

New Zealand Productivity Commission
PO Box 8036
The Terrace
Wellington 6143

22 June 2015

RE: More Effective Social Services

My name is Christine CURTIS

I would like to make a submission in response to Chapter 11: Client choice and empowerment.

I am 62 and have MS and I use Individualised Funding (IF) to manage my support.

IF has made a huge difference to my life. Before I moved onto IF, I was self employed. I get MS and can't work. Now I although unable to get sickness benefit, can get help with getting to appointments physio etc.

I have had my current support people/person for one year. What a difference it has made. I now get the support I need when I need it from people who value and respect me. Living in a remote area it would be hard to get staff through an agency. IF enables me to hire local people to help me.

On average employees tend to get a higher rate of pay and better working conditions under IF.

I know how I want to live and what I want my life to look like, so I am the person best placed to make decisions about how to achieve this.

I would urge the government to look into IF and see what an amazing difference it is making to people's lives.

Imagine what I could achieve if I had full flexibility with my disability supports and if I was truly able to choose the life I want to lead, just like other non-disabled New Zealanders.

Kind Regards,

C Curtis