



133 Molesworth Street
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
T+64 4 496 2000

12 July 2022

§ 9(2)(a)

By email: § 9(2)(a)

Ref: H202208106

Tēnā koe § 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 18 June 2022 for information regarding DECIDE and counselling for abortion services. I will respond to each part of your request in turn.

The name of the independent counselling provider sub- contracted by Counselling will be provided by an independent provider sub-contracted by Family Planning NZ and Magma Healthcare?

From 1 July 2022 abortion counselling has been available through DECIDE (www.decide.org.nz) for those who choose it. This is for people accessing abortion services in primary care and want to seek counselling support. The counselling will be provided by Employment Assistance Programme (EAP) services.

The criteria formulated by the Ministry of Health governing the information that is to be provided to women by the abortion counsellor?

The Ministry has been developing the Standard for Abortion Counselling Aotearoa New Zealand (the standard). This will be available for counsellors on the Ministry website in July 2022. The standard includes a list of practitioners who can provide abortion counselling.

*Does the un-biased support to be provided by the counsellor entail denying:-
That human life begins at conception.
That the unborn child from conception is a human being with a right to life?*

The standard provides a statement on the purpose of abortion counselling and details that it provides comprehensive support and enhances a person's ability to assess and understand their situation, evaluate their options, and make an informed choice or decision around abortion. It further states that abortion counselling should provide a space for people to safely express and explore their emotions regarding abortion, and abortion counsellors cannot hold any conscientious objection to abortion or abortion counselling.

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 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.

Nāku noa, nā



Emma Prestidge
**Group Manager, Quality Assurance and Safety
Regulatory Services**