint letter to:
 - Health & Disability Commissioner
 - Whaikaha
 - Minister for Mental Health
- Connect with DPA and other relevant organisations to share concerns and find out what others are doing

Stats NZ Consultation

Key Issues Raised

- Infringements when people cannot participate due to accessibility
- Data sovereignty and privacy concerns
- Lack of opt-out clarity
- Survey fatigue and power imbalance

Action:

- Invite Stats NZ to a WRLG meeting

3. Communications Update

- Ongoing issues with MailChimp ownership and newsletter hosting
- Decision: use one WRLG email address to send newsletters
- Meeting planned between Mel, Chris, and Robyn to resolve logistics
- SOP needed for when people leave roles

4. Programme & Group Updates

Next Steps

- Event broadening beyond school transitions to whole-of-life pathways
- 53+ sites confirmed, aiming for 100
- Potential to involve disabled volunteers

Disabled Core Group

- Growing participation, including EGL participants and people in residential settings
- First education session held on EGL principles
- More education sessions planned, some joint with whānau group
- Input provided to Total Mobility submission

Whānau / Family Group

- Strong engagement and increasing collaboration

- Report provided separately

5. Other Updates

- LifeLinks: relationship building and collaboration underway
- NEGL: closer alignment across groups and with Whaikaha
- Shane appointed to Royal Commission-related advisory audit group
- Planning for Te Whatu Ora visit next month; questions to be prepared

Closing Reflection

"We are planting trees for others to sit under."

Next Meeting – 28 April 2026