

3.8 Christchurch case study – Elderly parent residential care

The services and experiences described are all of the recent past. This case study represents how these respondents felt about the service they received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondents – Dyad interview

This was a dyad interview involving the daughter and son-in-law of the elderly parent. The daughter was aged 61 and the son-in-law 67, both are New Zealand European and self-described themselves as “poms”. They are retired and co-own their home.

The elderly parent was aged 93, but is now deceased.

■ Background

The elderly parent came into contact with the District Health Board (DHB) initially after an accident which saw her eventually hospitalised for pneumonia though the hospital had initially misdiagnosed a heart attack. In the months following her release from hospital to the residential care she had been in for the past 10-12 years, her health deteriorated to the point where she needed more intense nursing care which is the point at which a move to another residential care facility was required.

An assessment of the elderly parent by the District Health Board was conducted through Princess Margaret Hospital by two assessors who advised that she would need intensive care. They recommended an “end-of-life package”, which provided such care for up to three months for those who were not expected to live long, but such a package was only available from a facility accredited to the DHB.

The respondents’ preference was to have had this care provided at the rest home the elderly parent was living in which was within close distance of their home, so they could visit her daily.

■ Contact with State Services

➤ Christchurch Public Hospital

The elderly parent had a fall in December [year] which led to her being taken to Christchurch Public Hospital by ambulance. On admission to hospital, the respondents were told that she had had a heart attack though as it transpired she had pneumonia.

She ended up having a fall and was admitted by ambulance to the public hospital and we were told initially that there was no future for her, that she wouldn't survive because she'd had a heart attack. [That caused the fall, did it?] [No, I don't think so. There was so much stuff that went on but they decided it was pneumonia, didn't they, and they said – (Interjection.)] No, that was what they told us and then the next day we went in and they said “no, we found out that she hasn't had a heart attack, she's got pneumonia and we'll treat her in the normal way but she will only be 50/50 or she'll still only stands a 50/50 chance. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

Apart from the misdiagnosis, the services and information provided by the hospital were described as “good”. They commented that initially she had been kept in a private room at the hospital.

While she was in hospital the respondents told the hospital that they would be going away for three weeks in April. They were then advised that the elderly parent would qualify for some respite care at the rest home she was staying at which would be paid for by the DHB. The elderly parent normally lived in a villa at the rest home, but respite care facilities in separate accommodation were also available at that rest home.

➤ **Princess Margaret Hospital**

In early January [year], she was transferred from Christchurch Public Hospital to Princess Margaret Hospital where she was assessed as to what she was capable of doing on her own and released back to her villa in the rest home she had resided in for the past 10-12 years. The respondents were told that her release was to be on a trial basis. This raised an expectation for the respondents that there would be some follow-up monitoring of the elderly parent, but this did not eventuate though there was some extension to the services she had previously been receiving from the Nurse Maude Association.

When they send somebody home on a trial basis to see how they go, you would assume that it would be monitored and although they put some – she was already having some help initiated by them but done through the Nurse Maude Association where people came in and showered her and did a bit of hoovering and so on...[Yeah, they gave her a little bit more. (Interjection.)] (Christchurch, residential care, male)

Just prior to her release, a doctor at Princess Margaret convened a family meeting with the elderly parent present to give his prognosis which proved to be correct.

[He was great. (Interjection.)] And he called the family in and he sat there with [name]’s mother and he said that she had serious problems and he said “she might see the year out”. [She almost did. (Interjection.)] He was dead right but he said “she’s not going to have any great quality of life” and all that sort of thing. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

On release from Princess Margaret Hospital, she remained at the rest home in her villa apart from a three-week period in April when the respondents were away on holiday. During that period, she received respite care at the rest home paid for by the DHB.

However, by August [year] her condition had deteriorated and she was described as “really sick”. She was assessed by a doctor and another person from Princess Margaret Hospital. The respondents were then told that she was dying and that an “end of life package” was available to provide care and cover costs for people in those circumstances. The respondents said they found the description of the package distasteful, and said the assessors from Princess Margaret were secretive and evasive about what it entailed. They said there was a suggestion that Work and Income was the agency that would advise the respondents about the package.

No, they came out and she was assessed. They came to the villa. [In August they came to the villa?] Yes. [This is Princess Margaret?] Yes. They came and saw her and she was assessed and they said she needs – [Hospital care. (Interjection.)] Yeah, now they've got this expression which they call – [End of life package. (Interjection.)] End of life. [So they knew she was dying then which is a horrible way to put it so that could be an issue really. (Interjection.)] Everyone cringes when you mention it. People in the know know about it, but not many people want to tell you about it. It had only been going since the previous December as we understand it, so it's only been going for 12 months, but you can't find anything about it. You get books given to you about rest homes and all the various care facilities but nowhere does it mention this thing and when you try and talk to Princess Margaret about it, it's like secret squirrel. [Very evasive, aren't they? (Interjection.)] It's sort of like "we're doing you a favour, how dare you ask, you should only be concerned with the wellbeing of your mother". You couldn't find out – "oh you'll hear from WINZ, you'll hear from WINZ" and all this sort of thing. Well, we never ever heard anything from WINZ, did we, never heard anything. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The respondents' preference was to keep their elderly parent in the rest home she had been living in, but they were told the staff-to-patient ratios were not adequate enough where she was staying and that she had to move to a rest home that was accredited by the DHB.

In Mum's case it was – the thing that bugged us was the fact that they insisted that she move from where she'd been for 10 years into somewhere completely strange. [Where was this?] Well, it was another rest home. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

The respondents said they were put in a position where they felt they had no choice but to accept that their elderly relative would have to be moved to another rest home.

They were saying "we're in charge, we're providing this thing where the state pays for the whole lot". [They give you three months – (Interjection.)] Because they think that – in their view the person is going to die within three months so therefore it won't be required any longer, but if for some strange reason they live for longer than three months, they will reassess the position and you may have to pay something you see, so they're calling the shots. [This is what this end of life package is?] Yes. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

To find out more about the package they rang what they described as patient advocacy services which they said described as finding through the "health department or something like that". This was initiated as a result of a reference to patient advocacy services in a booklet put out by the rest home. This led them to an on-line link and they finally contacted patient advocacy in Auckland because patient advocacy services in Christchurch were unaware of the package. As a result of that inquiry, it appeared to the respondents that different levels of provision for a similar, but a differently named service, existed in Auckland to that of Christchurch.

I think it was through the Health Department or something like that. [The patient's sort of advocate that was for the – (Interjection.)] You can ring up on a no-name basis and get – [Ask what it's all about. (Interjection.)] Independent information and they'd never heard of it so at one stage we were put through to somebody in Auckland and they said "oh yes, you're lucky down there, if it was in Auckland you'd only get a month whereas they must have more money down there because they get three months". [But they didn't call it end of life package. I don't know what they call it up there. (Interjection.)] This was all a complete learning experience for us. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

They did receive some written information about the package from Princess Margaret.

They said there was disagreement between Princess Margaret and the rest home she had been living at as to whether there was a need to transfer her to another rest home. The fact that she had received respite care in April and that round-the-clock care seemed to be available at the rest home she had been living in had initially persuaded the respondents and the rest home that she could continue to stay there.

[She essentially needed 24/7 care?] Yes. She was getting it but they didn't think she should be there and wanted her to go to a hospital where she could get more. [Because they didn't have this contract, you see. Well they didn't have a hospital so it wasn't – (Interjection.)] No, it was built before the hospitals went into the rest homes but even some of the ones with hospitals don't have this end of life contract . So we had to bundle her up and take her to the other place with a hospital and we thought "oh well, at least she's going to be really well attended, she's going to get really good care". In actual fact it was dreadful. The day after she arrived, which wasn't their fault, but they got this norovirus. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

In the end, a doctor from Princess Margaret intervened and the respondents were told that while there was no hurry to move, the mother would have to be transferred in order to receive the care provided by the package.

In the finish the doctor intervened. She must have been told by – in the meantime we were told that "there was no hurry, you just go and – now you've got to go to a hospital rest home that's got a contract with the district health board which is administered by Princess Margaret". (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The respondents said that Princess Margaret did not provide them with the names of accredited hospital rest homes as this dialogue shows.

[Just talk me through this, where Princess Margaret says there's a number of accredited rest homes did they give you a list?] No, they wouldn't give you anything. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

They had to be careful that they don't favour one or the other. They're more or less saying (Christchurch, residential care, male)

Well I guess you get that in your own phone book really but you just have to ring and say "have you got this end of life package?", "no", "thank you very much", "have you got this end of life?", that's what you had to do. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

[So they didn't give you a list, you just had to ring through every rest home in the Yellow Pages?] *Mmmm. [And there was no advice on which ones were –] Good or bad, they can't really tell you. They can't tell you, no. I mean they're all run as businesses and I suppose if Princess Margaret is saying "you go to that one because they're really good", the rest of them are going to say –* (Christchurch, residential care, female)

There appeared to be no indication to the respondents which places might be accredited based on how well known they were.

We certainly found out that some of the better known ones don't have a contract and some of the popular ones that you might like to go to have got a long waiting list and so eventually we had a look at a couple. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The person who was responsible for administering the package provided intermittent communication with the respondents and apart from attending the initial assessment never met with the respondents again. All contact was conducted over the telephone.

The lady that we were dealing with, she was erratic and she kept hassling us, and yet she was inaccessible because she was always – it might have been an unfortunate time of the year or whatever but she would ring up or leave a message on the answer phone. It was always on a Monday and she was always going to be away and she would say "you can ring on this phone if you need something but I'll be back next week" sort of thing, and then you'd get another barrel the next week when she came back. [So maybe it was just a bad time. (Interjection.)] (Christchurch, residential care, male)

Prior to the move to the new rest home, the respondents said they were advised by Princess Margaret that the mother did not qualify for the end of life package. This was subsequently corrected, but they said it caused them some concern given the amount of money that was required to pay for the care that was needed.

Along the way, I just forget the chain of events, but we got word from somebody that there was no way that she would have been on – who was it told us, was it Princess Margaret? [I don't know what you're going to say. (Interjection.)] Somebody told us that we didn't have this package. [Oh yeah, yeah, that's right. Princess Margaret. Somebody from there, wasn't it? (Interjection.)] Somebody said we didn't have it. They said "oh no, there's no way that you've got that"... So we had to get onto them and sort that out. I mean it all involves quite serious amounts of money. You're talking about \$1000 a week. All of a sudden one minute you're getting told that you're on this thing and you haven't got anything in writing but then you get something in a form of writing, and then you get somebody saying you're not on it and then it takes several days to sort out if you are, and it's been a big mistake, and then even when [name]'s mother died and we left the place that she finally ended up in, the bill came to us, but that was a mistake that they'd made. We just couldn't believe it. We'd had all these dreadful experiences and all the time the person – (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The respondents also spoke of confusion with respect to the payment for doctors' visits and whether these were included as part of the package.

I'd read somewhere that the package included all doctors' bills. Well, we kept getting the doctors' bills. When you go into a hospital situation, there's certain routine hospital visits that have to occur where the doctor – normally you order the doctor yourself but in these things they do them and apparently that was part of the package and I'd read that somewhere but I couldn't understand why we got these bills. When I checked out they said "oh yes, that's right, they probably do" but there was no liaison or notification. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The respondents visited a rest home located close by to where they lived, which made it convenient to visit her, and agreed to transfer her. The transfer was a traumatic experience for the parent.

She was frightened really of what she was going to because she was out of her environment. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

On arrival at the new rest home, the respondents felt that too much of a focus was given on admitting her to obtaining information than providing the elderly relative with warmth and care.

No, we had to fill in forms and information when we admitted her which we could have done without. [Terrible, wasn't it? (Interjection.)] [This was when she was admitted to the new rest home?] Yes. [She was really shaking and she was ill. Get to bed straight away. (Interjection.)] She really needed somebody to sort her physical condition out instead of worrying about whether she wanted porridge. They went on about getting ministers and priests. I understand why they need this information but at the time – (Christchurch, residential care, male)

It could have been done when she was settled and not when she was terrified and she was cold. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

However, the information that was sought was regarded as useful and necessary to gather.

As was noted earlier, the day after admission, the rest home she had moved to was struck by the norovirus and was quarantined off from visitors. The respondents said they received no advice of what had happened prior to their visit to the hospital and that the experience over the following ten days was distressing for the elderly parent as well as for themselves.

Then the following day we went around to see her and they've got all these signs up in the window saying that the place was closed because this norovirus – but nobody had rung us and told us. They knew we were next of kin. [Were people still inside?] Yes, all you could do was wave through the window. [You weren't allowed to go in?] No, everyone was quarantined. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

She was absolutely petrified because she had all these strange nurses and people and they'd all got masks on. We were like monkeys out the window saying "are you alright?". It was hell. That lasted for about 10 days. She died just shortly – well a couple of weeks after that, two or three weeks after that. She wasn't having very good attention at this other rest home. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

The respondents were critical of the level of care provided by the new rest home. They said that it took a long time for staff to respond to the bedside bell when it was rung and they described the apparent lack of staff when they visited.

When you're actually going in there every day, sitting there and thinking "gosh ... it's like the Marie Celeste in here". You look down the corridor and there was nobody there. For hours there was nobody around. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

In another incident, they said it had taken four days to clear up shards of glass from a glass the mother had broken. Another example they gave of what they regarded as poor quality care arrangements was the mix of those in care from those who were active and mobile to those who had little time left to live.

But I think the level of staff was an issue there, wasn't it, really, for the level of care – it was more or less a hospice situation for quite a few people that were around there. But interspersed with these hospice people there were people that were up and about and able to drive their mobile cars around and that and were walking and could manage to get to the dining room and everything. So it was just random really. Those rest home people were not taken into another part of it. They were just left in the rooms that they had ... rest home but these hospice people were dying off, dying, dying, dying. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

They said they and others had laid complaints which they believe had led to an inspection of the facility.

They sent a woman down from the North Island to sort of troubleshoot and she was aware – we did say "this is not on". There were quite a few things that happened. The bell wasn't being attended to. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

Partly because of our involvement this woman was brought in, plus other people complaining and they had a staff meeting and there was a huge shake-up and we understand that things have changed. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

The respondents said Princess Margaret had offered to speak to the respondents about their complaints, but this did not eventuate.

Princess Margaret actually said that they would like to come and talk to us about it but there was never anything done about that. [It was up to us. (Interjection.)] If we had wanted to pursue it we could have done. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

There was also anecdotal evidence from staff that other rest homes were no better.

One of the nurses there said she had quite a lot of experience in the industry, in rest homes and different hospitals and she said "if you think this one's bad, you want to see some of them" so I think there might be a real problem out there. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

They said the aspect of their experience they liked the least was the lack of consistency about what they were told.

Just the inconsistency of things. One minute you were told that there was no hurry, just to take your time and get on a waiting list, and then the next thing you're getting a barrel because nothing had happened and a week had gone by. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

In retrospect the respondents said they felt that the mother would have been better off staying where she had been originally.

She was in a room in there being looked after and had more or less 24 hours in there really. There was no real difference when she went into the other place, was there, really, in her care, her level of care. It was worse because she didn't know these people, they had the norovirus, it was a nightmare and that wasn't the fault of this second rest home. I mean anybody can get norovirus but it was just the way it was handled, with no communication and absolutely no communication, just a notice on the door to say that they had this virus and that nobody would be admitted. Because there was no phone in the room – and you see we hadn't had the time to get a phone put in the room, and they didn't because they couldn't let the Telecom men in or anything, you know what I mean. It was absolute lock down and this happens all over Wellington, Auckland or whatever when they get these viruses. They're just so terrible. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

The positive experiences they had were based on the actions of individual staff.

Was there anything useful? A few of the staff were very nice and they were conscious that we were worried and concerned, but on the whole it was not a nice atmosphere. (Christchurch, residential care, female)

He said staff were critical of the facility.

The people kept coming and approaching us. Even the gardeners would come and tell us about the problems that were going on there, how awful it was. [No particular advice or information that was useful that you were provided with?] No, I don't think so. [You have to forage it all out. (Interjection.)] It's like getting blood out of a stone trying to find anything. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

➤ **Work and Income**

The son-in-law had some dealings with Work and Income as he administered his mother-in-law's affairs under a power-of-attorney arrangement. Up until two years ago, the mother-in-law had lived in a rest home with her sister, but when she died he notified Work and Income of the change in his mother-in-law's circumstances.

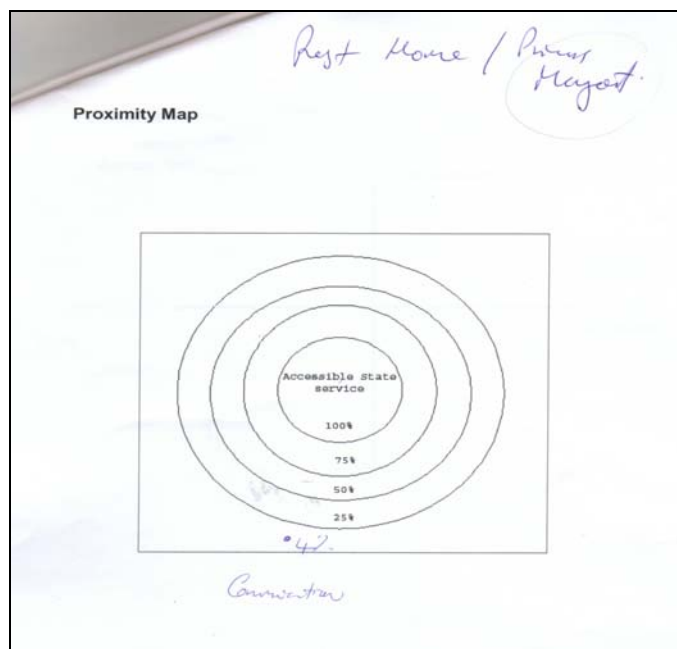
I had to notify WINZ that she was no longer eligible for her living alone allowance when she first went into the rest home because when her sister died – I mean previously she'd been just getting a widow's benefit and when her sister died she was eligible for an increase in the allowance because of the living alone allowance but if that situation changed you have to notify them so I notified them. [How did you know that you had to notify them?] Because it tells you in the gumph that they send out when you first get it. [So you were aware, you looked after her affairs?] Yes. [Did Work and Income send mail directly to you?] [No, because they don't know, you see. They rely on you to tell them. (Interjection.)] At one stage we felt it was necessary that one of us had – somebody had power of attorney to deal with her affairs with WINZ and they gave us a form and to be honest we never got around to completing that, or she might have signed it and we didn't put it in. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

He said dealings with Work and Income were straightforward and that all the information he required was provided. However, he did note that when his mother-in-law was in the second rest home and was in receipt of the “end of life package” that he had assumed the benefit payments would cease, but he said he could not obtain information about that.

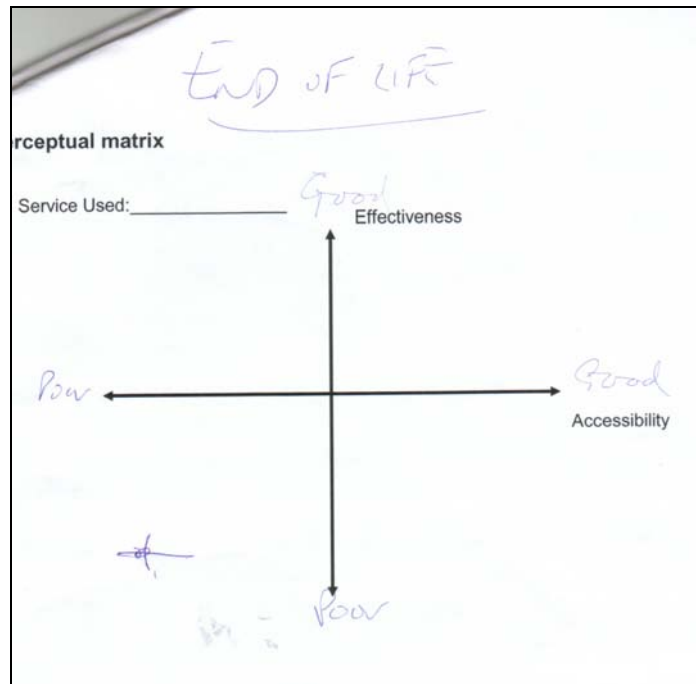
I'd assumed that because we were getting this end of life – what actually happened there? Because we were getting this end of care package that her benefit would stop. [Did it?] This is the frustrating thing. You couldn't get that sort of information. Nobody seemed to be able to tell you, or nobody seemed to want to tell you. Everything used to go through her passbook account. I used to look after all the other – the reinvesting of term deposits and looking after other financial affairs, but her pension used to go into her passbook account and she held onto the passbook so unless you had access to the passbook – which wasn't up to date – I mean if you wanted it to be updated you had to take it into the bank and they would do these bulk entries which brought it up to date and sometimes they didn't itemise them or they would just do them every once in a while so you didn't really know what was going on. I always assumed that because we were getting this end of life package where everything was paid for, that somewhere along the line her widow's benefit would be stopped and I don't really know whether that happened. (Christchurch, residential care, male)

■ Projectives

The respondents were asked to identify how accessible the services were on the Proximity Map below. They rated their experiences with Princess Margaret Hospital as particularly low for accessibility (4%) because of their experience with the “end of life package.”



The “end of life” package was also rated poorly in terms of effectiveness as the Perceptual Matrix below shows.



3.9 Taranaki case study - Farmer dealing with major weather event

This case study represents how this person felt about the service he received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a New Zealand European farmer in Taranaki aged 60-65. He has lived in the area most of his life, owns the farm with his wife and built their home 30 years ago. The farm is situated adjacent to a river, and farms sheep, cattle and horses.

■ Background

Much of the farm land and buildings, not including the house, were flooded in February 2004. Farmland was again flooded in one in 100-year flood in the winter of 2006.

We got hit pretty badly, but in saying that we didn't have a large area. It didn't flood our house ... We had quite a lot of land under silt ... it went through our stables, which is our main working area ... but we didn't have hundreds of acres or anything like that. We had forty acres hit I think. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

While parts of the farm had flooded before, the house had always remained safe. The winter 2006 floods, while not as severe, had a longer-term effect on the farm and operations, due to the season and the challenges of restoring grassland to a usable state.

We built the house here 30 years ago, and my family have been here a long time and it had never flooded, otherwise we wouldn't have built the house here. We've lived here since, I think 1980, we've had maybe 5, 6 floods. Now with the messes from last winter, and that was actually worse than the 2004 flood. It wasn't as high, but the time, the 2004 flood was in February, so it was hot and everything dried out really quickly and the weather was good. Whereas this year was in the middle of winter, and nothing dried out. Last winter was harder than the 2004 ... Went through horse paddocks, we re-grassed it but it hasn't worked, we'll have to leave it until autumn to re-grass. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

■ Contact with State Services

While support from agencies was appreciated, and it was expected that there should be some assistance provided and mitigation work undertaken, the respondent accepted that he carried a level of risk when farming by a river. State service assistance was not seen as a key factor in dealing with flooding. Most assistance for clean up and repair was given by friends and family.

Obviously with the insurance assessors we did, but we didn't have a lot of face-to-face dealings. ... We did a lot if it ourselves, friends came and, we did it all ourselves, actually. ... But we had insurance ... obviously they were quite slow too, not that we had a problem with them being slow, but there was such a lot of ... they were dealing with so many people that understandably it was going to be slow. But they were good, they kept us informed (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

Straightforward dealings with agencies was an important factor. Dealings with services were seen as quite unproblematic – “No hassle, I suppose”. “I wouldn't say that anyone was unhelpful”.

There were several different agencies that helped us, they were very good. ... Obviously you've got to be realistic as far as helping people after a flood ... I thought we were generously looked after ... They can't keep helping everybody for ever and a day, can they? ... The Council and the Regional Council and the Ministry of Ag did the best to help us as quickly as they could, and they did. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

While effects from the Winter 2006 flooding was noted as longer lasting, and therefore more disruptive than the February 2004 floods, there was less damage to equipment and buildings. No insurance claim was made for the more recent flood damage.

We dealt again with the Regional Council and the Council; we had a meeting with affected farmers, or people. We didn't get much for this last one, but as I said, you can't keep helping everyone. It wasn't as severe, we were hassled by it, we didn't have a monetary loss. We live by the river, don't we? (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

➤ **South Taranaki District Council**

The South Taranaki District Council provided rates relief. Most contact was in writing. Information was mailed to local residents and businesses, inviting application for assistance.

We didn't have any actual contact with them, other than paperwork, you know, we had to put in, obviously what it cost us, and what we needed, and we were well looked after ... and the District Council gave us rates relief. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

Public meetings were held to discuss issues, but these were seen as less than useful, allowing for an emotional response, but not providing immediate practical solutions.

Those sort of meetings straight after a flood don't do a lot of good ... you know they let the emotions run a bit, better to let the dust settle a bit, you know people were blaming people for this and for that, but you can't blame anyone for a flood, can you? (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

The respondent acknowledged that there could have been better planning and mitigation measures at Council level, but was slow to apportion blame. This was also reflected in a high level of satisfaction with the assistance provided.

There was problems here, because of the layout of the area and whatnot, there were problems, whether anyone was at fault, I don't know but there was water went this way and that way when maybe there should have- but that could have been just nature as well. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

The respondent was aware of other activity in the area that did not directly affect him.

There were people about doing, there were surveyors doing levels of the river and all of that and high water marks. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

There was an old couple up the road that shifted their house they were given finance to shift. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

➤ **Taranaki Regional Council**

The Taranaki Regional Council was involved with flood mitigation measures after the 2004 floods, removing trees that were reducing flow volumes in the river. This was described as a slow, but unproblematic process. The respondent was contacted to discuss the issue, but little individual contact was necessary, and the outcome was satisfactory. It was noted that water levels seemed to recede faster after the winter 2006 flooding.

The Regional Council, we had a bit of dealings with them re the river bank. They were probably a bit slower to react. In the end, they were fine ... There was a lot of trees on the river bank planted years ago by the Catchment Board, and they'd grown too big, causing problems in the river bank. And as of now, they've cut all those out ... It did take a little while, but then that's the way of it, isn't it, and those sort of things don't happen quickly. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

➤ **The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)**

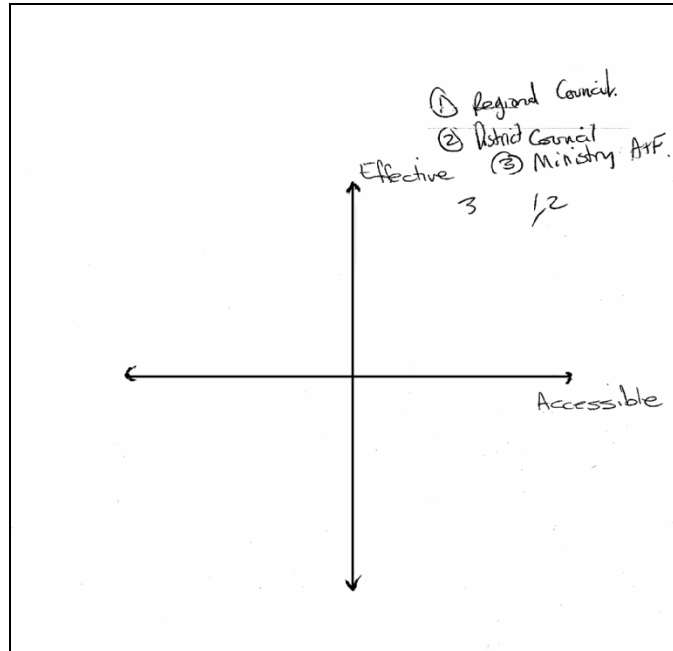
The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry provided financial assistance with restoring land, such as re-grassing fields. While they were noted as being somewhat less accessible than the Councils, no issues were noted about their assistance.

The paddocks that were flooded and that, we sowed grass seed by a helicopter, and we were reimbursed, I can't remember if we got reimbursed for the helicopter, but we got the grass seed cheap. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

The Ministry were obviously harder because they were, a bigger, yeah more centralised. Whereas our Council and the District Council were probably the same. The Ministry of Ag were a bit harder to access. But they weren't inaccessible. (Taranaki, farmer dealing with weather event, male)

■ Projectives – Proximity map

The South Taranaki District Council, the Taranaki Regional Council, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry were all rated very highly for effectiveness in regards to dealing with the floods. MAF was rated slightly lower for accessibility.



3.10 Taranaki case study - School dealing with the Police and Child, Youth and Family on behalf of a child

The services and experiences referred to in this case study are of recent occurrence. The case study represents how this person felt about these services. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a high school guidance counsellor in Taranaki. He has been at the same school for 14 years. He provides a full range of guidance and support for adolescent students, from simple course advice to dealing with at risk youth involved with Police Youth Aid and Child, Youth and Family.

■ Background

Most issues facing children can be dealt with independently of outside State Services. The respondent deals with a few cases per year which require the Police or Child, Youth and Family support or intervention. In these cases, Child, Youth and Family or the Police more often contact the school, rather than the school calling in help. His role is that of an advocate for the child, and is always present when services have contact with children on school grounds.

■ Contact with State Services

It was noted that outside agencies are generally involved only in severe circumstances, often when the resources and coping ability of a family are exhausted. Importance is placed in these situations on getting quick and efficient assistance.

Well the key thing is that I know that I'm going to get quality service from them. Basically when I'm in contact – quite often Child Youth and Family contact me ... with either Child and Adolescent or Child Youth and Family, it's because things have reached a stage that they're really quite serious for these young people and their families, and in particular it could be a solo mum has reached the end of her resources as far as she can handle her young adolescent male so I'm looking for quick, efficient and help to come in to help these young people. [What kind of help?] I've worked through Open Homes Foundation, for example, to place [children]. It has, with Child Youth and Family, 28-day respite care to give a parent, usually a solo parent, 28 days respite from their young person. They need a break and so that's one area that I've rung about and worked with them and so on. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

I want you to understand that my contacts with these people will only be two or three a year under the worst case scenarios. Most of the time with the young people as guidance counsellor, I work with them myself – no other state agency involved – just assisting them to overcome any hurdles, behaviour or learning that they have at school. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

I also attend what are called family group conferences as an education – if a boy from this school is having an FGC, as they call it, I will often get invited along to represent the school but as I say they'd only be two a year. In fact I don't think I went to one last year whereas I went to three the year before. It just depends.
(Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

The role of the school guidance counsellor is seen as a first contact and as an advocate for young people. The advocate and support role is central when agencies are involved, both for providing a neutral support when families are dysfunctional, and in place of parents while the young person is at school.

As an advocate, with state agencies as an advocate. As a support person for the young person because with Child Youth and Family it's because there are family issues that they're at the centre of. With Youth Aid it's because whenever there's a policeman at school, we've got a policy that in my role as guidance counsellor I'm there as an advocate for the young person in place of the parents basically.
(Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

While education is of course a key concern when providing support for young people, it was noted that good education outcomes can only be achieved within the context of family stability. Therefore supporting home living situations generally takes precedence over educational concern for young people most at risk.

In most cases like the kids who are involved with Child Youth and Family, education is secondary to their home living. The most important thing for those people is stability in their families. There's no abuse going on, there's no beatings, etc, like that. They can't learn under those circumstances. So education is usually secondary.
(Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

While formal channels include referral forms for various agencies, telephone contact is the primary communication channel used to discuss and organise appropriate assistance.

[As far as your communication with the various agencies that you deal with. You say they often come to you?] That's right, they do, through telephone calls, but if I'm making referrals to child and adolescent centre or activities centre, there are specific referral forms you use. Communication is made by writing as well. I ring them first, sound them out, talk about it, discuss it and then make the referral.
(Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Established working relationships is considered vital to effective communication and coordinated service delivery with agencies.

Very easy, no problem. One of the first things, for example, a counsellor does – normally the counsellor in a high school – when he or she is appointed to a new school if they choose to apply for a job, if they're good they will go out and meet these people straight away face-to-face because they're going to have dealings with these people straight away, the people who run these agencies. [So you see that as being quite important?] Absolutely vital and in fact it's part of my job description. Absolutely. It's part of any counsellor's job description is regular contact and liaison with outside agencies, most of whom would come under your definition of state agency. I might only meet or have communication with Child Youth and Family four times a year say but it's important I know. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Having these networks in place very much paves the way for effective and collaborative service. The respondent was fully confident that he could immediately access the appropriate services, via contacts that he had working relationships with, that they would be responsive and effective, and that they would provide guidance and information to assist with planning and coordinating assistance for young people.

Getting to know people, then it's just easy to pick up the phone and put a face to who you're talking to, and you'll be able to discuss things and understand where each is coming from. In other words, "what do you need from me," say with Child and Adolescents, "if I know you're going to accept this referral?" They'd say "well we need to make sure you've got this, this and this in place otherwise we won't accept it". A clearer understanding. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Communication and planning is focussed on individual cases, rather than wider strategic considerations.

It's really client based. We're not looking at a strategic long-term plan or anything. We're just looking at each individual case for these kids on their merits. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

While communications and collaboration are reportedly strong for arranging individual cases and actions, there remain some apparent weakness with the number and variety of agencies involved with particular families.

I would say probably sometimes there are too many outside agencies involved in families whereas there should be perhaps one single point. I think it adds to confusion for some of these families. I think that's quite a common complaint. The truancy person goes around, the social worker goes, the police go. Instead of building up a relationship they might be only one-off visits whereas if you had a key worker – this is incidentally what Strengthening Families is supposed to be about is having a key person involved. It's fair to say that I haven't been invited or been to a Strengthening Families meeting for quite some time. [Something that was around a few years ago?] It seems to have – I don't know where it's at now. I'll be honest; I'm not sure where it's at. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

There remains some concern as to the ability of even well resourced social service agencies to effect meaningful outcomes for children.

I think the usefulness lies in the fact of the ability to quite easily get hold of people to assist. That's never a problem. The usefulness is also – I believe successive governments have poured a lot of money into this area of social services and I commend them for that. There are people out there helping young people and other people all the time. The weaknesses, I believe, lie in the fact that none of the agencies to me ... have real teeth. Do I sound a bit harsh in saying that? Sometimes you feel as if you're going around a circle. "Well you'll attend this meeting", "yeah but I'd rather attend a meeting if I know something of value was going to come out for that child". (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

In some circumstances, he advocates stronger powers for directing assistance where advantages are clear.

I think it's the nature of – in my opinion it's just the nature of where we're at in our society itself. At some stage, when things are going wrong, something has to be done firmly and assertively to put it right and someone's got to do that, and they need the full backing of the law or whatever's required to assist them in that. Like when I meet with Child Youth and Family, it's the last job I would want. You can see why they have a huge attrition rate. They're hell of a jobs to go into these places where – [They're actually going into the households?] Yeah, so much awful things, and they're not welcome. Of course they're not welcome. "Hey, have you been beating your son?" I don't know, I went to one meeting for example, just to give you an idea, basically Strengthening Families, and the parent at hand – I won't go into what it was about – basically stormed out and said "no, not going to do it". I suggested the child started at the activities centre because the child was already behind in their learning. I went and talked to a colleague and I thought "we should have the right to say 'for the good of your child, because of such and such, he needs to do this and this'". It's not being too intrusive. What we're trying to look at is actually being positive for the kid. So that was a sense of frustration. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

This direction may include sending the child to a local activity centre, where they will clearly be advantaged by active and close educational management.

Because I knew if he started straight away, based on his previous record, started straight away in a big huge school he wasn't going to last because his behaviour was such – whereas I was offering an opportunity to start in a much smaller environment and gently work your way into the larger with some behavioural improvements which is what happens at the activities centre. [And that process would be actively managed by yourself?] Yes and the director of the Activities Centre you see, and so this boy would have mentors basically right from the start, but anyway that was a frustration. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

This frustration speaks to the respondent's core role and motivation in providing positive outcomes for young people.

You want something positive. This is what I want anyway, something positive for the [young people] that I work with. I can't criticise my workings with state agencies. They've always been there and they've always followed up what you've asked. I guess the frustration I feel is for them. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Although education is vital, for some of these kids the education is peripheral because of what's happening at home. [Still really valuable?] Well actually it can be but I always find it's the way out of a poverty trap or a dysfunctional family trap. If you get a good education you get choices. Much more so than if you leave with no education. You have not got the choices. If you look at any Saturday edition of any of the papers they want qualified people. That can be carpenters, builders, plumbers. They all need skills or they can't do their jobs. That gives them the choices ... I talk to them about choices. It may not be job or career choices but behavioural choices. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

➤ Role of the school

While State Services are limited in their ability to effect change in families, the school environment is also limited by the relatively small amount of time a person is at school.

I mean we're in an easy role in the sense that I work with young people to get them right and then I can refer them on if need be. ... But I'm not at the end of the line, and the other thing of course is that basically kids don't have to stay at school for too long. I mean they can leave legally when they're 16 or they can go on courses etc when they're 15½ so our time with them – we're talking about the more dysfunctional kids – is quite limited in a way compared to a state agency which may have had that family and then generations of that family by the way, and extended family, since that kid was five, whereas we only get them when they're 13 out to about 15/16. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

This, however, is not to understate the importance of the stable influence that a school can provide.

And five hours a day. Sometimes those five hours a day, by the way at school, can be the best five hours some kids have because they have mates, they're able to socialise and they're not being ill-treated in whatever way it is at home. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

It's got to be totally structured and that's what we would argue [school] offers. I'm not here to talk about other schools or anything but we offer a totally structured environment. ... We believe it's important they get into some sort of sport or activity or something like that. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

➤ Police Youth Aid

Regular contact with Police Youth Aid is made via monthly truancy meetings. Police Youth Aid also seek information from the school regarding particular children, and on occasion meet with children on school grounds.

Police Youth Aid, more often than not they're ringing us about a young person. "Can you give me some background information on this kid? He's offended. What's he like at school, how's he doing?" I also meet once a month with a youth aid officer at what we call truancy meetings. We have a truancy officer and I represent the school at the truancy meetings and I had one only an hour ago. One of the members of the Police Youth Aid is always present at that. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Police Youth Aid was rated highly for accessibility, noting that it generally initiated contact with the school, and was always contactable. Effectiveness was rated a little lower, however, this was put down to the complexity of cases and circumstances that are generally well advanced by the time the Police get involved. This again reflected general comments made above about limitations on the ability of State Services to effect positive change for young people in dysfunctional and non-responsive families.

We use them less so, so I would say [place rating] but they're very accessible. There's no issues in that but we don't have cause to use them that much. I can ring up and get in contact with them any time. [And when they are involved, it's always a responsive system?] Yes it is. The effectiveness I would say is not necessarily their fault. It can be because of whole lots of different dynamics. [I suppose you're at a certain stage by the time they're involved as far as within the justice system?] Yes that's right. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

➤ **Child, Youth and Family**

Both Child, Youth and Family and the Police often contacted the school when there was a suspected issue related to a particular child. In the case of Child, Youth and Family, this could be due to the fact that there was an existing family involvement with Child, Youth and Family before high school starts.

I'm the first step to assist these families and I will refer on if I feel that I've done what I can do and further assistance is required. In the case of Child Youth and Family, more often than not they actually contact us, and the reason they contact is because they have a young person under their care, who has been under their care usually for a number of years, not just at age 13 when high school usually starts. So they're contacting us to say "can I come in and talk to him about how things are going?" They meet in my office and I'm here as an advocate for the [child]. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

Where it is suspected that a young person is at risk, the school is obliged to provide access as a neutral ground away from family. The counsellor's role is to be present at these meetings as an advocate.

The other case that's been happening a lot, where there's particular issues within what we term these days dysfunctional families, they will come in – if they've had what they term a call, they've had a phone call by someone saying "look I suspect the boy or girl next door is being beaten". So we have to let them into the school by law to come in and interview the young person in a neutral situation away from the family, so I'm present at those meetings, so they contact us to say [name] can I come in and interview so and so? We've had a complaint" and they come in. Once again I act as an advocate for the child in my office. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

While Child, Youth and Family was rated the lowest for effectiveness, it was noted that a vast majority of their interventions elicited positive results. Those that did not were more as a result of the difficulties involved working with a core of inaccessible, dysfunctional families.

Child Youth and Family I've got probably the least effective. Once again in saying that, that's because of what they work under. They try very hard but the effectiveness is going, in the end, be based on the willingness of the families they work with. [Without the teeth and support behind that, there's only so much you can do by throwing resource at it and by throwing weight behind it?] That's right. [Because I suppose then you're back with the police force?] Well you are, yes. You've got to be careful not to take that away and say for example Child Youth and Family are useless. It's not like that at all. In fact I have good contacts and that. It's just that I empathise with them a bit. You know how they get a lot of bad press when something goes wrong, but they've probably had 90 interventions that have been really really good and worked. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

➤ **Child and Adolescent Centre**

The Child and Adolescent Centre is a DHB service at the Taranaki Base Hospital catering to mental health and learning issues of young people. The respondent refers young people to this service, following family consultation, should they need assistance beyond the scope of school counselling.

Adolescent issues, yes. Things like ADHD, depression, [condition], all those sorts of particular adolescent learning and behavioural problems. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

I'll have a meeting with a family in here and they'll say "he's really depressed at the moment" something like that and I'll say "I'll try a couple of suggestions and I'll make a judgement, if I feel he's going to need mental health I will make a referral to the child and adolescent centre". If you want a definition, they look after teenage and younger youth mental health as opposed to physical health. [Sounds like a really interesting service?] It's a very good service. Very necessary service too. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

➤ **Ministry of Education, Local Activity Centre**

Local activities centres provide temporary alternative education facilities for at risk youth to continue with their education outside of the school environment and with a much lower student to staff ratio. The activities centre also arranged 'alternative education', which entailed putting young people through courses.

Local activities centres are places where young men or women in high schools, only high schools not intermediates, can be referred if they need a break from high school because they're not fitting in for either learning or behavioural reasons. They usually go there only for a term or two terms. Usually they tend to be getting into a lot of trouble or just simply not willing to attend school, so if they're not willing to attend for whatever reason it is, we've got to look at "this child needs education, maybe they could go to the Activities Centre" which is generally about at the max 1–15, at the max. Generally it's down to 1–10. I've got two boys there at the moment. I referred them to the activities centre. That's a referral form directly in front of you for the Activities Centre. They're in every provincial area. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

The local activity centre was noted as 'extremely effective' and 'incredibly accessible', due to both the positive role of the facility, and the ease of communication.

➤ **Ministry of Education, Group Special Education (GSE)**

The school has some contact with Group Special Education, (GSE), developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and the coordinating Ongoing Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS) funding for teacher aides. However, it is noted that GSE assistance is mostly targeted to children before high school age.

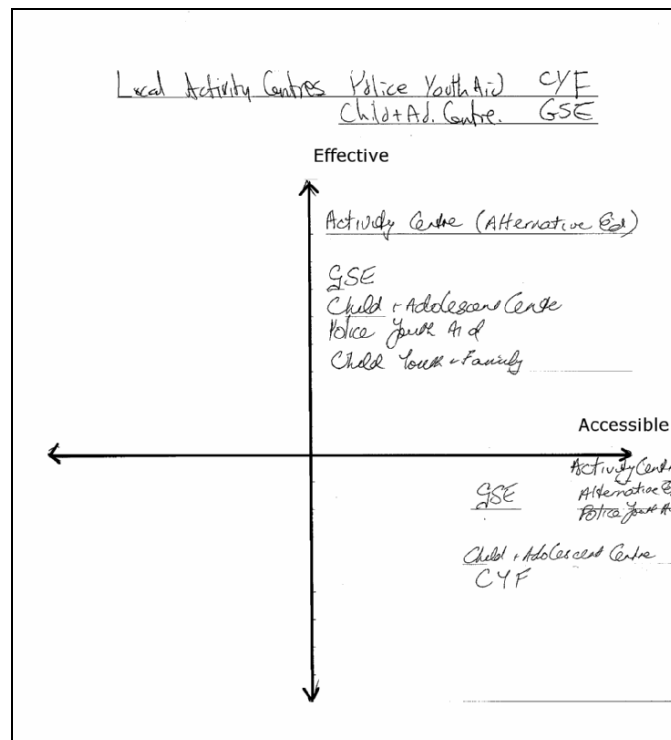
The Ministry of Education come under what's called Group Special Education. Used to be called SCS, it's now GSE. They have all sorts of acronyms. Group Special Education. Now they usually get involved in the intermediates and primary schools first. They're usually involved with either kids with severe learning problems or behavioural issues and they are usually picking these kids up at a younger age and assisting them and coming into high schools like us maybe at Year 9 level but usually not much later on because they've got – if you prioritise it at an earlier age hopefully it can have a benefit there. But GSE, when I use them, they give us what's called ORRS [Ongoing Reviewable Resourcing Schemes] Funding to fund teacher aides and I employ the teacher aides here and I work with GSE and have regular contact with them because we have to do IEPs for the kids. They're called individual education plans, and I do that with the assistance of a case officer, usually a psychologist from GSE. They come into my office. (Taranaki, School dealing with at-risk children, male)

■ Projectives

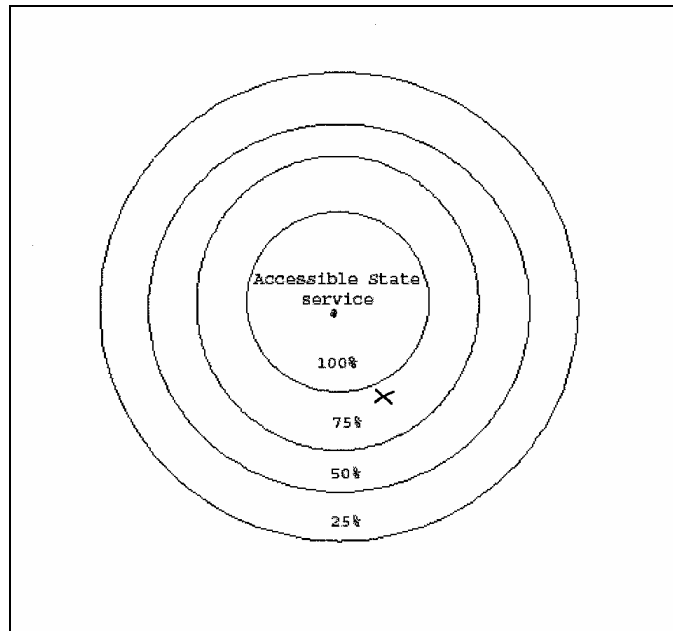
The respondent was asked to identify how accessible the services were on the Proximity Map below. He rated experience accessing services on behalf of young people from:

- Local activity centre (MoE)
- Child and Adolescent Centre (DHB)
- Police Youth Aid
- Child, Youth and Family.

As noted above, accessibility of all services was rated highly, and effectiveness was limited more by the entrenched difficulties of family situations, rather than particular fault of State Services.



Overall, State Services were rated very highly for accessibility.



3.11 Taranaki case study – Grandmother caring for Grandchildren

This case study refers to services and experiences over a number of years up to the present. This case study represents how this person felt about the services she received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a 65 year old New Zealand European female. She is a recently retired primary school teacher. She is in her second marriage and has six adult children. Her husband is aged 70 and returned to work from retirement after taking on their grandchildren in 1997. She is caring full time for two grandchildren aged 12 and 14. She has legal guardianship of another grandchild who lives with her paternal grandparents. The children's mother passed away in 1997. Their father is unable to care for the children.

■ Background

The respondent has been caring for her grandchildren since 1997, following her daughter's death.

I've had [name] for nine years and [name] for eight. I am guardian to the three of them, but the older girl she had slotted in with the paternal grandparents so I left her there, I thought it would do her more harm than good to take her out. But they keep in touch all the time. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

After a lot of to-ing and fro-ing with legalese and all that I became guardian in 1998 ... We went to the family Courts and I got legal guardianship and custodianship of them. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

The primary motivation for taking on the children was to provide stability and consistent care. Despite early difficulties, the respondent takes pride and satisfaction in her role as a 'recycled parent'.

To give the kids stability, consistency, we took them on. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

At first I think it was laid on us ... one son offered to but he's turned round after he's had his four and said I'm glad we didn't take them on, I don't know what we'd have done ... We've raised the kids as our own and well we think they're pretty well rounded kids. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

We enjoy them, we enjoy them. The kids are the most important thing. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

■ Contact with State Services

Much of the respondent's dealings with State Services were conducted in the late 1990s. State Services are now seen to play a very minor role in the lives of her and her family.

➤ **Family court**

All dealings with the Family Court, in the late 1990s, were mediated by the respondent's family lawyer. The lawyer was considered a key source of guidance and information and a critical factor for a satisfactory custody outcome and providing stability and protection for the children. While the Court process was unpleasant, the lawyer made it relatively straightforward.

I hired my family lawyer, and he did most of the groundwork, and the judge granted me the custodianship, guardianship of the kids, and the father was allowed visits but they had to be supervised. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

And that is a key factor in cases like that; get yourself a very competent lawyer who knows the law. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

➤ **Child, Youth and Family**

The respondent reported being specifically counselled against involving Child Youth and Family, for fear that they may favour the rights of the father, despite a firm belief that living with the grandparents was in the best interests of the children.

No, my lawyer said keep away from them. Apparently they can favour a parent even if that parent is not a competent parent.

[Lawyer] was adamant that we don't go through CYFS. Our family lawyer is always dealing in the family Court with these kind of cases anyway, so we were lucky that we struck a lawyer who knew the system.

➤ **Work and Income**

Raising grandchildren was financially difficult. The respondent's husband returned to work after recently retiring, and little money was received from the children's father. It was not until the advocacy group, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, was established in her town that she became aware of entitlements for financial assistance from Work and Income.

When we first had them [the father] paid us \$30 per week for both of them, and we'd already eaten into our savings, as you can understand. And then a Grandparents raising Grandchildren group was formed in [town] I think in about 1999, and I found out that when it became legal for me to have them we got what they call a children support, that was \$46 per week I think per child at the time. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

Further to the child support payments, she was informed by Grandparents Raising Grandchildren members that they were eligible for the Unsupported Child Benefit. This was disputed by Work and Income staff. A local Grandparents Raising Grandchildren advocate spoke to Work and Income on her behalf and it was agreed that they were eligible. However, it was not until she attended a meeting with Work and Income staff and the advocate that the benefit was paid. The respondent kept the money aside for fear that the decision might be reversed.

Then when I joined the Grandparents group they asked what are you getting and I told them and they said you don't get that you should be getting the unsupported child benefit. When I went to see them they told me I wasn't eligible for it, so I got the local advocate ... (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

All grandparents were entitled to that benefit ... [The Advocate] went in and he asked them in the May, and they said oh yes oh yes. He rang me in July and said have you got it and I said nope. ... We went in and saw them and he had a piece of the case manager and I got the unsupported child's benefit and they also gave me back pay, but I put it straight in the bank in case they claimed, it back, which they've got a habit of doing. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

Once the correct payments were put in place, contact is mostly limited to an annual renewal form.

Just with that, we have to fill in a form each year. To say what school the kids are at and that it's an ongoing thing, but that's all. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

Despite this negative experience, the respondent remains philosophical about Work and Income.

That was the only issue. I find that if you're polite and not agro to any social services they are usually pretty good, but at this point I needed that advocate to get me through the rough patch ... Having that support from the advocate was a big thing at the time. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

When information or a case manager meeting is required, an appointment is made via the 0800 number. While direct contact with the local office would be preferred, case managers are generally easy to deal with.

It's a small town, you get mostly local people. [Name] son works down there. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

However, the system is still seen as rigid and focused more on minimizing payments rather than ensuring entitlements and caring for people in difficult situations.

It's a system that's rigidly structured, they only give you the information they have to ... if you need to go beyond that, get an advocate. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

I think it's a case that they can pay out less money ... we'd all struck the same problem, I wasn't an isolated case. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

It's a really bulgy system and needs streamlining I think. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

I think they need to teach their staff to be a little more empathetic. To show more empathy to people and their situations. Not mop their brows and wipe their tears away, I just think they should show a little more, humanity, empathy, that kind of thing. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

Work and Income is noted to have significantly improved in recent years, and systems have particularly improved since her experience of receiving the DPB in the 1970s. However, there should be more immediate access to case managers who can outline all options.

They're better than they used to be. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

There should be someone there who can see you on the spot ... Here's my situation, what can you do for me? Can point out what your options are. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

With six kids and a granddaughter, I needed that benefit. (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

The respondent has most recently applied for superannuation when she turned 65. This involved 'a lot of bits of paper', but was seen as relatively unproblematic.

The respondent was informed that they were ineligible for Working For Families tax credit payments due to their receiving Superannuation payments.

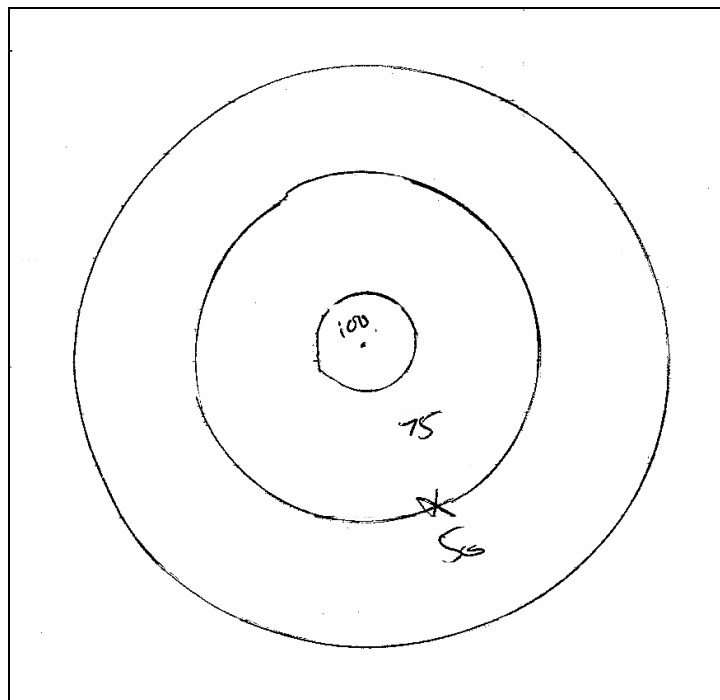
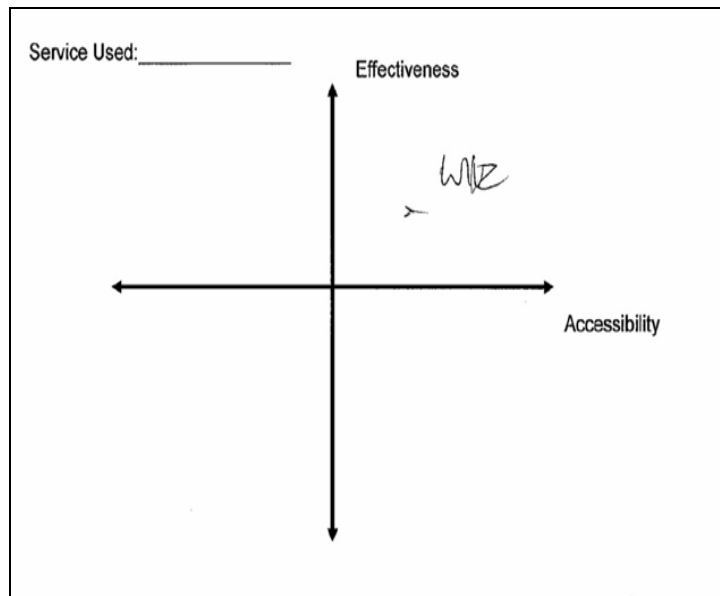
We're not allowed anything, because we're both on the superannuation, that's considered [husband's] primary income ... They said nope, you're not entitled to that because you're not a working family, though in a sense we are. It's a bit of a paradox isn't it? (Taranaki, Grandparent caring for grandchildren, female)

➤ **Schools**

There were no adverse issues reported in dealing with schools as a grandparent. All schools that the children have attended were noted to be supportive and accessible, in part reflecting the positive community outlook of small local community schools.

■ Projectives – Proximity map

The respondent gave mid-range ratings for accessibility and effectiveness of Work and Income, noting that they are 'better than they used to be', but repeating the importance of having advocates to access full entitlements. The respondent was unsure as to the accessibility of the Family Court due to the time that had lapsed since her dealings with the Court and a strong reliance on a family lawyer for all dealings.



3.12 Taranaki case study - Rural school

The services and experiences referred to in this case study occurred in the recent past. This case study represents how this person felt about the service she received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a mother of three who moved from Dunedin to Taranaki in mid 2006 with her husband and children. They have been living in Taranaki for 9 months. Two of her three children are of school age, the eldest is 10, the next oldest is 6 and the youngest is 2 years old.

■ Background

In Dunedin, the respondent was an education officer at the Otago Museum and her husband provided IT support at the university. The decision to move to Taranaki was motivated by a change in lifestyle. The couple are currently working as dairy farm assistants.

■ Contact with State Services

➤ Ministry of Education

The respondent's first contact with the school services in Taranaki was via email from their employer when they were in Dunedin. There were a number of possible schooling options available to them, but their final decision was based largely upon the closeness of the primary school.

[Can you just tell me about moving up from Dunedin to here and then trying to find schooling arrangements for the kids?] *Well our boss gave us names of schools before we got here and we emailed a lot of schools in the area and arranged a time to go in and look and we actually hadn't heard of [name] School which is the one that we are going to. One of the schools, I think it was [name] School said to us – because we were asking questions about school buses and all that kind of thing – [This is before you came up?] No, when we got here, said “you should try [name] School because it's actually only 3 kms away from you” so we did that and met the principal and thought – we went for that option basically for a geographical reason. It was really close and it seemed really good and both [name] and [name] went to that school because [name] was at primary school age last year. [This is [name] that's now gone to [name] Intermediate?] Yes, he's in his first year at intermediate this year, and so we sent them up there. [So you had two kids then at the local school?] Yes. (Taranaki, rural school, female)*

Correspondence could have been an alternative option, however, the respondent did not consider it. She places a lot of importance on social interaction for the children.

[Was correspondence a consideration?] *No. [Why was that?] I think they need the social interaction really. I'm finding like [name] was a full-time childcare child and he's basically home-schooled in the early childhood sense now and I'm already looking for places he can go because he's lonely and even in school holidays our kids drive each other mad. I couldn't imagine home-schooling him effectively. [So [name] will go to [name] as well] Yes. It works for some people and some people are much more motivated than I am and will take them places every day but I wouldn't. I find it really stressful. I go through terrible periods of where I put everything into it and then I wouldn't do anything for ages. They need school, ours need school.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

[Name] School has a sole-charge teaching principal. They had been in contact with the principal via email prior to enrolling and had organised to have a meeting with her.

We met her on a Saturday morning, we went into the classroom, she showed us around, told us things like drink bottles and housekeeping stuff. She showed [name] how the seniors are treated. Because, being a sole-charge principal, seniors are often given set tasks to do in the morning where they go through a checklist and do their work while she's teaching the wee ones literacy and things so she went through one of those sheets with [name]. He liked that because he works that way. She wasn't too schooly with the kids, just more friendly, kind of establishing a relationship with them. Then they started school that Monday because we came halfway through a term. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The principal's work ethic and approach to the newly located family impressed the respondent.

She was really open. She would ring us – I could just tell that she was a hard-working person, like she'd ring us on Friday nights and arrange things. I just liked her. I don't know why. She had pretty up to date teaching philosophies. She had just taken over the position and kind of turned the school around and the ERO reports. It just worked I guess. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

At the time the family were overwhelmed with their change in circumstance, thus the principal did not inundate them with a lot of information. They were given some basic paperwork to go over.

[So basically the information she provided to you was all verbal. There was no written information she provided to you?] *No, actually she gave us a bunch of paperwork with things like permission slips for school trips and the medical stuff and using the Internet agreements and that kind of information. [How did you find that information?] It was good. One of the things that actually changed was for that school we used to sign a form that would allow trips, consent for all trips. She's recently changed that I think, recommended by the ERO, to have separate permission slips for each trip and I kind of preferred just the whole one so you don't forget to sign it, it's just done, but I think she's complying with policy.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

Transferring her children to a different school was easy for the respondent. The school collected all the necessary information themselves and the Ministry of Education's on-line system enabled less repetition of information.

[When you enrolled, you provided information about yourself to the Ministry of Education about your kids and what you needed. How did you find that experience in terms of the information you had to provide?] *It was pretty good. I don't find they ask for stuff I don't want to tell them.* [Nobody asked you to repeat the amount of information all over again?] *No. I know what that feels like though but I haven't had that for ages actually. That could be an advantage of the on-line thing really... in terms of agencies, it's been pretty good, and also like transferring schools, I can't believe how easy that is. You just tell them your old school and they do everything.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondent preferred to access information via the Internet due to its convenience.

We're big on-line people. If we can we'll do it on-line. That's our preference. [Why is website your preference?] *Because it's accessible and effective I guess really, and you don't have to talk to those horrible machines that you have to at Inland Revenue, and you can do it at one o'clock in the morning if you have to which can be good if you've got kids. It's not so good when there's a lightning storm and your computer breaks for a week though. Very disabling.* [So the reliability sometimes falls down in rural areas?] *Yes but it would anywhere.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

As part of their search for a school the family viewed ERO reports via the TKI website.

[Did you check the ERO reports?] *Yes.* [How did you check those?] *On-line.* [How did you know that you could go on-line for the ERO reports for checking?] *Probably because I'm a qualified teacher. I'm only just qualified. I qualified about two years ago and so we learnt a lot about the TKI website and ERO and all those things through training.* [TKI website?] *It's a teachers' resource. I think it's Te Kete Ipurangi and it's a teachers' resource that links you into ERO reports and school – like you can look up school lists and click on the map of New Zealand and find schools in that area and then click on the ERO reports. So it's quite a good resource.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

One of the first things the mother looked up in the ERO report was the number of students in the school. The size of [name] School concerned her as she felt it could impede the social interaction necessary for her children. Also, the respondent was initially worried about her two eldest children being in the same class together as the school only has the once class.

[When you looked at the ERO report, what were you looking for in the ERO report? What were the things in the ERO report that they say that makes you think “that's a school that I'd like to send my kids to”?] *I always look up how many kids are in the school.* [And how many are at the school?] *There were only about 20 at [location] and that might have been another – I'm trying to remember, it's hard in retrospect – that might have been another indicator which made me not leap on it immediately because our kids were in a 200-student plus school and I was worried about it being too small, and other schools were a bit bigger so I looked at that initially but in the end it didn't actually contribute to the –* [What would be too small in your mind?] *Well, that probably would have been too small.* [20?] *Yeah.* [When you think of 20 being too small, why is it that?] *Well, it was because both of our kids were going and I wanted them to have some independence from each other because they were in the same class but it actually – then when I thought about it more, it was actually a plus because [name] was five at the time. It was a pretty big change that he was going through and I thought well perhaps it's good that he's got his older brother there.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The parents also considered the ethnic composition and decile rating of the school which they learned from the ERO report. The respondent noted she did not consider these valid indicators of the quality of education provided by the schools. She also read over the 'note to parents' section.

[Was there anything else about the ERO report apart from finding out the numbers?] *We looked up things like the ethnic composition and stuff like that but it doesn't really concern us. It just gives you a bit of a picture of what the school is like, and the decile rating is interesting but again it has its plus and minuses because if it's a low decile school it's going to get more funding; if it's a high decile school a lot of people believe that that means it's better but we don't necessarily believe that. [What is the decile rating of this school?] I'd have to check but I think it was probably about 7 or something, but then again decile reports are quite misleading, especially in rural areas because it's based on income and income around here is all sucked up in assets and stuff so it doesn't really tell you that much. Then of course we read the note to parents section of it which talks about the literacy and the achievements and the recommendations and if there's any area for compliance and there was nothing that stood out.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

During their school search the respondents were seriously considering [name] Primary, but were turned off by its "unfriendly" induction material.

[Did you check out any other school as well to make comparisons like that [name] School?] *[Name], which you probably drove past, that was interesting because had I known more about it I might have gone that way but I just got a really bad impression from their stuff that they sent us. They sent us a prospectus and just outlined the school and it just seemed quite bossy, like there were lots of rules about school buses and children must do this, and children must leave the school by 3.15 and things like that. It just gave me a weird feeling but now that I actually know the school, it's nothing like that. It was just how they came across in writing. They just came across a bit unfriendly. [Did you check them out on the ERO reports?] Yes and it was fine. I just had a wee tone from their letter which is quite awful really now that I know them because I'm actually quite good friends with a teacher who teaches there now. It was just that sometimes you pick up funny things from writing. [That would be about 10 km away?] Yes probably but there's a school bus that would pick them up outside the gate here and take them there.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondent felt there were many benefits to sending her children to a rural school. She felt that the principal was aware rural schools can be quite disadvantaged and compensated for this well. The facilities provided by the school such as the pool and library were excellent, and there are more practical learning opportunities available to the students.

The facilities like swimming pools at every school is amazing. There's a swimming pool at every school around here and the kids swim every day in the first term. You would not get that in city schools. What else is good? Oh things like lamb and calf day where the kids raise their lambs. It's really authentic. They have to feed their lambs at home or the lambs will die, whereas in a city school they'd be lucky to raise a tadpole. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

In addition, the small size of the school allowed for greater mobility of the class and thus more opportunity for school trips.

[What are you looking for from the rural school in terms of what it's providing?] *It's kind of hard again looking back on it. The things I like about it are because it's a small school the teacher's got a mini van so they can fit the kids in the mini van and they can have out of school experiences that are really authentic and work really well for the kids. [Name] probably been on more school trips in his one and a half years of school than [name] has in his entire primary school career. It's fantastic. (Taranaki, rural school, female)*

Every two years the rural school takes a trip for a week to Wellington, the school finances the trip via community fund raising.

[What are the sorts of experiences that they've had in these trips in the minivan?] *The first week that we got there they said "its school camp next week" and they whipped them away to Wellington. We felt like we'd lost our children for a week and they did all this stuff that I guess city kids would normally do so they went to the museums, amusement parks and pools. They went to Capital E where [name] and [name] learnt how to mix music and so they came back and were doing it on our computer so that was a really amazing experience. [Was that for a week?] Yes. [Do they do that every year?] No they do it every second year and it was just bizarre that we arrived the week before they took off, but they were really good about that too because normally a parent would have to go with them but we'd just started out job, we had [name], and they took them. It was scary at the time because we were sending our kids away with these people we don't know.*

[Name] Primary was also involved in events with other schools.

What else do they do when they go away? A lot of things are with other schools so they'll have sporting events, swimming events. [This is other rural schools?] Yes, all the ones we looked at. [What else have they done?] They've gone to New Plymouth, to the museum there, to the rhododendron gardens. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondent had found the teaching style of rural schools quite different to what she was used to. Teaching tended to be more through experience rather than traditional book methods which she said was a good way to engage students.

[What's the importance of that other stuff then?] *Of the out of school stuff, well it's real. If a kid wants to learn how to read, he or she will. By taking them out into the open world he'll see signs that he wants to read and he'll be motivated to read anyway, and he is very motivated to read. I don't want to say that literacy's lacking. I just think it's taught in a completely different way. Instead of with a book it will be taught with a real experience. Also the writing is really interesting because in the city schools you'll be asked to write about what you did in the weekend or write about the trip to the museum or whatever, whereas she'll stick them in the minivan, give them an experience, take them back to school and they write about it. It doesn't seem like it's traditional literacy but it is, it's really good. (Taranaki, rural school, female)*

There was more of a community feeling from rural schools, however, the respondent felt that at times learning in the traditional areas of literacy and numeracy could suffer as a result.

[What are you looking for from the rural school in terms of what it's providing?] *It's the same curriculum stuff but it's much more ... really, really community orientated. [In what sort of ways?] We had a hangi afternoon where the whole community turns up, not just the school. The whole community turns up to lamb and calf day. We had swimming sports yesterday where pretty much the whole community turned up again to watch. They have Christmas shows where the whole community comes and watches. It's amazing having that kind of experience and you really do feel like you're part of the community whereas I've never really felt like that before, like a big family... I guess when you've got that kind of enrichment going on, I guess things like literacy and numeracy might pay for that a wee bit. [How do you mean?] In a city school you get your reading books and your homework every day and nothing would interfere with that. If you're on a school trip literacy would be the most important thing. Whereas that's not so much the case here. I mean they do, do really good numeracy and literacy but I just don't think it's as highly prioritised but I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing either because he's not falling behind according to his age but if you compared him to his brother, he's probably not as moved on as he was. [Is that a reflection of the school?] I think probably but I don't see it as a problem because I prefer him to do all that other stuff. If I had a choice I would keep him where he was because I think that's important.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

When the eldest child attended [name] School there were two other children around his age who were both due to move to intermediate school this year. The principal recommended her son move with them even though he was a year younger. The respondent felt this recommendation was motivated by the school being ill-equipped to meet needs of senior students.

I think for younger children the rural school that we use is very effective and very accessible but as they get older and their needs change and their needs are more, then it gets less effective and less accessible. I think that's because of the groupings of the children and the needs in those age groups, but I think that it could also change because you could have, for example, the whole – 10 years' time you could have the opposite effect where it was really, really good for the senior kids and the new entrants coming in weren't finding it particularly accessible or effective. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondent agreed to the move and the [name] School principal asked the intermediate if they could take the child on. Initially, the intermediate did not agree as they felt he was too young. The respondent thinks the intermediate should have had more confidence in the primary school principal's judgement.

[So again I'm just thinking through, would it have been better for the principal at [location] to have had a conversation with the intermediate school that [name] was going to and so it was sorted, and then came to you?] *I think it would be better if the principal at the intermediate school took the primary school teacher's word for it rather than put us through that, because the principal at [name] wouldn't have made that recommendation if she hadn't really thought it was the best thing to do, and it was almost like the principal of the intermediate didn't trust mine or the primary school teacher's judgement so maybe more stronger relationships between principals of those transitioning schools but apparently they are friends so I don't know. Apparently they do have a good relationship.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondent said sole-charge schools needed to provide more support to principals to cope with their large workloads. The respondent herself helps the principal out with administration support from time to time.

[Coming back to the sole teacher situation and given their strengths and given the age differences in a full class, there's a risk issue there] *I think so and I think that there needs to – I actually help the principal out with some paperwork admin stuff, a couple of hours here and there a fortnight, and I think with the workload that single principal teachers have with their paperwork, just things like sorting the mail, teaching the kids, that they need more support really. I don't know if it happens in terms of funding or staff. [Are you providing voluntary assistance there?] I have done in the past but I'm also – like the Board's created a position where I can actually work there. [Is it in your view too much for one person to have to do?] I think any small rural school with one would be too much for one person. I think that's why she's probably working from six o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock at night and comes in, in the weekends because it's a big task. Even though there's not that many kids, there's still the same amount of paperwork. I guess it's what each individual puts into it. You could possibly have a single principal coping with all the workload but something will be lacking. It's a tricky one. I certainly wouldn't recommend that all rural schools had single principals teaching at them, but at the same time I certainly wouldn't recommend that they all merged and had one.* (Taranaki, rural school, female)

Some of the respondents concerns about sending her children to a rural school revolved around safety. She was particularly concerned with the big trucks that drive along the rural roads or the possibility of the sole teacher having to cope with some kind of emergency.

I don't know if you can make it better... I don't like, and I think it would be with all rural schools and it's probably to do with me being from the city, I don't like them being on open roads. I don't like that. It's in a 100 km zone and I don't like that it's not marked. [When I drove here I came across two trucks going at a fair speed in the opposite direction?] I don't like that. Tanker trucks. I'd like there to be a big judder bar outside. I just don't like it. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

➤ **School bus system**

To find out about the bus system the respondent consulted the Ministry of Education website, and was eventually referred to a neighbour with knowledge of the bus system.

Initially I went on-line and I think I went through the Ministry of Education website to find a contact person for the bus service to get that. I went on-line and found a contact person who then put me onto someone else who then put me onto the person who lives across the road. [The person across the road is the link for the school bus system?] Yes. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The regulations that apply to school buses created in the mind of the respondent a replication of zoning for rural schools. In essence, the family found themselves in the bus zone for [name] Intermediate, 20 km away as opposed to the school of their choice, [name] Intermediate which is 26 kms away. If the eldest child were to attend [name] Intermediate there would be a bus that would come past their house that would take him without cost.

It's our choice to send him to [name] and not [name] and so because it's our choice – because [name] would be free. [Name] would come up here. [Is that the distance between here and [name]?] [Name] is slightly closer but the teaching principal up there ... talking about, used to work at [name] intermediate school and took the class there on a lot of school trips and so [name] was quite comfortable with the school and knew what it was like, and all that kind of stuff so we sent him there. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

The respondents do not find the bus system that accessible, but that comes down to their choice of intermediate school.

➤ School dental programme

A dental service was provided to the rural schools. This was done in a very efficient way, and required minimal effort from the respondent as the dental service contacted her proactively.

[You haven't really used multiple agencies. It's basically been Ministry of Education?] I know what might apply which was good was the school dental service. We just filled in our enrolment forms not even knowing that we were doing the dental service – we might have known but – then one day the dental nurse rang up and we took them to [name]. That was good, I didn't even have to think about that. It just all happened for me, so that was a good state service thing. [So you had to take them into [name]?] Yes. That was two agencies working well together so that I didn't have to do anything. I like that. [So the school had told the dental service and the dental service just contacted you?] Yes. (Taranaki, rural school, female)

■ Projectives

The projective exercises reflected a positive experience with the Ministry of Education. The accessibility of the rural school was rated at 80%.

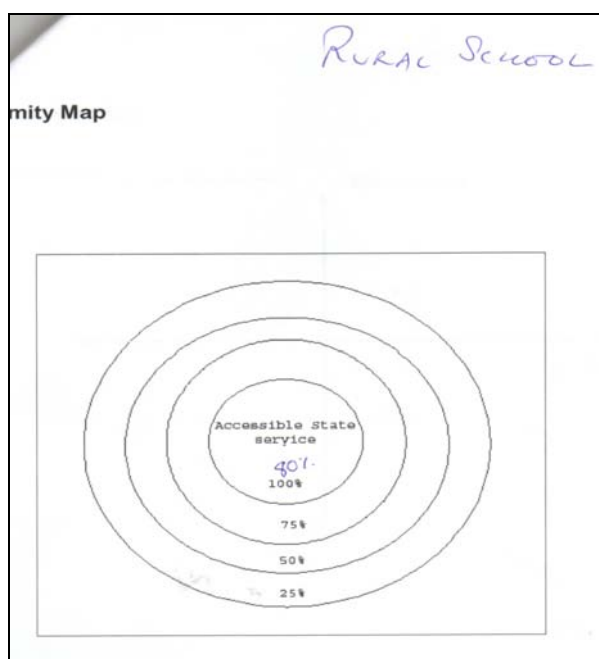


Figure 1: Accessibility – Ministry of Education

The rural school also rated highly for its effectiveness which reflected the range of practical learning experiences provided for the children. However, concerns were expressed that risks could attach to a sole-charge teacher's ability to effectively teach a wide age range of children. The respondent said she felt the teaching focus primarily went either on the dominant age profile in the class or reflected the teacher's own preferences.

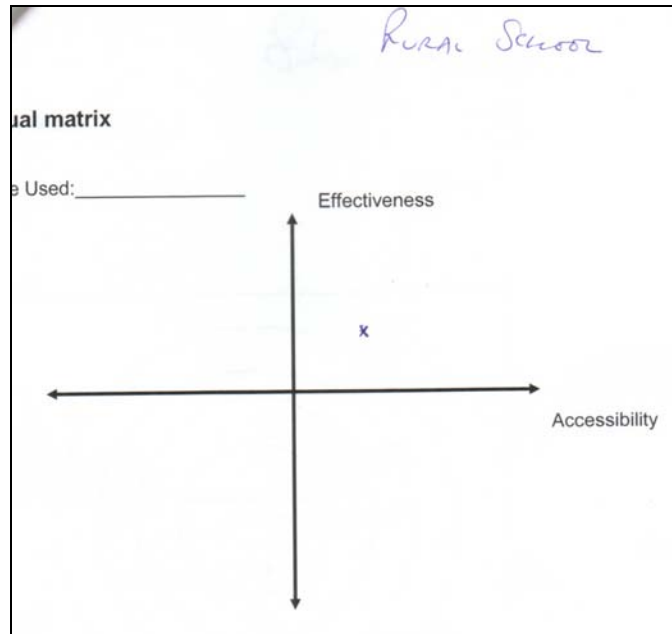


Figure 2: Effectiveness and accessibility – Ministry of Education

The school bus was marked well down for accessibility at 25%.

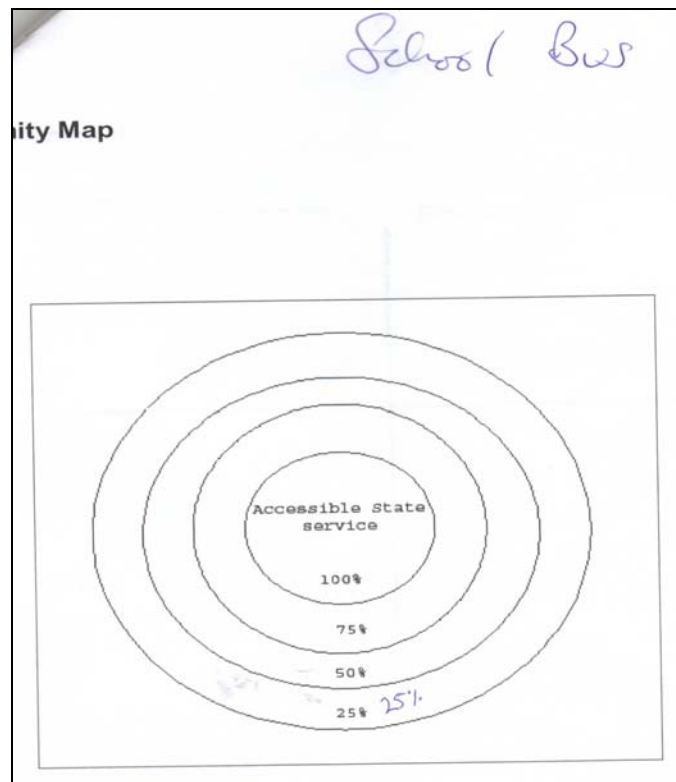


Figure 3: Accessibility – School bus

However, there were few qualms about the effectiveness of the bus service.

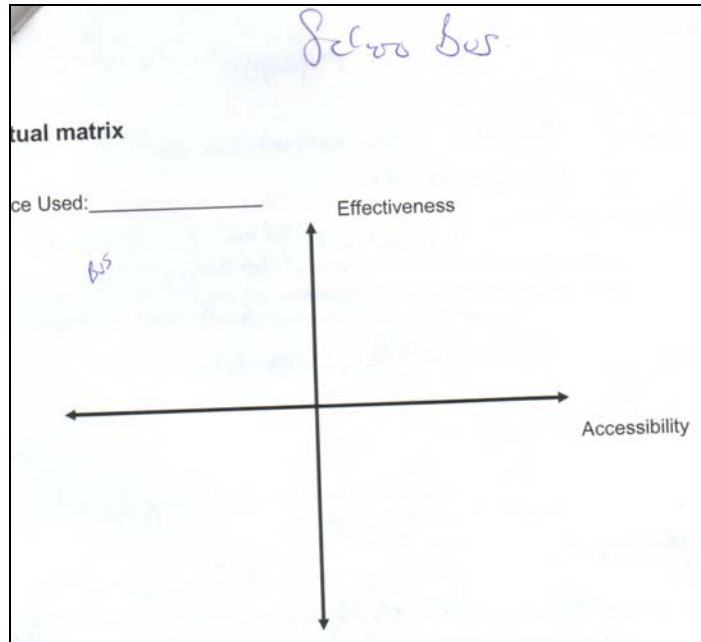


Figure 4: Effectiveness and accessibility – School bus

3.13 Taranaki case study – Treaty settlement process

The services and experiences referred to in this case study occurred over a number of years and ended within the recent past. This case study represents how this person felt about the service he received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a contractor consultant on Māori policy issues. His lwi are [lwi] and [lwi]. He is married with three children.

■ Background

This respondent was chief negotiator for his lwi. He had an interest in Treaty of Waitangi issues from an early age due to the influence of his whanau and did a Masters in History with the intention of working for the Waitangi Tribunal. One of his aunts led the first phase of the negotiations from [years] during which time he provided research assistance. When the second phase of negotiations got underway in about [year] he was asked to become the chief negotiator.

The respondent saw his role as one of critical importance to his lwi. He believed that a successful outcome would bring greater self identity, confidence and collective organisation for the lwi. Monetary compensation was secondary.

It gives you the ability to protect your interests. It gives you the ability to get out of a reactive mode into a more proactive situation. It gives you the ability to actually chart a future as opposed to just being swept around by the whims of government policy. For instance, the stuff that's going on at the moment there's a water programme of action which is going on at the moment. You've got government releasing all this stuff on climate change, you've got the fisheries stuff that's just come out. Five years ago my tribe wouldn't have been in a position to even consider those let alone respond to them. But going through that process has raised our conscious and importance of engaging in those sorts of issues. But it's also given us some capacity to do so. Organisations and capacities and resources there, so we know that our views on those particular issues are just as important as anybody else's despite the fact that we quite small tribes. In fact I'd go so far to say our views are probably better than a lot of people. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The respondent said historical disregard for the Treaty had had a heavy toll on the social fabric of his lwi. The negotiation was a matter for the entire community.

The negative effects of colonisation have led to essentially the destruction of our social organisation and so the Treaty Settlement for me is really about addressing that, pulling that collectivity back together, sort of the social fabric of our tribal entities. So it's really about – it's not about individualism which sometimes unfortunately some people forget, it's not about individual people, it's actually about doing what is best for the community. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

Much of the negotiation was not about compensation, but about establishing and agreeing to the historical account and the language of the settlement.

Actually the vast majority of negotiations there is bugger all negotiations. It was really in the historical account when we were debating the terms that we would use to describe the past, and the other thing where there was a little bit of negotiations was over the return of two domains in [location]. Yes so the vast majority of negotiations took place about terminology, control of language. There was no negotiations other than that. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

■ Contact with State Services

➤ Office of Treaty Settlements (OTS)

The Office Treaty Settlements was the principal State agency that managed the Treaty of Waitangi claim negotiations. While other State agencies had contact with the respondent, their contact with him was via the OTS as the co-ordinating agency for the negotiations.

The main agencies that we go through are the Office of Treaty Settlements, they are the coordinating agency for the government on behalf of the Crown. So rather than us dealing with every single individual government agency it was really mainly through them. But on a lot of occasions government groups like Department of Conservation, Ministry of Development, and these are sort of one off's. Ministry of Cultural and Heritage, Ministry of Fish, Ministry of Education, Land Information New Zealand, (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The respondent believed that political drivers were behind the Crown's keenness to negotiate with his Iwi. As negotiations had already taken place for three years [years] and because the claim involved land that had been forcefully taken from his Iwi, he believed the Crown viewed the negotiation as one in which progress could be easily made.

It looks better politically, it looks better for the government to say we have settled a long standing agreement with this group who we confiscated their land, shipped off some of their people down south and changed, killed some of their people rather than settle this claim this group sold their land. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

They were quite keen for us to complete the negotiations and so that was quite positive for us. But that's – I mean I'm pretty cynical about motives – we've been around for a long time so they wanted to get rid of us, but that worked for us so yea, that was a positive thing. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

One of the respondent's major criticisms of the negotiation process was the way in which Iwi were selected for engagement by the Crown.

Because it's a political process, there's no clear information that they can give you about how things work. That's the biggest criticism I have about the Office of Treaty Settlements but their policy information is quite vague, and it seems to change, depending on whom they're talking to. [How do you mean?] For instance they've got this large natural grouping policy which is an important part of the mandating process, and mandating is all about basically figuring who they're going to contract with. But until they tell you whether you're an appropriate large natural grouping, you don't know whether you are or not. So unless you get a signal in advance, you don't know how to organise yourself to engage with that process. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The respondent felt that this approach cut across the actual issues the Treaty negotiation process was actually attempting to address.

That's all symptomatic of the fact that the Crown doesn't really understand Māori at all, it doesn't know who it's dealing with, it doesn't really understand who it should be settling Treaty Claims with and so forth. I mean – but a resourcing issue – it can't, it doesn't want to settle with every little Hapū that's going around because that would be just ridiculous, because there are so many. So if they target a certain particular level of the organisation which used to be Iwi but some Iwi have 100,000 people in it. My Iwi has got [number], so the language of the Settlement has changed as well. It's moved away from dealing with Iwi to large natural groupings. Well what the hell is that? That gives them sort of camouflage, a natural grouping of whatever the Crown wants it to be. [No definition of a large natural group?] There's no real large natural group, there's no definition of that. What are you actually getting? And what impact does that have on the long term collective organisation of those tribes, which as far as I'm concerned remains the most important thing of the Treaty Settlement so the policy sort of messes in some ways what it's actually trying to address. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

Even so the respondent said OTS was helpful in providing research for the Iwi to assist them with their claim. While this initially raised questions for the Iwi as to whether the research could be trusted, it happened that an important finding of the research that was conducted concluded that the Iwi's land claim was twice the size than it was originally thought to be.

In addition, to this assistance, the professionalism of OTS was also acknowledged.

I think the thing that I quite respected about [name] is that he could sympathise with our position but at the same time he would hold the Crown's view, you know. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

However, the frustration for the respondent was that the OTS itself negotiated with a limited mandate. The respondent said that The Treasury in terms of advice on fiscal limits to any settlement and Cabinet were regarded as the “players” who were drawing the lines which limited the scope of the negotiations behind the scenes.

There was just a certain line they couldn't go beyond because it was against their rules. Those are set by Treasury – that is another one that I've forgotten. We've never actually dealt with Treasury, but Treasury is behind the scenes and they are the ones that cough up the money on all these things. And Cabinet, Cabinet are the ones that have the final say on whether the compensation is [\$ amount] or [\$ amount]. It's bloody ridiculous. We probably spend more than that just negotiating. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

With Treaty Settlements there are so many levels, the people who make decisions are about three or four levels away from you. You never have a direct conversation with the people who make the decision and in the early days of the Treaty Settlement process the old negotiators would speak face-to-face with Doug Graham when he was the Minister. You had ready access to the Minister providing he was making the decisions. These days you've got to go through the team leader, then to the blimmin director, then probably to the political adviser and then to the Minister. So you've got three or four blimmin levels to get to the person, then the Minister goes to Cabinet. So you've got four of those levels before anyone can make a decision. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The respondent contrasted this approach somewhat less favourably than negotiations of a decade or so ago when Cabinet Ministers were directly involved. However, he was also critical of political influence carrying sway over the process of prioritising claim negotiations.

If you're good mates with the Minister, even if you're good mates with a powerful member of parliament, you've got a better chance than somebody who doesn't than if you're not. And if you're a little tribe and you're not very well connected politically and that reflects in our quota. Whereas you see other little tribes who have got lesser grievances than us who are very well connected politically have got similar if not larger settlements. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

It's impossible for them to actually get them to negotiations unless the Office of Treaty Settlements wants to negotiate with them. Now in each case based on my talking with other groups who have tried to get in there. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

There were also concern about decisions being made behind the scenes separate from the negotiations that would have a major impact on claimants.

Unless they're making that decision for the right reasons then they stand to scare a lot of people, they scare relationships between people. They might not see that in the office in Wellington but the decisions that are made about this process can have some really damaging affects on the way that people relate to one another. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

Concerns were also expressed about placing time limits on Treaty claims to address a perceived need for a quick-fix solution.

Now if it's just to gain the votes, well what a waste of time. It's really got to settle Treaty claims for a far more enduring reason than that. And it's about like nationhood, it's about like Māori and non-Māori actually understanding each other. But for the long term benefit of New Zealand, it's not – it does sound cliché, but it's not cliché. It's actually very important for this country. And so that's why quick-fix Treaty settlements will not be quick-fixes. They'll be around again. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

Criticism was also levelled at what he understood to be the placing of performance measures on OTS staff to encourage speedy resolution of claims.

Several other State agencies were also involved in the negotiations.

➤ **Department of Conservation (DOC)**

The respondent was concerned by what he perceived as an inconsistency.

All throughout the negotiations the Crown was telling us there is no land for us to give you – we can't give you any land. It's all private, there's no land that we can give you. Then half-way through the negotiations we find out that the Department of Conservation wants to exchange 80 hectares of flat pasture land with this private land owner who wants to swap 100 acres of swamp that had conservation values. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The respondent said Māori did not distinguish between the various agencies of the Crown.

You're saying this on one hand, and this other half of the Crown - because I've been in part of the Crown – I understand the sort of divisions within government and one agency over the other. But Māori don't. When Māori are dealing with the government, they just see one thing, they sort of see, they're Crown. They don't give a toss about, I work for MED, I work for WINZ or that. You work for the government, end of story. Like most New Zealanders. A lot of comes down to Māori just not really understanding that a government is just like a giant Iwi, itself and it's got these other little hapū called Department of Conservation, Treaty etcetera. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **Ministry of Culture and Heritage**

Culture and Heritage was one Ministry that had straightforward dealings with the Iwi involving the establishment of a relationship memorandum and protocols for the future.

Cultural Heritage the person from there, the [name] she was really helpful, she was really useful in that she just came in with a very matter of fact, this is information blah. She didn't try and, if it was like a take or leave it situation, she'd just say take it or leave it. She didn't come in and then try and massage this thing and try and explain it. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **Ministry of Economic Development**

The Ministry of Economic Development was another they had protocol dealings with.

With these agencies like MED, Fish, Cultural Heritage, a few of the others, the Settlement provides for these things called relationship instruments, like memorandums, protocols, and it's about how you deal with one another on an on-going basis. And so the sort of information that each person gathers was their perspective on how these things would work. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

The thing that I remember about the MED person was like we needed a permit to gather stones for the hangi and I was like wow! Are you serious? Yes, yes, because it's classified as some particular mineral under the Minerals Act and you need some sort of permission to get it from a certain place unless you are going to do it this way. And I just couldn't believe it, I thought it was ridiculous. ... I said look are you going to come around and gather on the Marae and ask if you've got a permit for the ones you've had for the last 60 years. It was hard enough to take the mickey hey? (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **Ministry of Fisheries**

The Ministry of Fisheries had limited dealings with respect to fisheries allocations. As with the other Ministries, dealings were confined to one or two meetings conducted in the presence of the OTS as facilitator.

It's quality management systems, it's more about coastal allocation, issues like that. So basically we've got Treaty Settlements here, you'd be sitting where I'm sitting, and I'm [name] and he'd be doing all the talking and an official from MED might be there and an official from Ag & Fish might be there, and you don't see them, maybe once, maybe twice ...sort of stuff, talking about their specific issues. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **New Zealand Geographic Board**

The Iwi wanted a name change and dealt with the New Zealand Geographic Board. The only problem that arose was the respondent's failure to understand how much information was required to make the name change.

We wanted a name change and we were pretty late in supplying information but I didn't really understand the sort of level of information they wanted to make an assessment. That could be my fault for not reading the application properly. But some good examples about this type of information would have been more useful. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **Te Puni Kōkiri**

Te Puni Kōkiri was involved at the hui held to address the Iwi's claim definition.

TPK came along to one hui. That was not a big deal. And that was about our claim definition, the way that we describe ourselves. It is an important stage but it was very legalistic. It's quite complex actually, quite difficult. [How you describe yourselves?] Yes it serves two purposes and really it's for the government and really it's defining who stands to benefit from the Treaty Settlement. So it's for our purpose and then the other one is for the Crown's purpose it's who can no longer make a claim. So it limits their liability, their future liability, so basically nobody now who fits within the ... claim a definition is allowed to lodge a claim ... Crown action or omission in [location] Taranaki. (Wellington, settlement process, male)

➤ **Intermediaries**

Apart from the OTS acting as a facilitator for meetings with other government agencies, there were no intermediaries in the negotiation process other than legal advice. Even so, there was a strong reluctance to see lawyers taking on too much of a role on behalf of the Iwi as it was important for the Iwi to be responsible for its own destiny.

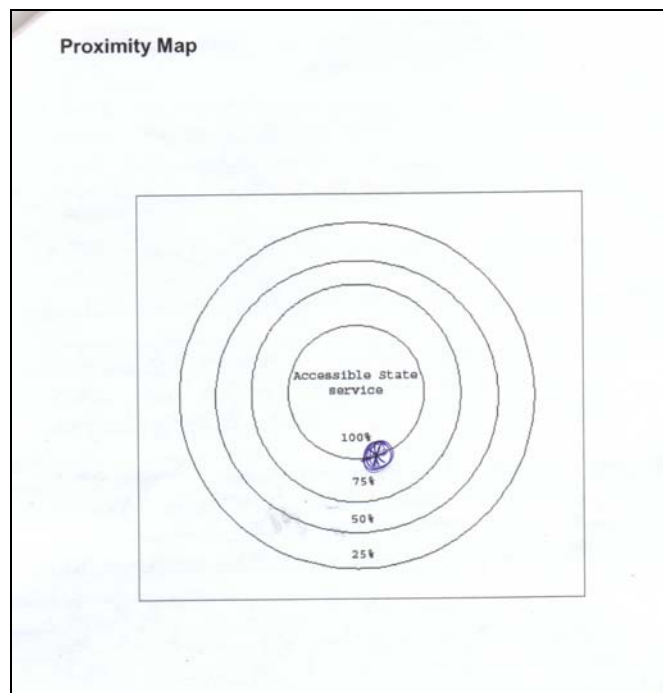
■ Preferred contact

Face-to-face contact was most important to the respondent even though much of the negotiation could have been conducted by correspondence. Personal contact was necessary to convey the importance of the issues at hand.

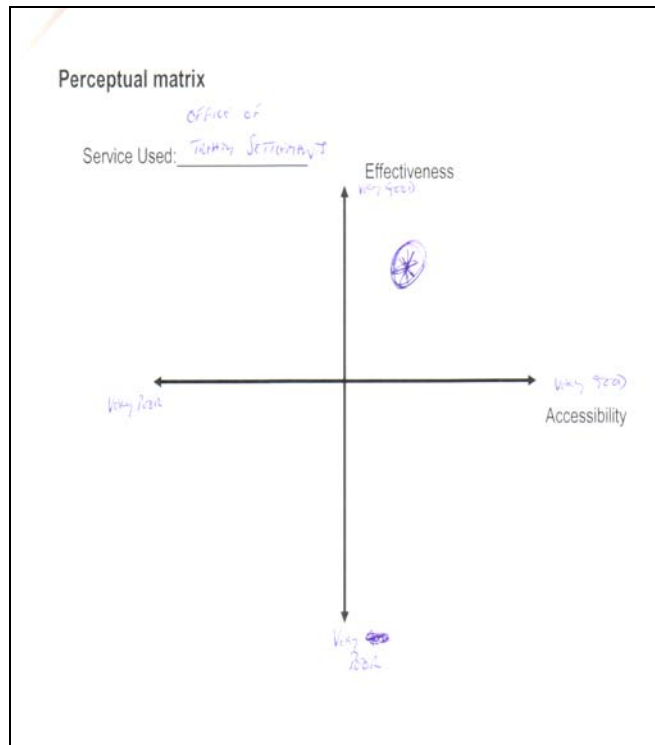
[Why was it useful to work that way, face-to-face?] *Because you got to, that's a good question actually, because you get to get your point across. A lot of it you could have just done on paper. ...papers in the mail. You really got to express the gravity of the situation. But it's supposed to be a good faith process so you look them in the eye when you're telling them no you can't have that. (Wellington, settlement process, male)*

■ Projectives

Although OTS staff were always accessible they were never required to be accessed outside office hours for instance. They were rated at about 90% for accessibility.



They were also rated highly for the effectiveness. The respondent said at the end of the day his lwi got what it wanted from the settlement process.



3.14 New Plymouth case study – ACC workplace injury

The services and experiences referred to in this case study occurred within the recent past. This case study represents how the person felt about the service she received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a 23 year-old female of Māori descent. She is currently a restaurant manager for [Employer] where she has been working for the past 18 months. She owns her own home and does not have children.

■ Background

At the time of the accident the respondent was employed as a ‘worker supervisor’ at [Employer]. She fell over at work while cleaning a puddle on the floor. Thinking she had only “just hurt” herself she continued working for a week. As the pain did not subside she asked if she could see a doctor. The doctor found she had broken her wrist in the fall.

■ Contact with non-State Services

Apart from her initial contact with the doctor when she filled out an ACC claim form, the respondent explained that she did not have much to do with State Services as [Employer] and ACC had a partnership. She said this arrangement allowed [Employer] to manage the administration of her case. The main contact she had for these matters was an employee at [Employer] head office. She found the service provided by this person to be excellent because regular, proactive checks were made on her recovery. In addition, it appeared that this person also liaised with the respondent’s medical specialists.

[Did anybody else come into the picture in this in terms of State Services? Department of Labour, did they ever come into the picture?] *Not that I know. The only people that I ... was just the people through work.* [This was your head office HR personnel department or something like that?] *Yes basically.* [What was their role? What did they do?] *She was the one where you’ve got to send all your forms through for your accidents and stuff.* [And basically their job was to ensure you got paid?] *She basically does everything, she’s like real good.* [What were the things that she did then?] *She used to ring me up and make sure I’m alright and if I went to physio what’s happening and stuff like that.* [How often would she ring?] *About every two weeks. She’d send me emails. She was really good.* [And she would just check the progress that you were making as you went through the –] *Yeah, and making sure that I wasn’t going back to work ... as far as I know she is the one who dealt with my case through like the specialist doctors, physios and stuff.* [What link up would she have with the specialists and the physio’s and that?] *I suppose she’d just ring them, I’m not sure. I know that physio rang her because I had to give them her name and stuff. For like the hospital bills and stuff like that I think they just contacted her.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

➤ [Employer]

The respondent was first contacted by her employer's head office once it had been notified of the injury.

[When did she first come into the picture?] *When they found out that my arm was broken. After that first week.* [After that first week she was in touch?] *Yes because she wouldn't have known because nobody sent through anything.* [But when you came back with your form, one for your employer, one for you, that went back to her, then she would have made contact with you I guess?] *Yes.* [By phone?] *Yes...* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

[Employer] took responsibility for accrediting the compensation to her account.

[... ACC didn't pay you?] *Well because we are like combined with ACC type thing so it was all one or a partnership with them.* [So [Employer] and ACC have got some kind of partnership?] *Yeah, they're a partnership.* [So you received pay through work?] ... (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

Her compensation was calculated on 80% of the previous four weeks earnings. This information was provided to her by people she knew.

[Are you full-time or were full-time at this stage?] *Yes.* [Did you expect to get 80%? Did you have any idea of how much compensation you'd be getting?] *Just from other people ... it was 80%.* [So from other people you knew how much you'd be getting?] *Yeah.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

[But you were working full-time, like your weekly wage doesn't change, does it?] *Back then I was just a worker so it does, but now I'm on a salary ... sometimes we could do 30 hours, sometimes we could do 40 hours.* [So it was full-time but the hours would vary, could be 30 or 40 hours. No more than 40 hours?] *Well ... like part-time is alright but if you do over 30 hours it's classed as full-time work.* [So you were hired as a part-time employee but ACC would look at the number of hours you worked and said "that's full-time?"] *Anything over 30 hours is classed as full-time work.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

[How do you feel about the calculation being over the previous four weeks? Was that fair enough?] *It was better than having nothing I felt.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

The doctor the respondent initially saw had referred her to a private specialist. The specialist instructed her to have six weeks off work, however, she felt conflicted between the requirements of her specialist and work as her manager had asked her to come in for a couple of shifts each week.

...I ended up with six weeks off the first time and then during that six weeks that I had off I was still going into work because my boss wanted me to. [What kind of work were you required to do then?] *I was off completely but she just wanted me to go in on my free days and still serve up, clean.* [How did you feel about doing that?] *I didn't mind ...* [How many days a week did she get you to go in?] *It was only like a couple, like every like three weeks or something. It wasn't like all the time.* [So a couple of days a week or something?] *Yeah.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

The manager of the store was keeping the respondents working hours 'under wraps' thus the head office was unaware she was working while injured. When the respondent found she was not being paid for working these shifts she notified her contact at the head office who was administering her ACC claim.

[You were in receipt of compensation so it wasn't like money was an issue for you?] *No. I wasn't getting paid to go back and work until I spoke to my person in head office. This is all the manager's doing. This is not [Employer], it's the manager. [So when you went back the first time, you were asked to come back but then the manager didn't pay you?] No. This is the manager that I'm talking about...I ended up getting paid for some of the shifts when I spoke to the person in head office until she found out about it . There was a big cover up so I told her about it myself. [And then you got paid?] Yeah.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

While working the shifts the respondent lifted items and due to the strain on her wrist she required an operation.

... I ended up having an operation because when I went back to work my duties – I wasn't around to like lift or anything like that which I had to. [So your doctor said "you can go back to work but you're not allowed to lift anything?"] Yes, I was under a specialist and I was not allowed to lift anything heavy and strain my wrist and stuff like that. [Did the manager or employer know that you weren't allowed to lift anything?] Yes. [But you were asked to lift stuff?] I wasn't asked to lift but in a fast food place you have to, there's no doubt about it. Then I ended up having an operation. [So why did you have to have an operation?] Because it was too strained. [With the lifting?] Yeah (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

After the operation the respondent again went back to work during the period her specialist instructed her to have off.

Then after that time I was back at work. [How long were you off after the operation?] It was like 8–10 weeks. [Did you remain off work all that time?] No. [You went back helping out again?] Yes. [They asked you to?] Yes. [Did they understand that you were not supposed to?] Yes. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

She was careful not to lift much to avoid having another operation. However, six weeks later she was back at the hospital because her hydrocortisone injections were not working.

[So you had the operation and then you were off for 8–10 weeks, but you were asked to come back and you came back again a couple of days a week?] *Yeah, about that, yeah. [A couple of shifts a week, okay, and the same sort of stuff, you were working at the counter cleaning and lifting stuff?] Yeah, wasn't so much lifting because this time I didn't want to have another operation. During that time I was having physio and stuff too. Then my wrist was still playing up so I had the injections, the hydrocortisone ones I think they're called, but they didn't work so I had to have another operation.* (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

After the second operation the respondent did not work at all for the recommended two months as “I was sick and tired of being in and out of hospital”.

In addition to seeing a specialist, the respondent also had regular appointments with a physiotherapist. The costs of these services were picked up by [Employer], however, the respondent was required to pay for her own deep heat and strappings for application at home.

... I had to pay for all my own strappings and stuff. All that got paid for was just the physio and I paid for all my own Deep Heats and strappings and stuff like that. [Did that surprise you? Did you think maybe that ACC should have been picking up that? Did you ask anybody whether they should have?] Well, I asked and they said that I had to pay. I asked the physio people because they said I had to strap it at home by myself because I was only going like every week and I had to change the strappings and stuff and they said that I had to pay for it and I said “is it not covered by ACC?” and they said no. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

She felt that the treatment from the physiotherapy aggravated her injury at times.

Well, really I didn't get anything out of him. He just made my wrist kind of worse than what it was, should have been getting better. [Did they seem not to know that they were making it worse?] ... this electric treatment ... and that was basically it. I wouldn't do any exercises or nothing. And apart from the specialist, when he gave me exercises myself to do and they were pretty painful - I couldn't move it at all. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

She let her physiotherapist know that she felt the injury was being aggravated by the treatment, however, the physiotherapist did not seem to take this seriously.

[Did you let the physio know that it wasn't working and was perhaps making it worse?] Yes, I said it was doing nothing because I had a sore neck at the same time and they ... they just told me just to move my neck on the side to stretch it. [What did the physio say? Did he say anything?] That's all he told me, just to stretch my neck because I was like holding this one ... I didn't really like them. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

■ Contact with State Services

➤ ACC

Her first contact with State Services arose when the doctor asked her to fill out ACC forms.

[... So you went to the doctor the first time, got the X-rays and filled out the ACC forms. How did you find filling out the ACC forms? Were they straightforward?] Yeah they were pretty much just the same, yeah. [Once you filled out the forms, then what happened? The doctor took the forms or –] I got given a form for myself, one for work. I got two copies. [Right, two copies, one for you and one for work, and were you told to do anything?] No, just give one to my work. [When did you give the form to work?] Straight away as soon as I went back. [Like when you called in?] When I first went to the doctor. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

The respondent reported receiving little information from ACC thus creating some uncertainty to “where I stood with them”. She did not attach any importance to the information in the one letter she received from ACC.

... ACC didn't really send me nothing apart from that letter so I didn't really know where I stood with them. [How did you find that letter from ACC?] It's just the same letter if you hurt yourself, they don't really change. [Did it tell you much?] Not really. Just said my claim number and stuff like that...It's one of those letters you just don't really look at, you don't bother reading. [Why can't you be bothered reading?] I read the first bit of it and it says it's been accepted and that's basically all I read. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

The respondent stated she expected more interest from ACC during her time on compensation. The minimal information she did receive made her feel like a number to them.

[What sort of information would it be useful to get from ACC if you were thinking –] They could do an awful lot of things. [Just tell me the sorts of things that would be useful for them to do?] Just ask how you're going or something like that, if everything's going fine, if you're getting paid properly, things like that, but they don't. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

All you got was the claim number. That's all you were was a number. (New Plymouth, work injury, female)

■ Projectives

Employer, as the administrator of the ACC claim, was rated highly at 85% in terms of accessibility. This reflected the regular contact made by head office to check on her recovery and to ensure that she was not working.

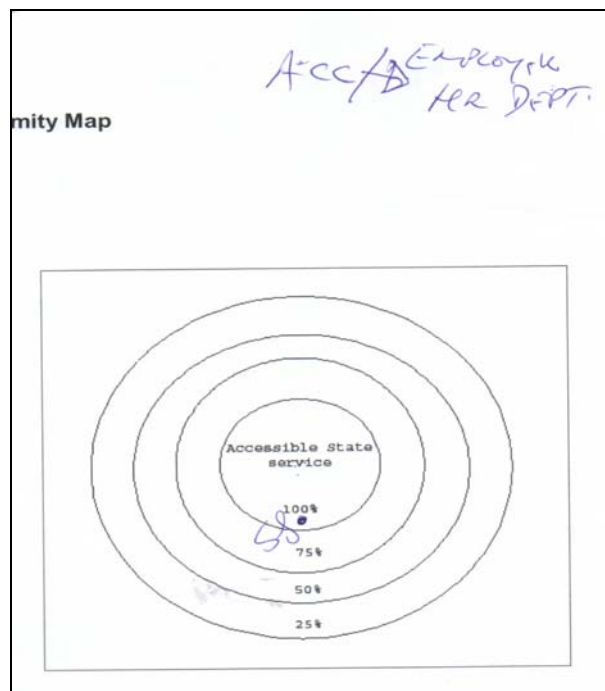


Figure 1: Accessibility of ACC/ACC partner-employer

However, in terms of effectiveness, the ACC Partner-Employer was marked low due to the attitude of the respondent's local manager who asked her to work. (Note the respondent has marked only effectiveness on Figure 2 – the accessibility rating is inconsistent with the rating given in Figure 1).

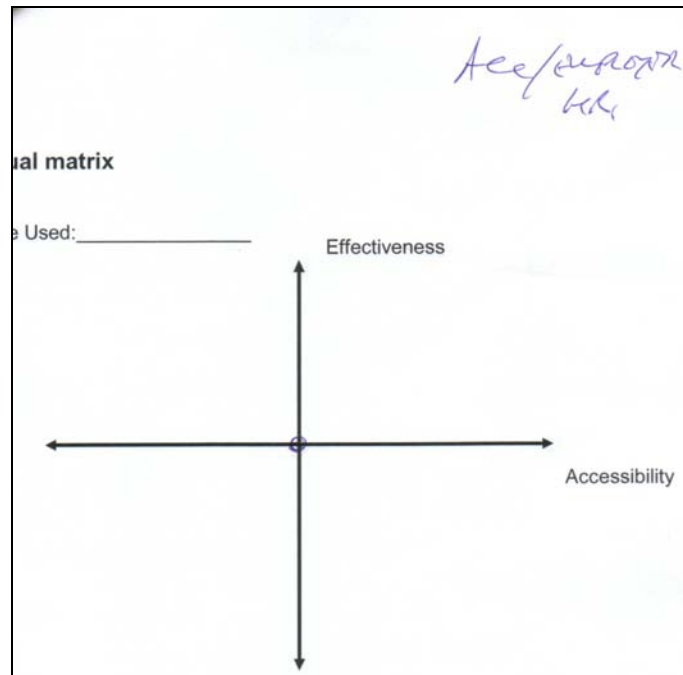


Figure 2: Effectiveness and accessibility of ACC/ACC partner-employer

The respondent rated the private hospital care provision highly for both accessibility and effectiveness.

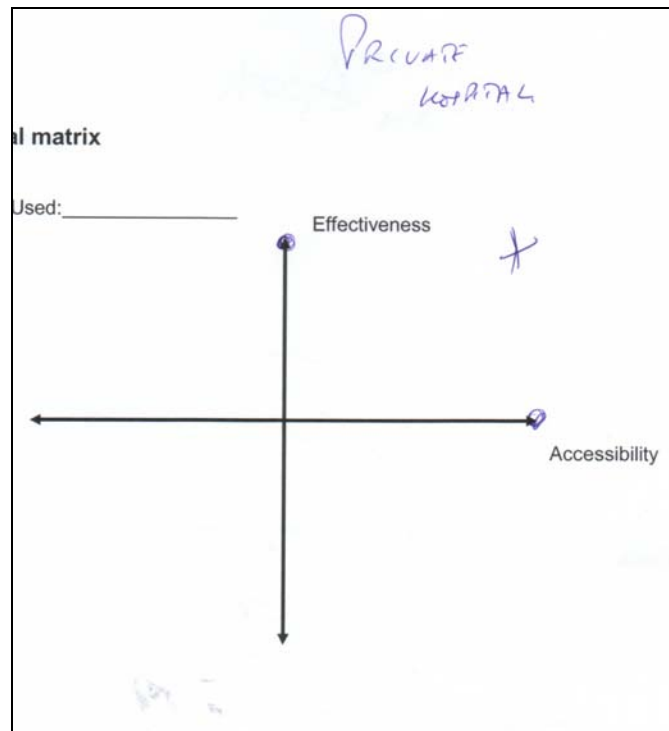


Figure 3: Effectiveness and accessibility of hospital care

3.15 Taranaki case study – Workplace apprenticeship

The services and experiences referred to in this case study occurred in the recent past. This case study represents how this person felt about the service he received. It is not representative of the New Zealand population.

■ Respondent

The respondent is a 28 year old male employed as a sheet-metal fabricator. He has been working at his company for 5 years. Prior to this he was employed as a fabrication labourer. He is currently in his third year of an apprenticeship, is married and has a little boy with another child on the way. He owns his own home.

■ Background

The motivating factors for completing an apprenticeship were the increase in wages, job security and employability that would result from the qualification. These factors were largely influenced by his family situation and desire for family security. The respondent entered into an adult apprenticeship after he moved away from his first job as a fabrication labourer as he felt there was no more potential for upward movement within the company. Previously, the respondent had not considered an apprenticeship before as he could not afford the cut in wages. Doing an adult apprenticeship through his company allowed him to avoid this. The respondent's employer pays for a large part of the apprenticeship costs in addition to the normal wages he receives.

As part of the apprenticeship, the respondent has to complete workplace assessments. At his work, there is a work place assessor and a supervisor who answers his queries and provide assistance as long as he does not take up too much time. They also validate the respondents work and assure his Competenz that he has performed satisfactorily.

■ Contact with State Services

➤ Wintech

The respondent is required to take a three-week block course once a year as a requirement of the apprenticeship. The course is not available in New Plymouth, so he travels to the Waikato Institute of Technology, though the course is also available in Palmerston North. The apprentice has to finance his own accommodation during the course. The respondent stays with family in the area, but recognises that for those without family this would be an expensive endeavour.

It's not easy when you're a young apprentice and you're only getting like \$15 an hour. That doesn't go far. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

Even with his accommodation organised, the travelling is a great inconvenience for the respondent

Accessibility for Wintech was just a pain for the fact that it's so far away. I've got to be away from my family and stuff for three weeks obviously. I can come back on the weekends but that costs me money to do that as well because I've got to run the car there and back. I do come home on the weekends but that's only because of the fact that I want to see my boy and stuff. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The respondent indicated the priorities of the block course need to be reassessed. He felt that his course was covering topics in-depth that were not useful to his industry whilst skipping over ones that were. The respondent questioned his tutor about the relevance of the course content.

[What did the tutor say?] *The course is written like that. He said “I’m only doing what I’m told, I’m only teaching you guys what I’m told to teach you” so I’m not quite sure who’s written the course and what it was written for. Whether they’re using the same course for different industries which they’re not supposed to. They’re supposed to have one for every different industry because that’s a different thing. I meant the first year we spent probably about 10% of our time was workshop time. The rest of the time was classroom time, theory. The majority of that theory was on the heavy duty welding. I was rather disappointed in that from the fact that that aspect of it was mig welding as well and mig welding is not commonly used in the majority of sheet metal because it’s just too heavy duty. Tig welding is what they should have been teaching us more of.* (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

I think that they just lacked a little bit of information within their course as far as like sheet metal and the formation of sheet metal and that kind of thing... Don’t get me wrong, it is essential to learn some of that welding stuff but I think they should have broken it down. It didn’t need to be as technical as it was because a lot of it you learn for – every individual industry is slightly different so you’re better off to learn the basics and then learn what you need to know in your workplace rather than at your trade school. You’re better off to learn skills that you can benefit from every day (i.e. how to handle and form sheet metal basically). That was the aspect of their thing that I found not so effective. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

According to colleagues who have completed the equivalent block course in Palmerston North their course content was quite different.

[So you know guys who are sheet metal worker apprentices here in New Plymouth who go to Palmerston?] *They were guys who had previously done their apprenticeship. There were two other adult apprentices who went through and they finished about three months before I started and they all went through Palmerston. [From the sound of it their block courses were different in terms of the workload?] Their block courses were completely different. They didn’t do the same welding units. They did a little bit more sheet metal than we did. They did a lot more than we did.* (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The first block course the respondent attended finished a week in advance, however, the workload during the second course was very demanding. The respondent felt that a reallocation of content was required to even out the workload throughout the course.

The second year we got there and they gave us all of our course material and we were like “far out, we’ve got three weeks to do all this”. We got through it but it was a pretty intense three weeks ... thinking, working hard at home at night to get the paperwork for it and then basically the whole course was done. Near enough the whole course was done in the workshop. I think it was 75% workshop time ... but there was no room for re-sits. If you didn’t get it right the first time you were seriously behind. You had to talk to the tutor nicely and go in at lunchtime sort of thing because we were under that short a time you weren’t going to get it done. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

Receiving information prior to the course about what kind of material was to be covered would have allowed the respondent to deal with his workload more effectively. If he had been able to review material in advance of attending the course he would have prepared what he needed whilst on the course.

[Do you think it would be helpful if you got some stuff a few weeks in advance?] *Yes, it would be good to be able to get a feel for what you've got to learn like you say so you could basically do a bit of swot on it and just recap what the stuff is, like if they're going to be doing pattern development you can look over your pattern development books that you've got through the Open Polytech and just try and refresh your memory on a lot of the stuff, just as an example. All the drawing units. But we get nothing. We don't even know what we're going there to do. We know there's going to be welding, but we don't know if it's going to be mig welding, tig welding or gas welding. They're all very different processes and they require a whole lot of different information. It means that at night time you've got to go and find the information that you haven't got that you've possibly got at home, but I can't shoot home and get it because I'm 3½ hours away... I was floundering my way through it and I don't like doing that. I mean I was still passing okay but I don't like doing that. I prefer to know what I'm talking about. [So if they'd told you in advance, you'd have been able to pick up books from home and taken them with you?] Yes, or flicked through them before I left to get the information I thought I might have needed because there's a lot of key points in this stuff that you need to know, but if you're not doing it on a daily basis you forget that stuff temporarily. So it would have been nice to have had a bit more forward warning as to what you're going to be doing while you're there. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

The majority of the time the respondent found he was working with second hand material. He attributed this to poor funding.

[Anything else about the block course, good/bad points about it?] *It was tight from the fact that their funding is the bare minimum they can get so we're using a lot of second-hand material and stuff like that, like we're using other people's assessments and chopping them up to make material for us to do our assessments on, so we're spending a whole lot of time cleaning up stuff, that to me is rubbish but it's not rubbish to them because they can't afford to buy more. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

Contacting Wintech via the phone had proven to be a frustrating experience, though the respondent found face-to-face contact with tutors very helpful due to their practical knowledge.

In my first year I had a couple of queries and I made like five phone calls I suppose trying to get hold of one particular person and just kept getting fobbed off and passed around. I never got what I wanted in the end until I got there and I spoke to the tutor and said "look can you sort this out for me" and it was 10 minutes he had it sorted. He said to me "leave it with me", left me in the classroom, went off and did what he had to do and came back and it was sorted. [What was the problem?] I can't remember exactly what it was. It was something to do with enrolments. It was nothing to do with the course. It was just something to do with my enrolment that wasn't completed. I can't remember exactly what it was to be honest with you. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The respondent has found the experience and assistance provided by the tutors, who were ex-tradesmen, to be excellent.

The tutors were able to answer any questions that you had to do with the job. Even if it wasn't actually what you were being assessed on in the block courses they could still answer it so they were skilled tradesmen themselves who had turned to teaching others rather than doing the job themselves which I thought was good. It was nice to be taught by somebody who could actually walk the walk as well as talk the talk sort of thing. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

➤ **Competenz**

Competenz send workbooks to the respondent. These contain workplace assessments for completion. He is required to verify the assessments with photographic evidence and accompanying confirmation from his workplace supervisors. The respondent keeps a digital camera at work and takes photos of "everything". When he has a full CD he sends it to Competenz, the process is very convenient for the respondent.

Credits are received for units completed with a minimum amount of credits being required to become a qualified tradesman. Initially, the respondent was quite confused about the credit system and overall assessment process.

I had no idea exactly what it was I had to do before I started doing it, and then like Year 2 it started to make a whole lot of sense to me. I sort of asked the guy, the representative from Competenz that came and saw us about it and he had been through it but I really didn't understand what he was talking about. It was a little hard for him to get it through to me exactly what it was without showing me. He couldn't show me because he didn't have the materials to show me. It's all in written formation and it says about your units and how many credits they're worth but some of the units that are quite small are worth a lot of credits but then you get other units that are massive and they take weeks to do. I mean one of our drawing units took me like two weeks doing it every night, spending like two hours a night doing it and that was worth three credits. But then there's another one, you can sit down and do it in one night and it's worth 15. [Do you understand why the weighting is kind of so different?] I don't understand that because he said to me "you can expect to be working this many hours for this many credits" basically with your correspondence at night time... (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The enrolment process for Competenz is simple and straightforward. Participants are only required to enrol once at the beginning of the apprenticeship. At the beginning of the course the area representative runs through the training agreement face-to-face with the apprentices. This allows the apprentices to raise any queries and receive answers immediately.

[And that training agreement and contract, that's all –] That's all sorted, yeah. They run through it all with you on the day. It takes about three hours, all the drama they go through. They sit us down and basically read the whole contract to us and we signed it there on the day. [This is the area rep that visits?] Yes, when he comes to sign you up to start your apprenticeship, they go through all that on the day. Then your course information turns up, like all your workbooks and stuff turn up about a week later and you're into it from there basically. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The respondent felt many of the tasks in the workbook were not of practical value. The workbooks can go into too much detail and are unnecessarily repetitive.

[They could be improved then?] *They could be improved. They could be simplified a whole lot because there's a whole lot of drama in there that is made real long-winded and it doesn't need to be. It could be shortened up and improved a lot more than it is. [Any examples?] Just things like assembling components. They've got several different aspects of it but to do one aspect of it you've got to do three others as well but they're all broken down individually. But obviously if you've done the last one you've got to have done the first two before that. That's in the formation of things too like to make something you've obviously got to cut the pattern out and from there it's all got to be marked, cut and it's got to be folded before it can be spot welded together but they require us to do each part individually, but if you're doing the last part you've obviously done the first two bits before it...*(New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

He attributed this to inexperienced authors. He felt that Competenz would benefit greatly if they hired an author with trade experience to write the workbooks.

It would probably be better if the book was actually put together and collated by somebody who had trade experience rather than just somebody who was just working off theoretical experience. Because I mean obviously theory is quite different to doing it. Something that says it will work on paper doesn't always work when you do it. So yeah, it would be nice if they just collated it and took a bit of the rubbish out of there that doesn't need to be there. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The area representative for Competenz provided support and answered questions about the workbooks when others could not, but contact with him was infrequent and difficult.

It's good from the fact that the area rep is an ex-sheet-metal man himself so he knows what he's talking about. [How often do you see the area rep?] Rarely ever. He's a really hard man to get hold of and I'm assuming it's because he's got such a big area to cover, so many people. [Might do the entire Taranaki] He does all of Taranaki. I think he goes down to Wanganui as well. [Would you see the area rep once a year?] Last year we saw him once. We've seen him twice this year but I think the second time we saw him was only because he was coming in to see the boss about another young apprentice that we've just taken on. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

Generally, contact with the area representative is via phone and is only successful occasionally.

[Can you contact him by phone or email outside of that?] *We can contact him by phone but when he's in meetings with people he turns his phone off. He's obviously a busy man because sometimes he'll return your calls, sometimes he won't. We've had trouble making appointments with him and it's like two months before he actually turns up to see you. Two months is a long time to wait if you're waiting to sign something off. I appreciate it from the fact he's a busy man and he's got a lot to do.* (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

There have been situations where the respondent has found it too hard to complete assessments due to the absence of the required equipment in his workplace. The area representative has been quite helpful at these times.

[What about the information that's provided in those workbooks? Is it helpful, easy to understand?] *Most of it is relatively easy to understand. Some of it is written in terms that I don't quite understand, where they've asked us to use equipment that is no longer available or is just unheard of. But last time the area rep was in I asked him about some of that stuff and he told me to just disregard it. He said if Kompetenz dispute it, deal with it then. [He'll deal with it then, or you will?] We will, he said. He said you can talk to them and if you're not getting any sense out of them, then he said I'll talk to them. With him being an ex-sheet-metal man, he knows what's available, what's common, what's not sort of thing. I mean obviously you need to have experience with some uncommon stuff such as computerised machinery. We don't have a lot of that in our workshop and there's not a lot of it in Taranaki but it is out there. We are required to know how to use it which is understandable because it's the future, where the industry's moving but obviously you're limited as to how much time you can spend using it, and you're limited to how much time the employers are spending on it too because next year it's going to be different and the year after that it's going to be different again so you're better off to learn it when you've got the technology rather than knowing the technology's out there. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

Competenz are hard to access and as most queries require a face-to-face explanation phone contact can be quite inappropriate.

[What was the problem when you tried to phone Kompetenz themselves?] *They've got offices all over the country and you just seem to get bounced around from various different people and then you'll get an area rep from Auckland that they'll put you through to or something like that. He's no good to me. He obviously can't come and see me to sort my problems out. A lot of their information is very hard to explain over the phone to them what you're having troubles with. Then they have trouble explaining it back to you what it is you've got to do without actually having the book out because there's so many units and so many numbers and it just gets so confusing. Every unit has a different number. Some units might have five different numbers to them. It's just really hard to get your point across what your problem is and stuff with the fact that you need so many numbers and stuff. It's easier just for them to come in and say "look this is the one you've got to do, it complies with that, you've got to do this to do it" sort of thing. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

The respondent felt that the level of administration and verification required from Kompetenz was unreasonable and just made things unnecessarily complicated.

[If you had to sum everything up, to what extent is it efficient and effective in meeting the needs that you have?] *Some of the paperwork, like the correspondence and stuff, I think is pretty much essential, you need to do that, but going back to the old school apprenticeships like what my boss and that did 20/30 years ago, they didn't have anywhere near the drama in the workplace that we have to do. Basically their skills were signed off by the fact they did the job, it complied, it was up to scratch, they signed it off, it was done from there, whereas we've got to go through and have photographic evidence and books and drama which I suppose you've got to do because there's an element of dishonesty out there where you get friends to do it or other workmates to do the job and then they get it signed off as being theirs but*

I think the security is a little bit too tight. They could lax it up and get rid of the ... stuff out of their workbooks that they're basically making you spend a whole lot of time verifying when I don't think it's essential. It's stuff that doesn't matter if you know it or don't know it. At the end of the day the only thing that matters is that you're able to do the job and do it well. You shouldn't have to sit there and be able to tell everyone the theory of why this has to be done and all that sort of thing. It's a physical job. You do it with your hands, not your mind. You've got to think about what you're doing obviously but you think about it as you're doing it, not before you do it or after you do it. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

➤ **Open Polytechnic**

The respondent also receives correspondence material and assignments from the Open Polytechnic.

[The Open Polytech are basically the ones that are providing you with –] They provide us with our correspondence material. [So that's the workbooks, is it, or not?] No, the workbooks are from Competenz. The correspondence is just stuff that we do at night time. A lot of it is just theory to the actual job... [So it's all theory and the workbooks is sort of practical stuff] Yes, that's exactly what it is. The workbooks are when you do the job and it gets signed off in the book but Open Polytech stuff is all assignments. You've got to do written assignments and stuff with that. Then that gets marked and signed off from there. It gets marked off on a competent or not competent basis. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The respondent found enrolling with the Open Polytechnic troublesome as re-enrolment was required every year when he had to provide his birth certificate and verify his student number. However, it seems The Open Polytechnic's system has changed and enrolment is now more user friendly for the apprentices.

[So you have to go and show your birth certificate again each year?] Yes, every year you've got to do it but then this year just been I spoke to my tutor about it and said to him "look this is a load of rubbish, why do we have to do this?" and he said "you don't now, they've changed the courses. Where information turned up it was all quite different how it's formatted and their system of sending you ... you used to have to self-address an envelope and put all these stickers and stuff on it, the barcodes for them to pass it through their system but you don't do any of that now. They do it all themselves so they've obviously changed their systems quite dramatically and I didn't have to do that. I still had to re-enrol but all I had to do was basically put my name and address and birth date and student number and all that sort of drama on a form and then send it away and they did the rest. [So it's simple now?] Yes. Last time it was like being a new student every year. [Changed from the beginning of this year?] Yes, changed for the better by a long way. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

In a similar vein to the workbooks and block courses, the respondent finds some material in the correspondence unnecessary for his trade.

[Can you just talk me through the correspondence material. You said some of it is really useful and some of it is not. Can you give me examples of what's useful and what's kind of not useful that they provide?] A lot of it, like for our fabrication we don't do drawings and stuff, we make stuff so we've got – in the first year I think we had four units that were entirely drawing and some of them seemed a bit over the top for me and it's the kind of thing that you would do if you were going to be a draftsman because we have to do freehand drawings and then proper production

drawings done with drawing boards and all that sort of thing. For the freehand ones we're not allowed to use rulers or anything. It had to be all done by hand and it had to be perfect otherwise they wouldn't mark them off. Both of us had them sent back in that first year because the lines weren't straight enough and that kind of thing, which I thought was a bit over the top. We would have been better off to be learning stuff that we were going to use on a daily basis. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

The respondent attributed the lack of relevance in the content to cost cutting from the Open Polytechnic. Providing more individualised courses would be very expensive for the Open Polytechnic, he believed.

[Is that again maybe a problem of somebody designing something that really doesn't understand the work that you actually do?] I think a lot of what it is is that the Open Polytech don't write information for particular courses. They've got modules that are written by all different people. They've got a whole range of different courses. Then when they come to do like a fabrication course for instance, there's fabrication welding, fabrication light and fabrication heavy. We're doing fabrication light and they just go through it and they whip out X amount of units out of the whole portfolio they've got and every course is different. They'll put different books into it but you still will have some of the same books and I think that's probably just a drawing one and they thought right they need some drawing books so they've whipped those ones out. They're not specifically written for it. But when you see what the courses cost, I can understand why they're not specifically written for them because they'd cost tens of thousands of dollars if they had the right information for every course. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

While some of the information provided by the Open Polytechnic was helpful, the material was best learnt via observation rather than correspondence.

[What about some of the stuff from the Open Polytechnic that is really helpful and useful information?] There is a lot of helpful information in there as far as like their pattern development books showing you methods of developing various different patterns but there's really no way to have it explained to you. The only way you can see it is by seeing it done or getting a picture of it being done step by step which I guess is basically the same thing. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

Initially, the respondent found contact with the Open Polytechnic to be extremely difficult.

[Open Polytechnic.] I was having a lot of issues with them but when I finally got hold of my tutor, I got his direct extension number and once I had that I've had no problem because I can get straight through to him every time or his answer phone. [Before were you getting the merry-go-round?] Yes, getting passed around because they didn't know where to send you. I didn't know if the Open Polytechnic's got various different sites around the place, or if they're all done in one place, but it seemed to me that nobody knew who anybody else was. They looked up in their directory to try and find extensions for this person and "oh that person doesn't work for us any more" or "I don't know what their extension number is". It was just a drama, but then when I finally did get hold of him, I asked him for his extension number and he gave it to me so I just go straight to him now. I don't go to anybody else. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

However, the tutors are now contactable on a toll-free number during the day and they also have a late night one a week. The respondent finds the services provided by the tutors excellent.

[We've covered Open Polytech, you don't ever see them?] *No. [Do you have plenty of contact with them?] I've got a tutor that I can ring so if I've got any trouble with anything in my correspondence I can phone him and he can generally sort it out pretty quick. They are nice and easy to get hold of. If you leave messages they call you back within minutes generally. If not, it's as soon as he gets the message. If there's anything wrong with the information like this year in my correspondence I had some wrong books sent to me and there were a couple of books missing. I rang him and it was like two days and they had all the stuff I needed. It was sorted. [So pretty well onto it then in terms of the contact with the Open Polytechnic?] Yes. The information, like last year I had a couple of assignments where there were a few questions that I didn't quite understand. I rang him, rang my tutor and asked him about it, and discovered that he's actually an ex-tradesman as well and he gave me the information I needed in terms that I could understand so that was good. I had the information I needed within 10 minutes, it was good. I was thoroughly impressed with that. It wasn't quite what I was expecting. I thought this is going to be hard. I sort of put off ringing him for a couple of weeks until I did it but ... (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

The reports provided by the Open Polytechnic are quite different compared to those from Competenz. The Open Polytechnic reports are perceived to be the most reliable, however, there are occasional irregularities between units completed and what is shown on the report. The Open Polytechnic did not seem to provide much support when events like this happen.

[Are they both sending you the same thing?] *No, they're completely different formats. These guys' one was actually straight from NZQA. The one that these guys do is from themselves. They're obviously getting the information from NZQA and their own stuff and then they turn it into their own form and then send that to us. It can be really confusing at times. I pretty much disregard Competenz' one and just go with the Open Polytech's because it seems to be more accurate. Even some of the Competenz units you sign off don't appear on your record of learning from them for 6–12 months sometimes. [Is there any reason?] Open Polytech have got the same information and it's on theirs, but their one hasn't got it and it's been there before. [Is there any reason for that?] I don't know. I've spoken to them and they shrug their shoulders and don't know what I'm talking about sort of thing, so they clamp or they don't know why it's happened. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

With regard to the report presentation the respondent found the graphical representation of how he was performing and where he was heading quite valuable.

[What does it have in those reports?] *It basically just tells you what units you've got signed off. It has a graph with where you're heading to, where you currently are, where you've come from as far as your credits go. It's got a range that you should try and stay in which is quite good. You should achieve X amount of credits every year over every month, sort of thing. They work a graph off of it and you just have a dot on the thing. (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)*

When comparing the written information from the Open Polytechnic and Competenz the material from Open Polytechnic is preferred. Quite often there are inconsistencies between the information the two organisations provide. The respondent feels they need to streamline their material better to minimise this.

[How do you find between the practical workbook stuff and the theoretical stuff you get from Open Polytechnic, that cross-over you talked about, do you think they complement each other well in what they do?] *They do. These guys, Open Polytechnic, have got – I think they're a little bit ahead of Competenz as far as their information. It's a lot more useful than Competenz. They could tie in better but obviously it comes down to the cost thing too. [In what ways could they tie in better?] Just basically the writing of their information would be better to be written by the same people or people who have spoken to each other but some of the stuff the Open Polytechnic's got is quite old. It's been written in like the 80s or something like that, but then Competenz change their course every year and because of that you end up with conflicts of information because of it. It's not always a bad thing but there are the odd things in there that the Open Polytechnic says right, but then Competenz says wrong. It's basically just A checking with B before it goes out to C kind of thing.* (New Plymouth, tertiary student, male)

■ Projectives

The respondent gave Competenz a moderate rating of 50% for accessibility reflecting the occasional visits by the area representative and because accessibility by phone was not adequate.

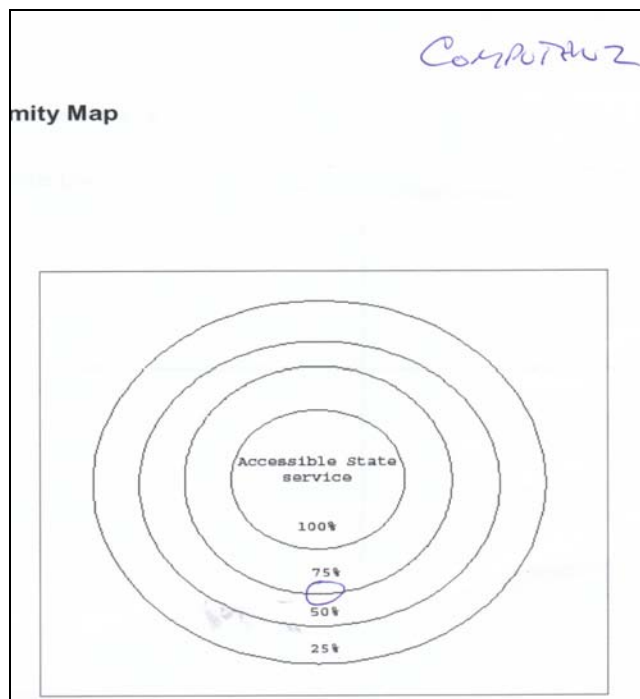


Figure 1: Accessibility of Competenz

Competenz fared relatively better for its effectiveness compared to its accessibility despite adverse comments made about the impractical aspects of some of the work he was required to do and the excessive verification required for tasks carried out.

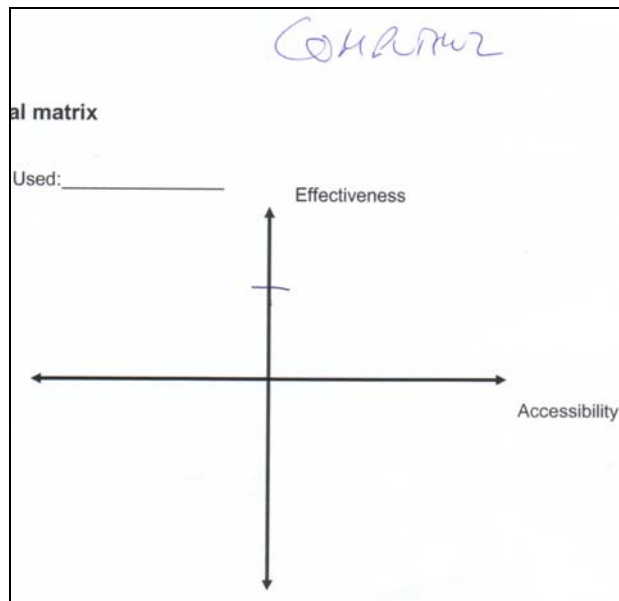


Figure 2: Effectiveness and accessibility of Competenz

Accessibility of the Open Polytechnic was rated very highly at 100% though initially contact had been difficult. The provision of a direct line through to tutors and their availability at a specified time each week outside of work hours had clearly been of assistance.

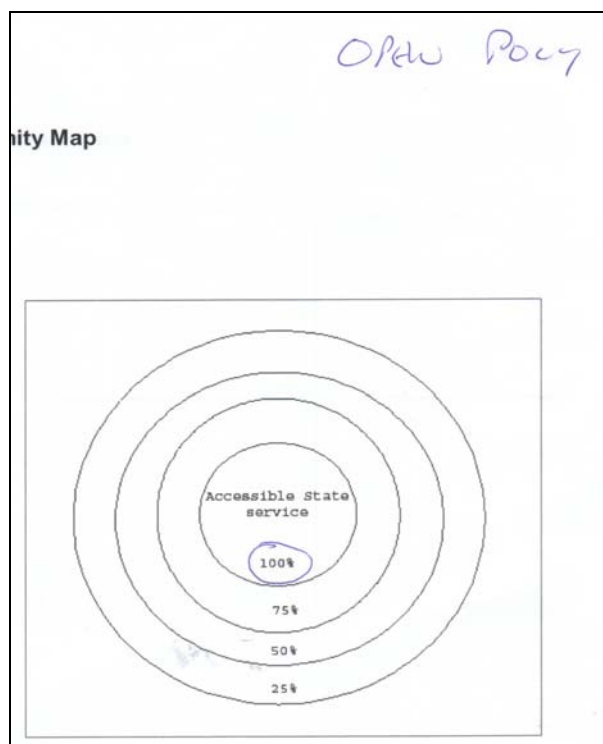


Figure 3: Accessibility of Open Polytechnic

The Open Polytechnic also rated well for its effectiveness. This was based on the practical trades experience of tutors.

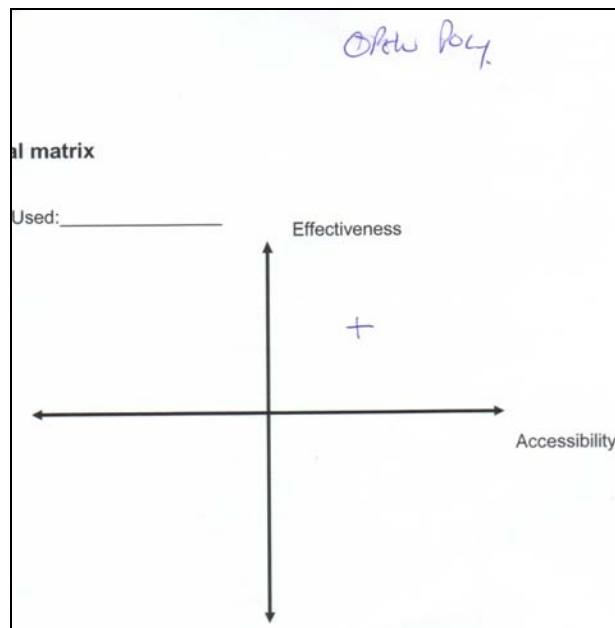


Figure 4: Effectiveness and Accessibility of Open Polytechnic

Wintech rated only 50% for accessibility reflecting the fact that block courses were held in Hamilton some distance from the respondent's home in New Plymouth.

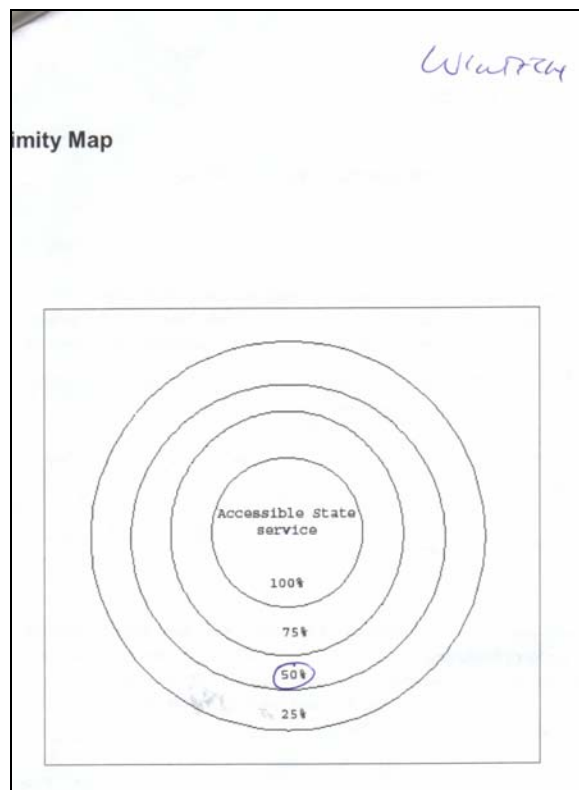


Figure 5: Accessibility of Wintech

Wintech's effectiveness was marked relatively high though this could be an error on the respondent's part as the accessibility rating is below that marked in the previous figure. Issues raised about Wintech revolved around the dubious value of course content and lack of advance provision of information on block course content.

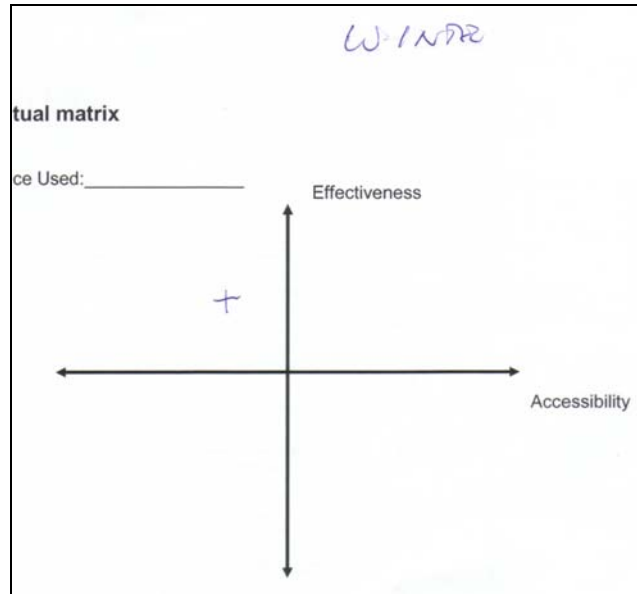


Figure 6: Accessibility and effectiveness of Wintech

