

06 March 2017  
BFNZT Statement



**RE: Provision of 'Changing Places' facilities.**

The NZBC G1/AS1 or NZS4121:2001 accessible toilets and showers required in places where the public may be admitted (whether for free or payment of charge) enable many people with disabilities to undertake normal activities and processes. They do not however meet the needs of people with a more restrictive impairment such as; spinal or brain injuries, spina bifida, motor neurone disease, or multiple sclerosis. Often these require extra accommodations to enable the person and their support person to comfortably and safely access the toilet, shower and changing facilities.

[Changing Places](#) was launched in the UK in 2006 with nine facilities containing features of a Changing Places toilet. It appears the launch was so successful and well received that there are now 938 Changing Places facilities across the UK. The facilities have been placed in key public spaces such as; shopping centres, large railway stations, leisure complexes such as aquatic facilities, and recreational and sporting complexes such as the zoo and football stadiums. More recently at the London Olympics, a Changing Places facility was made available at all venues.

"Changing Places" toilets are different to standard accessible toilets in that they have additional features and a larger footprint to meet the needs of people with more restrictive impairments, their families and carers. Each Changing Places toilet provides:

- A height adjustable adult-sized changing bench
- A tracking hoist system
- Enough space
- Safe and clean environment

Without Changing Places toilets being available families and carers of people with more restrictive impairments could struggle between two choices:

- a) Engaging in day to day life within public spaces but knowing that they will have to change their loved-ones on what could be a wet and unhygienic floor of a public toilet
- b) Remaining at home where there are suitable facilities, and not engaging in day to day life within public spaces

Barrier Free NZ Trust's belief is that it is the right of every person regardless of their ability level, to participate within the public realm and to do so with friends and family and without being exposed to avoidable risk. While we support the provision of Changing Places facilities as 'best practice' we wish to be clear that they are additional to what is required by the NZ Building Code.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this statement further please don't hesitate to get in touch at your earliest convenience.

Regards,



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For more info on changing places please visit

<http://www.changing-places.org/>