

POLICY	CONSULTATION POLICY
Purpose	This policy describes NMDHB's formal consultation process.
Background	<p>The Board is committed to involving the community in its activities and decision making.</p> <p>The consultation process is a mechanism essential for the successful implementation of the Board's Community Involvement Policy.</p> <p>NMDHB has specific consultation requirements in relation to the NZ Public Health and Disability Act 2000. The Board understands the legal requirements and the additional contribution made by case law.</p> <p>The benefits of formally consulting with interested parties are recognised and consultation processes will be conducted according to best practice.</p>
Scope	This policy covers formal consultation conducted by the Board.
Definition	<p>Consultation has been defined by the Court of Appeal in <u>Wellington International Airport vs Air New Zealand</u> [1993] 1 NZLR 671,675 as being a process that is more than notification but something less than negotiation and agreement. The Court ruled:</p> <p><i>Consultation must be allowed sufficient time, and genuine effort must be made. It is to be a reality, not a charade. The concept is grasped most clearly by an approach in principle. To "consult" is not merely to tell or present nor, at the other extreme is it to agree. Consultation does not necessarily involve negotiation toward an agreement, although the latter not uncommonly can follow, as the tendency in consultation is to at least seek consensus.....</i></p> <p><i>.....Consulting involves a statement of a proposal not yet finally decided upon, listening to what others have to say, considering their responses and then deciding what will be done.</i></p> <p><i>Implicit in the concept is a requirement that the party consulted will be (or will be made) adequately informed so as to be able to make intelligent and useful responses. It is also implicit that the party obliged to consult, whilst still entitled to have a working plan already in mind, must keep open and be ready to change and even start afresh. Beyond that there are no universal requirements as to form. Any manner of oral or written interchange which allows adequate expression and consideration of views will suffice. Nor is there any universal requirement to duration. In some situations adequate consultation could take place in one telephone call. In other context it might take years of formal meetings.</i></p>
Policy	NMDHB will use an open and consultative approach to decision making and provide an adequate system to inform the public on matters relating to the public health and disability support activities and policies.

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NMDHB will consult with the community/communities of interest when it wishes to:

- Initiate new policies, services or plans that have significant implications.
- Make significant change to existing policies, services or plans.
- Establish priorities.
- Make significant changes to the range, type or access to services.
- Proposing changes in methods of contracting.

NMDHB will consult with Maori to:

- Fulfil its duty under the Treaty, as Crown agents, to engage with Maori communities.
- Ensure that its strategies for Maori health improvement are effective.

Aims/Rules

NMDHB will:

- Enter all consultations with an open mind.
- Involve interested people at the earliest possible stage, including planning.
- Be clear about what is being proposed, why consultation is necessary, what will be done with the information and who will be making the decision.
- Identify all those affected individuals and communities of interest so that they can be informed about the proposal and encouraged to participate.
- Be compelling so that all affected individuals and communities of interest will want to be involved knowing that their views will be heard.
- Allow sufficient time so that everyone who wants to is able to respond to the proposal.
- Provide all relevant information to enable people to make intelligent and informed decisions.
- Use simple language and avoid jargon.
- Use a range of communication modes, communicate often and keep channels open throughout the process.
- Where possible use face to face contact, particularly with Maori.
- Acknowledge all submissions providing good feedback so all who participated are reassured that their views and efforts are valued.

Process

Planning

1. The aim or purpose of the consultation is determined.
2. A consultation plan is drawn up.
3. The consultation team is appointed.
4. The interested individuals/communities of interest are identified.
5. The methods of consulting are decided.
6. The consultative time frame is drawn up.
7. The mechanisms for giving and getting the right information are determined.

Implementation

1. The implementation is monitored to ensure the right people are being reached and are responding.
2. The monitoring is to ensure early detection of problems or issues so remedial action can be taken.

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Acknowledging and Analysing Information

1. All submissions are acknowledged on receipt.
2. All input is reviewed and collated in a full internal report.
3. The report is assessed by a wider team and, where appropriate, circulated to others for comment.
4. The external and internal input is considered and recommendations made so a decision can be taken by the Board.
5. A summary of submissions and decisions taken is sent to all interested parties.
6. When appropriate results will be delivered in person.

Evaluation

1. The consultation is evaluated including:
 - Assessing aims against outcomes;
 - Effectiveness of methods;
 - Overall planning and implementation;
 - Cost compared with budget;
 - Identifying the difference consultation made to policy development or decisions.

Timeline

The following provides the timeline NMDHB attempts to adhere to when undertaking consultation. This however may from time to time be subject to external influences or requirements outside NMDHB's control.

Week 1	<u>Consultation period commences</u> Document is mailed out Invitations/advertising, meetings and hui Process for making a submission outlined made public.
Weeks 4-6	Meetings/hui/workshops/focus groups
Week 8	<u>Consultation period closes</u>
Weeks 9-12	Submissions acknowledged, analysed and recommendations made.
Weeks 12-16	Board decision made and announced. Feed back sent to submitters.

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