

International policies on disability comparison



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Aging and Disability Task 4

Comparing international developments to New Zealand's policies and practices, in relation to disability and aging.

4. 1 International policies on disability from New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom

New Zealand

According to the New Zealand Disability Strategy it is a long term plan to change the way New Zealand society works with people with disabilities. The strategy was developed through consultations with people with disabilities to gain insight in what they need and from people who have been working closely in the disability sector because they provide real and valuable insights in what needs to be addressed in order for New Zealand to become a society where disabled people are included in every aspect of community life.

According to the strategy New Zealand can be said as in inclusive society for disabled people when disabled persons can say that they live in"

" A society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation."

This are the Objectives:

- To encourage and educate for a society that is non-disabling
- To ensure that rights of disable people are upheld
- To provide disabled people the best education possible

- To provide employment and economic development opportunities for disabled people
- To promote leadership by disabled people
- To foster an aware and responsive public service for disabled people
- To create a long term support system centred on the individual and not on the disability
- To support quality living in the community for disabled people
- To support lifestyle choices, recreation and culture for the disabled individual
- To collect and use any relevant information about disabled people and issues relating to disability
- To promote and enhance participation of disabled Maori
- To promote and enhance participation of disabled Pacific people
- To enable disabled children and youth to lead active lives
- To promote participation of women who are disabled in order to improve quality of life
- To value families, whanau and people providing ongoing support to disabled individuals

Canada

In comparison to New Zealand where there is Disability Strategy, Canada does not have a specific disability policy for disabled people. Canada sees disability as a complex and multi-dimensional condition wherein the combination of all the effects of disability in a person's life is addressed in different legislations in Canada. This includes: Canadian Human Rights Legislation, The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Universal Health

Care System which all have different policies regarding people with disabilities.

Under these agencies, there are ten areas of policy classification in relation to people with disabilities. These ten areas are:

1. General disability
2. Transportation
3. Employment
4. Housing
5. Education
6. Participation
7. Income replacement
8. Recreation and leisure
9. Taxation
10. Health

This ten areas explores the important aspects of the lives of people living with disabilities which follows a needs-based approach. It examines the fundamental needs of the persons with disabilities which is also something similar to the Disability Strategy of New Zealand. It aims to explore the personal fulfilment of people living with disabilities through learning, working and participating in their own community.

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom they follow an internationally recognized benchmark set by the United Nations Convention for persons with disabilities in all areas

of their life. Unlike New Zealand and Canada which has ten goals or benchmarks, the United Kingdom has only 5 benchmarks which are:

1. the right not to be discriminated against
2. the right to employment
3. the right to health
4. the right to equal justice
5. the right to participate in culture

In July 2009 the government of the United Kingdom ratified the Convention set by the United Nations, this meant that they agreed to be bound by the terms of the Convention and to follow and implement its benchmarks.

International policies on aging from New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom

New Zealand

Health of Older People Strategy

New Zealand's Health of Older People Strategy aims for older people to be able to participate in their fullest ability in decisions about their health and wellbeing. This also includes the health and wellbeing of their carers or families and their life in the community. Support through coordinated and responsive health and disability support programmes are provided for them.

The Health of Older People Strategy has eight objectives which are:

New Zealand's Health of Older People Strategy outlines policies, strategies, guidelines and how funding will be provided in the care of older people.

The strategy has eight core objectives:

1. Older people and their family/whanau are able to make well-informed choices on their options for a healthy living, healthcare and their support needs.
2. Quality health and disability support programmes will be integrated around the needs of older people and they will be helped by policy and service planning.
3. The funding and service delivery will provide promotion of prompt access to a quality integrated and disability support services for older people, their family or their carers.
4. The health and well-being of older people will be promoted through programmes and health initiatives.
5. Older people will have access to primary and community based health services that will promote and improve their health and functioning.
6. Access to health services in a timely mainly to improve and maintain the health of the older people.
7. Integration of general hospital services with any community based care and support.
8. Older people that has high and complex health and disability needs shall be given access to flexible, prompt and well-coordinated services and living options that will take into consideration the needs of their family and carers.

Positive Aging Strategy Ministry of Health

Another policy on Aging that New Zealand have is the Positive Aging Strategy by the Ministry of Social Development. It has a vision wherein New Zealand is a society where people can age in a positive manner, where the elderly are placed in high esteem and value and where they are recognised a core and important part of the family and the community.

It continues to state that positive ageing is a reflection of the attitudes and experiences of the elderly about their own selves and how the younger generation of people view ageing and that includes how they view their own ageing as well.

The New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy helps promote and reduce barriers experienced by older people. They also improve services that older people can access.

They have Ten Goals which are:

1. Income -provide adequate income for older people
2. Health- fair, prompt and accessible health services for older people
3. Housing- provide an affordable and proper options for housing to older people
4. Transport- provide transport services that older people can afford and have adequate access to
5. Ageing in the community- older people can be safe and secure as they age within the community
6. Cultural diversity- older people are given choices that are appropriate for cultural diversity in the community

7. Rural services- when accessing services in the rural communities, it will ensure older people are not disadvantaged
8. Positive attitudes- to ensure and propagate awareness so people of all ages have a positive attitude towards ageing and older people.
9. Employment opportunities- it aims to eliminate ageism and promote work opportunities that have flexible work hours for older people.
10. Personal growth and opportunities- to increase opportunities for personal growth for the older people

The positive ageing strategy of New Zealand takes in to account the health, financial security, independence, personal safety, self-fulfilment and the living environment of the elderly in New Zealand.

Canadian Policies on Ageing

Like New Zealand, Canada has a long history of policies and programmes that is aimed at serving the elderly in Canada. The responsibility for policies and programmes in addressing the needs of the elderly is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial/territorial levels of the government in Canada. The majority of the income security programmes are provided the federal government.

The National Framework on Ageing

Canada's National Framework on Ageing has a vision which is the promotion of the wellbeing and contributions of all the elderly Canadians in all areas of their lives, the promotion of the wellbeing of seniors, recognising their valuable and important contributions to society and the reflection of the goal of eliminating ageism in the culture in all sectors of Canada.

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Canada's National Framework on Ageing has 5 Principles which are:

- Dignity
- Independence
- Participation
- Fairness
- Security

United Kingdom policies on Ageing

National Health Service

In the present the aging population in the United Kingdom much like the aging population in New Zealand and Canada, is steadily increasing and therefore it goes to say that health or care needs has been rising and that older people have now become the biggest users of health services. This aging trend now holds new responsibilities for the NHS and social care services in helping the elderly stay in a state of health, be active and as independent as possible for as long as possible.

The United Kingdom's healthcare system is much New Zealand's. Under the NHS are districts and there are district health authorities that are the ones providing funding for health care for the elderly in their respective districts. Referrals for specialists for elderly patients are made by General Practitioners, so patients under the NHS can't directly access these specialists. Emphasis has been placed on primary care regarding policies of ageing in the United Kingdom.

But unlike New Zealand and Canada which has a national plan for service planning for the ageing population, the United Kingdom has no such national planning service but instead the Department of Health sets out the priorities on a yearly basis.

4. 2 International service delivery policies on disability (ACTS) from New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom

New Zealand

Disability Support Services

In New Zealand the Disability Support Services is responsible in the planning and funding of disability support services, the administration of the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003. They also provide advice on policies to the Minister of Health.

The services that are being funded by the DDS are accessed through a (NASC) Needs Assessment Coordination service. NASCs are contracted to the DDS, they are organizations that work with people with disabilities and help identify what they need and to outline what types of disability support services are available to them. They are also responsible for allocating Ministry funded support services and they also assist the disabled people with accessing other support services that they may need.

The main focus of the Ministry of Health's Disability Support Services is based on the New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference – Whakanui Oranga.

According to this document its aim is ensuring that disabled people are able to live in a society that puts a high value on their lives, works in improving their participation in their own communities and ensures that their needs are considered before making any decisions that will affect them will be made.

Canada

At present there are no Disabilities Act in effect in Canada, though according to my research political parties often promise such would be legislated but have still not been acted upon. Though they have no such disabilities act Canada has an alliance called the Canadian Disability Policy Alliance which is a national collaboration of disability researchers, organizations within the community, provincial as well as federal policy-makers which is aimed at creating and mobilizing knowledge to improve the disability policies in Canada and to promote equality and create opportunities for disabled people in Canada. They are being funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council for a period of 5 years. In five years, they will need to address four policy areas:

- Employment
- Education
- Citizenship
- Health Services

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom unlike New Zealand, they follow the United Nations Convention. Since they have ratified this the Convention now expects the

United Kingdom government to involve people with disabilities in the development of any and all policies that will have an effect on them.

The Equality Act of 2010 was enacted on 1 October 2010, this aims in protecting the people with disabilities and prevent any form of discrimination against them. The Act provides people with disabilities legal rights in the areas of:

From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of:

- education
- employment
- access to goods and services
- functions of public services
- buying and renting property

In the United Kingdom the Equality Act also covers and provides the rights of people to not be discriminated directly or harassed just because they have an association with a person with disability. This applies to a carer or a parent of a disabled person. Adding to this, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed just because people have the misconception that they are disabled. Also protected by this Act are people who were disabled in the past. But in New Zealand the policies regarding disabled peoples protection are specifically for disabled people alone against discrimination and there is a separate policy for non-disabled people against discrimination.

International service delivery policies on aging from New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom

New Zealand

In New Zealand, Service Delivery Policies includes care services on a long term basis in both the residential and in the home setting.

Service Delivery Policies include long term care services in both residential and home settings. It aims to provide a high quality, affordable, sustainable and timely access to services that are being funded through their own respective District Health Boards.

Under the Social Development sector, a retirement income such as Superannuation is provided to New Zealanders over 65 years of age. There is also a veteran's pension available for people who have served in the military. Other range of services available to older people includes financial assistance like Gold Card, Accommodation Supplement, and reduced cost in fees for their doctors, and a form of medication subsidies.

Canada

In Canada they have a national health care insurance program called “ Medicare”. This program is under the Health Care Act, which is a publicly funded system in Canada with an interlocking set of 10 provincial and territorial plans. This act provides the older people access to hospital and physician services all the time.

There are also other services the older Canadians can access which are:

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- Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- Old Age Security (OAS), pension for over 65
- Guaranteed Income Supplement
- Spouse's Allowance (1975)

One other contribution of the Canadian federal government is the funds allocated to the provincial health and social programmes through agencies such as Canada Health and Social Transfers. They also provide major allocations in funding for health care, health promotion, disease prevention and medical research.

The National Council on Aging (NACA) since the 1980s has long been assisting and providing advice to the Minister of Health on issues relating to the ageing of the Canadian population and the quality in the life of the older Canadians. Through its institution, the government of Canada has recognized that it needs to meet the concerns of its elderly population that they needed to be informed especially by the elderly about what their needs and concerns are and how to improve their conditions.

United Kingdom

National Service Framework

In the United Kingdom there is a National Service Framework designed as a 10 year programme that contains eight standards that relates to services designed for older people. It covers a wide range of services of care that older people need. The frameworks standards represents essential principles which guarantee that care is based on the clinical need and not the age of the individual. It guarantees that services being provided treat the elderly as

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individuals, promoting their quality of life, their independence, their dignity and the elderly's right to make their own choices and decisions especially regarding their own care.

As early as January 1909, the United Kingdom (including Ireland) has a basic state pension known as the “ Old Age Pension”. They also have travel concessions, allowances for winter fuel and housing assistance programs.

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