

To: Social Services and Community Committee

From: Birthright New Zealand

Date: 3 May 2021

Supplementary Submission: Social Security (Financial Assistance for Caregivers) Amendment Bill

Background

On 25 March 2021 Birthright attended the abovenamed Select Committee to orally affirm the written response provided to the Financial Assistance for Caregivers Amendment Bill.

Birthright committed to making a recommendation to the Community and Social Services Select Committee regarding the following question which was posed by a Committee member during Birthright's oral submission;

What are your thoughts about the "break down criteria" that needs to be met in order to receive support? Is "break down" the right word to be using?

As indicated in our oral submission, Birthright considers the words 'break down' to be negatively toned – particularly when the intention of the financial support for care givers and youth is intended to make a positive impact in their lives.

We have given consideration to a naming convention which would be simple, and reflective of the steps required in order to assess the circumstances required in order to satisfy the conditions for financial support to be provided.

Considerations

Birthright considers that the naming convention for the 'breakdown criteria' could be as simple as dropping the wording 'break down'; resulting in the assessment process referring simply to 'Criteria'.

According to the Collins dictionary 'Criteria' (noun) the plural of criterion, is of Greek origin, means;



1. a standard by which something can be [judged](#) or [decided](#)
2. *philosophy*;
a [defining](#) characteristic of something

The original use of the word *kritēria* from *kritēs* judge, from *krinein* to decide.

Given the context within which the word 'criteria' would be used would appear appropriate.

An alternative naming convention, 'methodology' was also considered.

According to the Collins dictionary 'methodology' (a variable noun) means;

1. A methodology is a system of methods and principles for doing something, for [example](#) for [teaching](#) or for carrying out [research](#).

While the consideration of the circumstances for a care giver or young person might follow a particular methodology or systemic approach to determine entitlements or eligibility, we consider that in light of the definition of 'methodology' compared with 'criteria', that criteria would be more appropriate. Birthright also gave consideration to the types of naming conventions used across the social sector agency, and criteria does appear to be a commonly used and well understood term both within the sector, and generally with the use of government and forms intended for public use in New Zealand.

Recommendation

Given the consideration above, Birthright would recommend simplifying the naming convention to simply reflect 'Criteria', removing the reference to 'break down'.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a suggestion with relation to the naming convention for the 'Breakdown Criteria' referred to in the Care Givers amendment bill.

Kind regards

Leanne Inder
Co-Chair, Birthright New Zealand

