

# SCI Action Plan Update

*This bulletin provides an update on progress implementing the NZ Spinal Cord Impairment (SCI) Action Plan (2014-19) and highlights achievements*

August 2017

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## What is the SCI Action Plan?

ACC and the Ministry of Health developed the NZ SCI Action Plan in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders including consumer groups, professional bodies, expert clinicians, district health boards (DHBs), and researchers.

Our vision is that the SCI Action Plan will help achieve the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes for people with SCI, enhancing their quality of life and ability to participate in society.

The SCI Action Plan has eight objectives with inter-disciplinary implementation led by a cross-agency governance group. A copy of the SCI Action Plan is available at <http://safer.nz/NZSCIAP2014>

## Two highlights from our work to date

### Spotlight on the NZ SCI Registry Dr Richard Smail (PhD)

When I was undertaking my research into Ageing people with SCI in NZ it was apparent that information being collected on people with a SCI was localised, fragmented, and inconsistently collected.

*“With the introduction of the NZ SCI Registry we now have a single nationwide reliable and accurate information system that enables improvements in service delivery to all people with SCI”*

Richard Smail (PhD)

## What have we accomplished?

- Formalised a supra-regional structure which means there are two specialist SCI centres in NZ for acute care management and rehabilitation. The two centres are based in Counties Manukau and Canterbury.
- Implemented a national destination policy on July 2015 which means people requiring acute care with a SCI or high suspicion of a SCI are taken directly to a supra-regional SCI centre unless they need immediate trauma care in another centre before being transferred.
- Developed a national specialist service for children and adolescents which combines paediatric rehabilitation expertise between Auckland and Waitemata DHBs.
- Implemented a NZ SCI Registry in partnership with the Rick Hansen Institute (Canada) in August 2016.

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With the introduction of the NZ SCI Registry we now have a single nationwide reliable and accurate information system that enables improvements in service delivery to all people with SCI.

During its first year, the NZ SCI Registry has collected data on people newly admitted with a SCI. Overtime this registry will greatly assist with research, clinical treatment and improve the overall wellbeing of people with SCI.

The NZ SCI Registry Governance Group and Coordinators are now gearing up, not only for the first year's follow-up collection of data, but to invite those people who have an existing SCI prior to 1 August 2016 to participate in the registry. This will be a major undertaking, but the benefits cannot be stressed highly enough.

Those of us who are now ageing with SCI can, through participation in the registry, contribute to building new knowledge that will ultimately improve outcomes for others and possibly ourselves.

### **Paediatric Model of Care** **Emma Maddren, General Manager,** **Clinical Services, Starship and Child** **Health Services**

The Starship Rehabilitation Service became aware of a child who had an unexpected spinal cord injury following a surgical procedure. The child had not been referred directly to us.

As a result of our new Specialist Paediatric and Adolescent Rehabilitation Service (SPARS) which includes an advisory service, we were able to actively bring this patient into our service. This meant that she received tertiary specialist medical rehabilitation sooner than she would have otherwise received a specialist rehabilitation service.

We are working to spread the word locally, regionally and nationally about SPARS, including the outreach and advisory services. We are hoping that children and adolescents with a spinal cord injury continue to enter the service sooner, and receive as much care and treatment as close to home as possible in a shared care model.

### **What is coming up?**

We are continuing to progress the work of the SCI Action Plan; areas of focus include:

- Collecting first year follow-up data for those people contributing to the NZ SCI Registry.
- Developing a pilot where a regular support worker provides specialised supports to a person with pre-existing SCI admitted to public hospital.
- Progressing the professionalised peer support model.
- Completing our evaluation planning.

### **What have we accomplished?**

- Improved systems and processes and information sharing between the supra-regional SCI services.
- Improved equipment and housing modification processes, particularly where funding is required from both ACC and the Ministry of Health.
- Sponsored post-graduate education (University of Sydney) for assessors providing specialised vehicle modification assessments.
- Worked with the NZ Spinal Trust and TASC to develop a professionalised peer support model which should be ready to pilot within the next year.
- Contributed to the NZQA Level 4 qualification for support workers to include specialist skills needed to support people with SCI.
- Commenced evaluation planning so we can evaluate the effectiveness of the SCI Action Plan.

### **Want to know more?**

If you'd like more information about the action plan or any SCI work underway, please get in touch with Phyllis Meier at: [Phyllis.meier@acc.co.nz](mailto:Phyllis.meier@acc.co.nz)