

President's Report 2024-2025

The AGM is an opportune time to reflect on the achievements of the Cerebral Palsy Society in supporting its members over the past year. We have supported our members in various ways and welcomed many new members. I want to thank the Society's management team and staff, led by Clare Williams, for their hard work and dedication to supporting our cause, and my fellow Board members for their diligent oversight and direction of the Society's operations and strategic objectives. I also acknowledge the support from our partners, funders and other supporters.

I am proud to acknowledge the more notable services we have provided to members directly and indirectly, and the Society's achievements below.

Direct support for members

The funding we have gratefully received from donors, trusts and foundations has enabled us to provide:

- Financial support on over 1,200 occasions to members through our various programmes and services
- Disability information and advisory support over 35,000 times
- Seventy-six events attended by over 1,000 members
- Thirty educational presentations to schools, universities, workplaces and conferences.

The feedback we receive from members is greatly appreciated and reinforces that the mahi we do is necessary and important. Some examples are:

"We just want to acknowledge all the great initiatives currently underway and how hard you all work for us all. Well done and thank you so much for your ongoing support."

"It is societies like this one that provides so much needed relief for everyone that has CP. From bottom of my heart, I am grateful that you care so much and help me manage my CP."

As always, the four strategic objectives of the Society's Business Strategy remain front of mind in everything the Board, management and staff do. These are:

1. Ensuring future organisational and financial sustainability
2. Delivering a valued, national service to our members
3. Awareness and advocacy
4. Driving research into Cerebral Palsy – Hōkai Nukurangi.

I believe we have successfully achieved these objectives in the 2024-2025 year, and I am proud to share some of these with you:



Research and advocacy

Research and advocacy have been two areas we have focused on over the past year. Research is critical to effective advocacy, and advocacy is critical to ensuring members receive the support they need and deserve from the Government, public bodies and the community.

You may have noticed an increase in member surveys. This information is essential to enable us to provide the most effective support to the membership and advocacy. This has enabled us to advocate on behalf of our members on topics such as funding changes and accessible housing. I understand that members lead very busy lives with the additional work that living with cerebral palsy can place on us, and I appreciate the time, feedback, and expertise survey respondents have provided.

Some of the more notable advocacy efforts and research we have undertaken are:

- Contributing to global advocacy with the United Nations and World Health Organisation around childhood-onset disabilities, specifically producing a collaborative statement from 15 countries.
- As an individual organisation, and in collaboration with the disability sector, working to inform government strategies and campaign for policy shifts, including the Government's NZ Disability Strategy Refresh and the Caregivers Strategy. Board member Renata Kotua and I are part of the Housing working group for the Strategy Refresh in which we advocate for and represent the interests of the cerebral palsy community.
- Informing and shaping the Cerebral Palsy policy in both Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally, including the Australia and New Zealand Cerebral Palsy Strategy.
- Contributing to medical school education, allied health and design students around disability and childhood onset conditions, and preparing key messages for the future health workforce.
- We have identified gaps in current Aotearoa New Zealand research and commissioned a specific project looking at the funding landscape and the disparity between ACC and MOH funding.

Practical resources for Society members and the wider Cerebral Palsy community

- With the support of the Starship Foundation, we have developed an Aotearoa New Zealand-specific [toolkit for the early years \(0-5\)](#), including an introduction to Cerebral Palsy and the services available to individuals and their whānau. The toolkit has been produced in English, Te Reo Māori, Tongan and Samoan. We will also be producing toolkits that cover different ages and stages of living with Cerebral Palsy to support members and their whānau.
- We have updated our [website](#) to include a comprehensive accessibility function to make it easier for people with different access needs to navigate our website. Among other things,



this includes a screen reader, dyslexia friendly settings and the ability to increase the font and the cursor.

- We developed a section on our website called [Living with CP](#). This is a collection of practical articles filled with tips about everyday aspects of Cerebral Palsy that our members often ask about. It covers topics such as staying warm in winter, safety around water, footwear and the relationship between disabled children and their siblings.
- We have been involved in two unique media opportunities.
 - We contributed to the planning and development of [The Cerebral Palsy Podcast](#). The podcast is the brainwave of two men - one living with Cerebral Palsy – Hōkai Nukurangi and the other is the father of one of our members. The podcast features interviews with many Cerebral Palsy Society members and was a finalist at the recent New Zealand Radio and Podcast Awards 2025.
 - The second opportunity involved supporting Attitude Pictures in developing a two-part documentary featuring people living with Cerebral Palsy – Hōkai Nukurangi. It includes several Cerebral Palsy Society members speaking about various aspects of their lives. The first episode aired on 5th October 2025 on TV 1 and the second episode will be airing on 26th October 2025.

It's been a rewarding experience for the Board, management and staff to be involved in such varied activities over the past year and, most importantly, serving our members' interests to the best of our abilities with our available resources. We've been able to maintain our core business of supporting members while also taking advantage of new opportunities to raise the profile of Cerebral Palsy – Hōkai Nukurangi and advocate for those living with it to live their best and most fulfilling lives.

Our investment fund has performed well over the past year despite the national and global economic volatility. The Board will wind up the direct investment subsidiaries that were set up before the current directors joined the Board. Although we have worked to mitigate the challenged performance of these investments, there will be a loss through the loan CPS provided to these entities in 2019. We are looking forward to focusing on our managed funds portfolio and fundraising efforts as our main income sources.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our departing Board members — Reuben Woods, Emma Lovett, George Hewitt, and Renata Kotua. Reuben and Emma have been on the Board since 2020 and have provided invaluable leadership and guidance during their tenure. George and Renata have provided the important perspective of adults living with Cerebral Palsy. On behalf of the Board, staff, and members, I thank them for their outstanding contributions to CPS over the past three to five years. Their dedication and insights have strengthened our organisation and inspired all of us on the Board. I also acknowledge and thank Liam Sanders, who



served as Member Representative on our Grants Committee, who has stepped down from that role after 4 years of service.

Finally, I extend a warm welcome to our new Board members. I am excited about the contributions and perspectives you will each bring to CPS and look forward to working with you for the benefit of our members.

To our members, kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui – be strong, be courageous, be resilient.

Ngā mihi nui,

Daniel Clay
President
Cerebral Palsy Society

