

Weighted Animal Funding Rationale

Weighted Animals help people live their life or makes life better

The use of a weighted animal improves the lives of people with (but not limited to) Autism, ADHD, Anxiety, Sensory Processing Disorder, Dementia. Using weighted animals:

- (a) Enables the user to relax and settle into sleep better at bedtime
- (b) The residual calming effects after using a weighted animal enables individuals carry out their daily activities, leading to greater independence and confidence in the community
- (c) Enables the user to self-soothe in times of anxiety or stress, increasing independence at home and in the community
- (d) Enables users to feel more “grounded” or “present” or focused to carry out daily tasks at home and enables better engagement in the community
- (e) Enables users to feel a sense of care, social connection, companionship and belonging with the weighted animal

Weighted Animals are used as a Disability Support

- (a) Using weighted animals is a strategy used in behaviour management and behaviour de-escalation. They are used as a calming and preventative strategy, which is a safer alternative than resorting to physical restraint and isolation
- (b) Weighted animals are specifically designed for people with high proprioceptive needs
- (c) Weighted animals provide calm and comfort in contexts where live animals are not permitted, for example in hospitals or in residential care settings
- (d) Weighted animals provide a dignified way for users to access comfort in the community in an accessible and socially appropriate way
- (e) The weight in the weighted animals is contained in a stitched inner reducing the possibility of leakage for increased safety

Weighted Animals are reasonable and cost effective

- (a) Purchasing of a weighted animal has calming benefits across the day and night and can be used as required
- (b) Weighted animals can be used across multiple settings to provide consistency and enable independence when travelling or on overnight stays in unfamiliar environments

- (c) The costs associated with personal support reduce over time with greater independent use of a weighted animal to regulate emotions and anxiety levels
- (d) Weighted animals are adapted in New Zealand

