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9 December 2024

s 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2024056144

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 – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 13 November 2024 for information regarding the regulation of Counsellors in New Zealand. Please find a response to each part of your request below.

Please confirm whether the profession of Counsellors is regulated in New Zealand.

The counselling profession is self-regulated in New Zealand, meaning they are not regulated under the Health Practitioner's Competence Assurance Act (2003).

If yes, please confirm the governing body name who regulates the profession of Counsellors in New Zealand.

Although the profession is not regulated under legislation, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors undertakes many of the same functions of professional regulation as a Responsible Authority would under the Health Practitioner's Competence Assurance Act (2003). This includes registration of Counsellors trained in New Zealand and overseas, accrediting training providers, setting scopes of practice, and managing complaints and concerns relating to practitioner conduct and competency. In addition to the New Zealand Association of Counsellors, the New Zealand Christian Counsellors Association performs similar functions for professional counsellors who identify as Christian. Employers and contractors of professional counsellors may require membership or registration with a professional body.

Please confirm whether the New Zealand Association of Counsellors- is or ever was accredited / approved / recognized with your authority to offer a health licence to practise the profession of Counsellors.

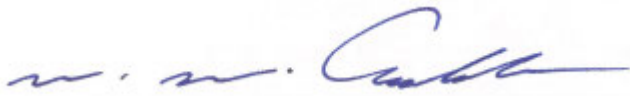
The Ministry does not officially approve or recognise self-regulating professions, such as the New Zealand Association of Counsellors. We are currently conducting a review of our regulatory framework, however, and one of the proposals under consideration is to set up an accreditation process for such bodies. There will be a public consultation on all proposals in early 2025, and details will be published on the Ministry's website.

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

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 Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Chadwick', is positioned above the printed name and titles.

Dr Martin Chadwick (he/him)

Te Āpiha Hauora Haumi | Chief Allied Health Professions Officer
Ngā Āpiha Hauora | Chief Clinical Officers