

20 April 2022

**s 9(2)(a)**

By email: **s 9(2)(a)**  
Ref: H202204538

Tēnā koe **s 9(2)(a)**

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 24 March 2022 for:

*“all information held by the Ministry in relation to the decision to prioritise mild to moderate service build ahead of acute service build in the roll-out of the Mental Health Reforms, including the rationale for such a decision, as reported in various media yesterday by the Minister of Health.”*

The Ministry has interpreted your request as information, including rationale, in relation to the decision to prioritise investment in expanding access to and choice of new primary mental health and addiction services for people with mild-moderate needs in the Budget 2019 mental wellbeing package, as part of transformation of the mental health and addiction system.

Please note, government decisions on the prioritisation of investment are made by Ministers and the Cabinet, not the Ministry of Health.

In Budget 2019, the Government invested \$1.9 billion over four years in a cross-government mental wellbeing package. The package of initiatives reflected a whole-of-government approach to supporting New Zealanders' mental wellbeing and included around \$843 million to address some of the drivers of mental health and wellbeing, outside of the health system. This funding has gone into work led by a range of government departments, for example supporting employment for disabled people, reducing homelessness, and providing wellbeing support for veterans.

The remainder of the \$1.9 billion was allocated to directly support the mental health and addiction system: approximately \$235 million for mental health and addiction facilities and approximately \$883 million for mental health and addiction services and supports. This \$883 million includes \$455 million for expanding people's access to and choice of primary mental health and addiction services plus a smaller amount of support for crisis services, along with resourcing for suicide prevention, school-based services, telehealth and digital services, and workforce development across the mental health and addiction system (please note that all the figures referred to above are totals over four years, meaning that the money isn't all available from day one).

The Government's decision to prioritise investment in primary mental health and addiction services as part of this package was based on the Government's decisions in response to *He Ara Oranga*, the 2018 report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health Addiction. *He Ara*

*Oranga* called for urgent action to expand access and choice of mental health and addiction support particularly for the 'missing middle' of people with mild to moderate needs. As part of its response to *He Ara Oranga*, the Government accepted the recommendation to significantly increase access to and choice of publicly funded mental health and addiction services for people with mild to moderate needs.

Information in scope of your request is publicly available online through the following links:

- Information on the Government's response to He Ara Oranga and associated Cabinet papers can be found on the Ministry of Health website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/release-ministerial-decision-making-documents/cabinet-material-inquiry-mental-health-and-addiction](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/release-ministerial-decision-making-documents/cabinet-material-inquiry-mental-health-and-addiction).
- Information on the Budget 2019 mental wellbeing package can be found on the Ministry of Health website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/general-information-releases/budget-2019-information-release](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/general-information-releases/budget-2019-information-release).
- Information on the Budget 2019 mental wellbeing package can be found on the Treasury website at: [www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/information-release/health-portfolio-budget-2019-information-release](http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/information-release/health-portfolio-budget-2019-information-release).

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Nāku noa, nā



Philip Grady  
**Acting Deputy-Director General**  
**Mental Health and Addiction**