



# Across the Spectrum



'He waka eke noa' – 'We're in it together'

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## From the CE

ISSUE 115

Welcome to our first issue of Across the Spectrum for 2025!

The year has kicked off with a bang following our recent Spectrum Group Ball, which took place on Saturday 22 February at the Due Drop Events Centre in Manukau. It was a doubly significant event as it coincided with the celebration of our 30-year anniversary!

It was particularly enjoyable taking the opportunity to look back at all we've achieved and to thank everyone who's been part of our journey. If you were lucky enough to secure a ticket and attend, please consider sharing any photos of the event on our Spectrum Care Facebook page!

2025 is going to be a big year for Spectrum Group, with some major digital transformations in the works. The first cabs off the rank are a Property Management System (PMS) for Homes of Choice and the replacement of Spectrum Care's CRM system – both of which are going to make a huge difference in how we deliver support.

The PMS system will help us streamline our processes and improve data accuracy and workflows, while the new CRM system will give us better access to information on the people we support in order to improve how we plan and implement support. It's all about making our services better and more efficient.

We're also bringing our new Values to life in 2025:

- **Equity (Mana taurite)** – We treat everyone fairly
- **Dignity (Whakaute)** – We honour and respect each other
- **Ambition (Pae tawhiti)** – We dream big
- **Sustainability (Ka ora)** – We do what's best

We're committed to ensuring these Values are more than just words. They serve as a compass for our decision-making, helping all of us understand what's important and how to act in various situations.

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# Spectrum Ball 2025

More than 600 of our whaikaha, kaimahi, and whānau came together for the annual Spectrum Ball. For the first time, we moved to a bigger space - giving everyone the chance to dance like no one was watching.

For the people we support, this event is more than just a night out. It's a rare and special opportunity to celebrate, connect, and step into a world that feels a little different from the everyday.

And everyone understood the assignment. Feathers, sequins, pinstripes, pearls – you all brought the Gatsby magic to life! A truly unforgettable evening.

  
**Spectrum  
care**

Te Wai Kahukura Atawhai



**Every person with a disability deserves  
a life of choice, freedom and independence**

## From the CE continued...

They shape our organisational culture and influence how we interact with each other and with the people and whānau we support. They also ensure consistency in our actions and behaviours, which is fundamental to building trust and reliability. When our Values are ingrained in everything we do, they create a sense of belonging and purpose.

As we move forward into 2025, I'm filled with optimism and excitement.

Together, I'm sure we'll build on our successes, embrace new opportunities and overcome any challenges that come our way. I'm grateful for the dedication and passion of our staff, and I look forward to working together with the people and whānau we support to make this year our best yet.

Thanks for your continued support to Spectrum Group, and here's to a fantastic year ahead!

# Spectrum Foundation

Since commencing its philanthropic funding in 2023, Spectrum Foundation has now distributed \$1.7m to disability-focused initiatives and community organisations.



Based on feedback from the community and Spectrum Care staff, the Foundation has refined its funding priorities. Updated details are now available on the website: [www.spectrumfoundation.co.nz](http://www.spectrumfoundation.co.nz)

Expressions of Interest for the 2025 funding round close on 28 July 2025. If you or someone you know is interested, reach out to the team for more details.

Alongside community funding, Spectrum Foundation has provided \$7716 in grants through the Outcomes Fund, which is available to people living in Spectrum Care's Supported Accommodation. This fund helps individuals access opportunities that enhance their independence, skills and well-being.

Some recent recipients include:

- Hamish (pictured), who purchased a bike trailer and started his own paper run.
- Ezekiel, who built a vegetable garden with new tools and materials.
- Shane, who joined a weekly drumming group, improving his communication and emotional well-being.
- Tracy-Lee, who now attends social activities for seniors and enjoys crafting candles, soaps and bead portraits – bringing creativity, joy and a little extra income.
- Trinity, who used funding to sustain his candle-making business, selling at local markets and within his community.

To apply for the Outcomes Fund, scan the QR code. You can also contact Mahmoud Sarhan at 027 470 0871 for assistance or to apply over the phone.



# Spectrum Care

We are currently launching Programme Astra, a new kaupapa designed to strengthen staff training through the voices of disabled people. Created in partnership with All is for All, a disabled-person-led organisation, this interactive video series brings to life real experiences of whanaungatanga, informed decision-making, and personal plans that truly reflect the people they're for. Those involved will get the chance to see their kōrero on screen at a special premiere before the full rollout begins.



Kaupapa ki ngā whetū

Meanwhile, events across the motu have been bigger and more diverse than ever. The Spectrum Ball moved to a larger venue to welcome more friends and whānau, while local teams have hosted everything from festive celebrations to skill-building workshops. With over 75% of our event targets already met, there's even more to come in 2025.

Safeguarding remains a key focus, with Spectrum Care signing a partnership agreement with VisAble in late 2024 to enhance how we respond to concerns and support disabled people's mana and well-being. A structured self-assessment has shaped the next steps, ensuring kaimahi have the tools to work alongside community organisations and create safer, more empowering spaces for the people we support.

## Peter's Bus Ride

Peter wanted to go for a bus ride. When he received his Total Mobility Card, he did just that. He confidently navigated the bus station, used his card, and set off to explore the city.

He enjoyed a walk along the waterfront, taking in the views of the boats. On the way home, he tagged off just as he tagged on – marking the start of many more trips to come!

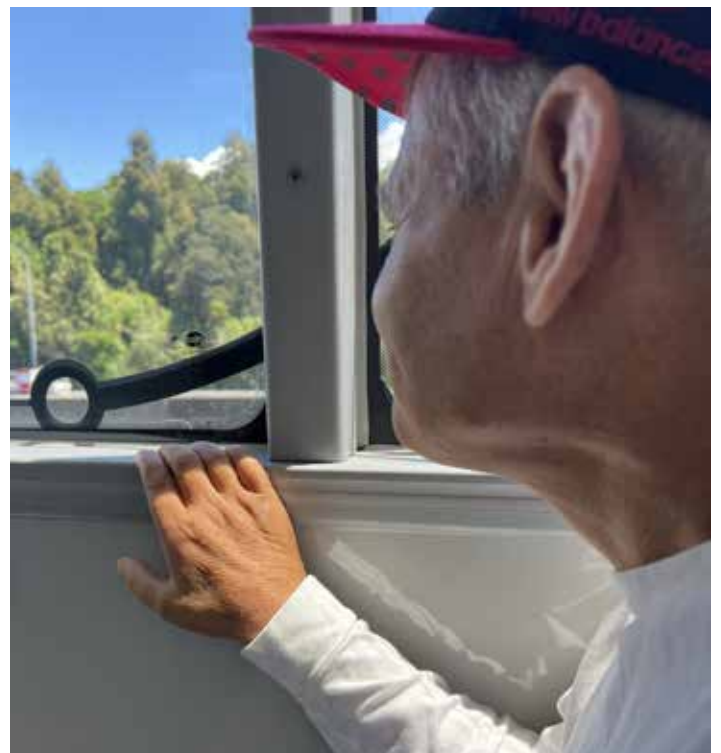
For Peter, this card means more than just transportation. It's about freedom – getting out, experiencing the world and making the most of each day.

### More about the Total Mobility Card

Peter's journey was made possible by the Total Mobility scheme, which supports people who can't always use public transport. In Auckland, cardholders receive 75% off taxi fares (up to \$60 per trip) and discounted public transport with Auckland Transport's accessible concession.

Find out more:

<https://at.govt.nz/bus-train-ferry/whaikaha-accessible-travel/total-mobility-scheme>



## Stay Connected

Did you know that Spectrum Care, Homes of Choice, and Spectrum Foundation are on social media? Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, where we share updates and challenge perceptions of disability.



# Homes of Choice

December 2024 marked the one-year anniversary of the Te Ki a Alasdair apartments on Frederick Street in Wellington. We're very pleased to report that the team is working well together and has great relationships with the tenants. The festive season saw a couple of real highlights, with the HoC team being supported by a local charity to provide Christmas presents to all 75 tenants and also hosting a shared sausage sizzle to celebrate the New Year.



Homes of Choice is currently in the process of delivering a development pipeline that will see more than \$23m invested into safe, affordable homes that are tailored to people's needs.

These developments, many of which are being delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, have grown our portfolio to more than 200 properties and provide an additional 64 bedrooms across eight development sites, nearly half of which are fully accessible.



It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Nathan Balchin, our Senior Property Manager.

Nathan joined Homes of Choice last year and quickly became a well-known and well-liked tāne. The whaikaha we support, and the kaimahi who worked alongside him, knew him for his big smile – something we all miss.

Nathan brought passion and dedication to our kaupapa, standing alongside us in the fight to give people the homes they deserve. Ngā mihi nui, Nathan, for everything you contributed.

Our aroha is with Nathan's whānau and friends at this difficult time. This is a grief we share, his wairua we feel.

Kua hinga te tōtara i te waonui a Tāne. A tōtara has fallen in the forest of Tāne.

For any queries relating to Nathan's projects, please contact [felicia.quirk@homesofchoice.org.nz](mailto:felicia.quirk@homesofchoice.org.nz).



# Making Decisions: Understanding Welfare Guardianship

At Spectrum Group, ensuring people have the freedom to make their own choices is central to what we do. But for some, cognitive challenges can make decision-making difficult. In these cases, a Welfare Guardian - appointed through the courts - can step in to help.

Many parents don't realise that once their child turns 18, they no longer have automatic legal authority to make decisions for them. If needed, parents can apply to become a Welfare Guardian, a process that is straightforward but involves paperwork. Spectrum can provide guidance, forms and a step-by-step guide to make it easier.

Applying is free if you do it yourself, and there are no court fees. If you'd prefer assistance, independent services are available to help with the paperwork and provide advocacy.

More information on the application process can be found on the Ministry of Justice website: [www.justice.govt.nz/family/powers-to-make-decisions/welfare-guardians/apply-for-a-welfare-guardian](http://www.justice.govt.nz/family/powers-to-make-decisions/welfare-guardians/apply-for-a-welfare-guardian)

Once an application is submitted, a court-appointed lawyer reviews it, speaks with relevant people, and provides a report to the judge, who then makes a decision. There is usually no need to appear in court unless someone requests to. The initial Order lasts three years, with subsequent renewals lasting five.

At Spectrum, we see legal orders as a last resort - used only when decision-making barriers create significant risks. If you'd like more information, contact your loved one's Service Coordinator, or reach out to:

**Helen Peterson** JP - Advocacy Manager, Spectrum Foundation

Email: [helen.peterson@spectrumfoundation.org.nz](mailto:helen.peterson@spectrumfoundation.org.nz)

Phone: 027 475 7577

