



**Te Kawa Mataaho**  
Public Service Commission

# Better Public Services Result 10 - Case Study: New Zealand Government Office, Christchurch [archived]

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**1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.**



A seamless shopfront for Government services - both on-site and online - was the innovative solution for Cantabrians who no longer had permanent places to meet government service staff and solve their issues.

The Christchurch earthquakes had turned numerous government offices to rubble, and two of the most acutely needed government agencies were Inland Revenue and the Ministry of Social Development. People and families needed MSD

services such as pensions for seniors, StudyLink for students, Child, Youth and Family social work, and Work and Income benefits. They had similar needs for IR's Child Support, Student Loans and Working for Families Tax Credits.

The two agencies agreed that the public could gain maximum advantage from a single point of contact offering access face-to-face and online services, a joined-up service connecting agency offerings, and customers who were unfamiliar with online services needed a way to learn safely to become comfortable about going online in their own time and place.

At about the same time, the government announced its Better Public Services programme, which included a stated aim (Result 10) that, by 2017, an average of 70 percent of New Zealanders' most common transactions with government will be completed in a digital environment. IR and MSD saw that a single service delivery office could help overcome some well-known barriers for people

accessing digital services - such as access to hardware and software; simple awareness that digital services exist; and the privacy of personal information. To solve those issues, the government needs to increase coordination between agencies, focus more on customer needs and customer-centred service design, and manage funding constraints.

The one-stop-shop ticked all the boxes. The New Zealand Government Office opened In Durham Street, Sydenham, in February. Customers are greeted by staff and directed to the right aspect of a growing range of government services. Customer responses have included:

- "Having all the departments under 1 roof is great"
- "Treated with respect, not rushed despite loads of needs"
- "I'm leaving feeling more informed and able to manage the situation"
- "Was seen promptly and was dealt with in a helpful manner, wasn't treated like a number"
- "Reception - smiling, relaxed, confident, interested. Case worker also competent and helpful"

At the Centre, customers get answers quickly to simple questions, book and attend appointments, apply for benefits and assistance, or check tax details. They also complete transactions online via self-service workstations, supported by front of house staff. Those who're unfamiliar with online services get a chance to learn in a safe, supported environment, and become comfortable about going online in their own time & place.



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# Better Public Services Result 10 - SmartStart makes it easy for parents [archived]

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**1 May 2018: The Government announced in January 2018 that the Better Public Services programme would not continue in this form. These pages have been archived.**



An initiative born out of a commitment to making it easier for New Zealanders to access and use government services online is proving a hit with new and expectant parents.

SmartStart is an online tool that aims to help babies get off to the best start by having step-by-step information and help all in one place.

Life is about events, not agencies. When people interact with government they do so in order to have a personal need met.

New Zealanders told us that they wanted to do less running around between government departments and that they find it frustrating to have to provide the same information to many agencies.

We listened.

SmartStart enables new parents to update their benefit with MSD, request an IRD number for their baby and update their Working for Families application, all from the birth registration process. This is saving parents time and money so they can concentrate on their new family member.

With SmartStart, parents now have access to an online tool that makes it easy to access services and support during their pregnancy and baby's first years.

We have made it easier for parents and caregivers to access relevant information and services for themselves and their babies from conception to early childhood, through the delivery of customer-centric, cross-agency digital tools and processes.

The digital identity for a child is established early to use throughout their life.

SmartStart a multi-agency initiative delivered by the Department of Internal Affairs, Inland Revenue, Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Health with invaluable advice and support from Plunket NZ and the New Zealand College of Midwives.

Plunket Chief Operating Officer Lois van Waardenberg says they are absolutely delighted that they are a part of making Better Public Services.

“The Life Events Series is a ground-breaking cross-Government agency initiative, and I say that for more than one reason – the first being that it is actually progressing.

“Not as a matter of right, rather by finding and leveraging opportunities and people and parts of our system prepared to prioritise our customers or citizens over parochial and more individual concerns,” Lois says.

New Zealand College of Midwives Chief Executive Karen Guilliland says the College has been closely involved in SmartStart, providing representatives in an advisory capacity, providing advice at an organisational level and disseminating information about Smart Start to its members and networks.

“The College has also been impressed that DIA’s overall vision for this work (to improve the lives of new parents) has been apparent as the driving motivation throughout what was undoubtedly a complex project.

“College members have informed us that the families they are working with have provided positive feedback about SmartStart as it has supported them to manage what can be confusing administrative processes with ease.

“Midwives also inform us that SmartStart has made their work easier as there is a now single place to refer new parents to for a range of information,” Karen says.

Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages Jeff Montgomery says the new tool is a game-changer for parents.

“It’s now so much easier for parents to get the services and support they need to set up their child for the future.


“We’ve had heaps of support from our baby experts, like Plunket and NZ College of Midwives, which has really helped to make our step-by-step information simple and easy to use” Jeff says.

*Lessons learned*

SmartStart is the first product delivered under the guidance of the Service Innovation Working Group and we have learned many lessons along the way. Capturing and now sharing these lessons was something the cross agency team felt really strongly about so that others working on similar projects could learn from us.

The main lessons learned are:

1. Enablers for success include deep customer insight, an agile mind-set, an approach based on a minimum viable product and a dedicated delivery team;
2. Product development leverages existing enablers and shared services teams, a supportive stewardship group that able to navigate governance and stakeholder needs, and cross-agency funding;
3. Product sustainability requires a cross-agency funding model that continues throughout the life of the product; and
4. Governance and traditional reporting mechanisms within agencies need to be considered when delivering an across government initiative.

 [Read the Lessons Learned report \(/assets/Legacy/resources/smartstart-lessonslearned-v2.pdf\)](/assets/Legacy/resources/smartstart-lessonslearned-v2.pdf)  
(PDF 896 KB)

## **Related Case Studies (/bps-case-studies)**

[Back to Better Public Services \(/better-public-services\)](/better-public-services) | [Result 10: New Zealanders can complete their transactions with government easily in a digital environment \(/bps-interaction-with-govt#result10\)](/bps-interaction-with-govt#result10)

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# Better Public Services Result 10 - Case Study: RealMe opens doors for business and government [archived]

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It's easy, convenient, and picking up momentum.

Government Chief Information Officer Colin MacDonald says RealMe is a great example of a service designed to meet the needs of government that is also useful in the private sector.

"RealMe lets New Zealanders easily and securely prove their identity online, plus access lots of online services with a single username and password. People can use their RealMe login to

apply for New Zealand superannuation, file company returns, and conduct some business with local government."

People who have taken the additional step of verifying their identity through the government's online RealMe service can use it for a range of services - including opening a bank account with TSB or BNZ, enrolling to vote, transferring foreign currency with NZForex, or applying for a Studylink loan or allowance. New Zealanders renewing their adult passport online can verify their identity with RealMe with just the click of a button.

Mr MacDonald says RealMe is core to achieving Better Public Services Result 10 - allowing New Zealanders to complete their transactions with government easily in a digital environment. It's also part of the public service transformation work he is guiding in his role as ICT Functional Leader.

"Customers expect service delivery from the government that is increasingly digital, responsive and personalised," he says.

Agencies using login include ACC, Auckland Council, Datacom, Department of Internal Affairs, Electoral Commission, FMA, Hamilton City Council, Ministry of Justice, Customs, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry of Social Development, NZ Fire Service, NZ Police, NZ Post, NZTA, Rotorua District Council, Treasury, and Wellington City Council.

The RealMe services were developed in partnership by the Department of Internal Affairs and New Zealand Post. More information is available at [www.realme.govt.nz](http://www.realme.govt.nz) (<http://www.realme.govt.nz>)