Have recent changes to PPL brought NZ up to (international good practice) standard?

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Outline of presentation

- Brief summary of PPL in NZ
- What were the recent changes?
- What else in NZ needs attention?
Summary of PPL in NZ

- 18 weeks paid leave, to mother (unless adopting), but all transferable if not ‘primary carer’
- Wage replacement but to low cap of minimum wage
- 52 weeks (total) leave (unpaid except for 18 weeks) and job protection
- Work related eligibility tests (employed and self employed)
- 2 weeks unpaid leave for fathers/partners
Recent changes

• Employment:
  • 10 hours/week, any 26 of 52 weeks before due date/adoption
  • One or more employers

• Covers:
  • recently changed jobs, seasonal, casual, fixed term
  • Those less likely to access provisions
Recent changes

- Family arrangements:
  - Birth mother/an adoptive parent has *primary entitlement*
  - *Transfer* to father, partner (defacto, married, same-sex), other adoptive parent

- New: transfer to other permanent caregivers such as grandparents, whangai, guardians, ‘home-for-life’
Recent changes

- Increased duration
- Now 18 weeks
- Still below OECD average and WHO breastfeeding guidelines
What else needs attention in NZ? –
Payment rate

- Minimum wage rate:
  - Impacts on use by fathers
  - Short duration also a factor
- Fathers take annual leave, or combine different types of leave, but not PPL
- Limited desire to consider other funding sources
What else needs attention in NZ? – equality / rights based discussion

- Rights of the child? ‘other’ parent/carer?
- Undervalues care role and work undertaken by women
- Recent legal challenges
  - Terra Nova (Bartlett) case – rest home workers, ruled would be paid more if a male-dominated industry
  - Ministry of Health v Atkinson and Ors – caring for disabled relative ‘for love’ does not require payment
Thank you

Any questions?