

24 FEB 2020

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Ref: [REDACTED] H202000308

[REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 24 January 2020 for information regarding disability support services, disability equipment and travel policy.

A copy of your request is attached as Appendix One.

The Disability directorate is responsible for the Ministry of Health's (the Ministry) advice on disability issues and the disability system. The directorate has responsibility for providing the oversight of 'end-to-end' activities and functions for the disability community, which includes the Māori disability community. This includes purchasing disability support services for people with a long-term physical, intellectual and/or sensory impairment that requires ongoing Government support to enhance their health and wellbeing, as well as advising on disability policy and ensuring disabled people receive the health care services they need.

Information in response to your request is attached as Appendix Two.

I trust that this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely



Adri Isbister
Deputy Director-General
Disability



24 January 2020

Ministry of Health
650 Great South Road,
Ellerslie,
Auckland 1051.

Email: disability@health.govt.nz

Tēnā koe,

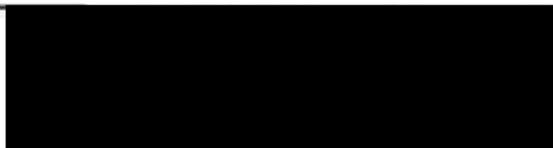
RE: OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982 REQUEST – WAI 2575 HEALTH SERVICES AND OUTCOMES KAUPAPA INQUIRY (“THE HEALTH INQUIRY”)

1. We write to you on behalf of several clients we represent who are participating in Stage two of the Health Inquiry which is currently being heard by the Waitangi Tribunal.
2. This correspondence is a request for documents under the Official Information Act 1982 (“the Act”). In this correspondence the definition of “official information” contained in Section 2(1) of the Act is adopted.
3. Therefore, by way of this letter, we request the following information.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

4. What are the criteria to access disability support services for people over the age of 65?
5. How do persons over the age of 65, if they fulfil the criteria for accessing disability support services go about accessing this support?

6. Can you provide the current Needs Assessment service providers for the following regions:
 - a. Northland;
 - b. Bay of Plenty;
 - c. Waikato;
 - d. Hawkes Bay;
 - e. Lakes;
 - f. Mid-central;
 - g. Auckland; and



h. Waitemata.

7. Please provide the total number of persons who have accessed disability support services during the following periods:
- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
 - b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
 - c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - d) 1 April 2019 to current.
8. How many of total number of persons who have accessed disability support services during the following periods were Maori:
- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
 - b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
 - c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - d) 1 April 2019 to current.
9. Can you provide a breakdown of regions and rates of use of disability support services provided by the Ministry of Health:
- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
 - b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
 - c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - d) 1 April 2019 to current.
10. How many of the users of disability support services were Maori by region?
11. How many unsuccessful applications were made during:
- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
 - b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
 - c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - d) 1 April 2019 to current.
12. What are the main reasons for refusal of disability support services?

DISABILITY EQUIPMENT

13. How often would physically disabled people have appointments to check on their prosthetic limbs?
14. What is the prioritisation process to decide who gets funding for equipment or modifications?

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

15. What mental, psychological, spiritual and cultural support do you provide to Maori with lived experience with disability?
16. What mental, psychological, spiritual and cultural support do you provide to the whanau of Maori with lived experience with disability?

TRAVEL POLICY

17. Does National Travel Assistance fund the travel of a caregiver or carer and the disabled persons?
18. Do disabled persons living in rural areas have access to Supported Living?
19. Please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss this request.

Nāku noa, nā



Appendix Two

4. *“What are the criteria to access disability support services for people over the age of 65?”*

Health services and disability supports for older people over 65 years of age are funded by district health boards (DHBs). Further information on how to access these support services can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/services-older-people/support-services-older-people>

5. *“How do persons over the age of 65, if they fulfil the criteria for accessing disability support services go about accessing this support?”*

New Zealand citizens or residents over 65 years of age who are eligible for publicly funded health or disability services and wish to receive support services funded by a DHB must have a needs assessment.

People can refer themselves (or someone else can refer the person, with their consent) to their DHBs Needs Assessment Service Coordination (NASC) agency to be assessed for support. Details on where to find a NASC agency are on the Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination Association website: <https://www.nznasca.co.nz/regions/>

There is a booklet available that provides information to older people and their families and whānau on how to access needs assessment and home support services. This can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/needs-assessment-and-support-services-older-people-what-you-need-know>

6. *“Can you provide the current Needs Assessment service providers for the following regions: a. Northland; b. Bay of Plenty; c. Waikato; d. Hawkes Bay; e. Lakes; f. Mid-central; g. Auckland; and h. Waitemata.”*

The names of the NASC agencies contracted by the Ministry and the areas they cover are provided in the response to question 9.

7. *“Please provide the total number of persons who have accessed disability support services during the following periods:*

- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017*
- b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018*
- c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019*
- d) 1 April 2019 to current.*

8. *How many of total number of persons who have accessed disability support services during the following periods were Māori:*

- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017*
- b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018*
- c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019*
- d) 1 April 2019 to current.”*

The information provided in the table below applies only to people assessed as eligible to access Ministry funded disability support services.

The information is broken down by financial year ending 30 June for each of the years 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, which is the Ministry’s standard reporting.

Total number of people accessing Ministry funded disability support services		
Year ending 30 June	Māori clients	All clients
2016	5,974	33,453
2017	6,161	33,990
2018	6,517	35,362
2019	6,922	36,900

9. "Can you provide a breakdown of regions and rates of use of disability support services provided by the Ministry:

- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
- b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
- c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
- d) 1 April 2019 to current.

10. How many of the users of disability support services were Māori by region?"

The table attached as Appendix Three provides separate yearly breakdowns on the number of clients accessing disability support services and the regions covered by NASC agencies. The regions are mapped to the DHB district the NASC agency operates in.

Information is also provided on the number of people with an intellectual disability accessing disability support services provided by the National Intellectual Disability Care Agency (NIDCA).

The information is broken down by financial year ending 30 June for each of the years 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

11. "How many unsuccessful applications were made during:

- a) 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
- b) 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018
- c) 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
- d) 1 April 2019 to current."

As this information is based on a single date (Referral Completion Date), it can be summarised by the time periods requested. The table below provides the numbers of unsuccessful applications to the Ministry for disability support services from all ethnicities and those identified as having Māori ethnicity.

Number of unsuccessful applications to the Ministry for disability support services		
Period	Māori ethnicity	All ethnicities
1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	342	1,448
1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	313	1,290
1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	321	1,264
1 April 2019 to 3 February 2020	269	1,000

12. "What are the main reasons for refusal of disability support services?"

The main reason for applications being unsuccessful is due to the person not being eligible to access the Ministry's disability support services. Information on the Ministry's eligibility criteria is available at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/disability-services/getting-support-disability/am-i-eligible-ministry-funded-support-services>

The Ministry does not fund disability support services for conditions or situations covered by other funders, including those where people:

- have psychiatric/mental health and addiction, chronic health-related and age-related needs for disability supports, which are funded by DHBs
- have a short-term illness or personal health need
- require support for less than six months
- have impairments caused by accidents or injuries and are funded under Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).

For disability supports to be allocated, the person may also have to meet access criteria for certain services. For example:

- if a person does not hold a Community Services Card, they may be charged for household management services (ie meal preparation)
- Funded Family Care (FFC) funding is only available to eligible adults with high and complex needs
- access to high and complex services is required for people with intellectual disabilities who are subject to compulsory care orders under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003
- access to equipment and modification services is through specialised assessment and recommendation, based on Ministry access and eligibility criteria.

13. "How often would physically disabled people have appointments to check on their prosthetic limbs?"

This part of your request for information was transferred under section 14 of the Act, to Capital and Coast DHB (CCDHB) for response. CCDHB is the lead DHB for administering the national contract for funding the provision of prosthetic limbs through the New Zealand Artificial Limb Service.

14. "What is the prioritisation process to decide who gets funding for equipment or modifications?"

The current processes for prioritisation include:

- ensuring the access and eligibility criteria are met
- the requirement for mandatory advice provided by the Equipment and Modifications Services (EMS) providers to EMS assessors for specific high cost or complex requests
- the requirement for rationale to be provided to support high cost or complex requests and monitoring of these requests by the EMS providers
- consideration of requests by the Ministry's EMS Review Panel (if the cost is over \$25,000 clarification of policy is required, or when consideration of genuine and exceptional circumstances has been requested).

Please note the current EMS manuals refer to the Prioritisation Tool which was in use until March 2019. These manuals will be updated. The Prioritisation Tool was introduced to ensure those people who had the highest priority received their services in a timely way. This required the completion of an 'Impact on life questionnaire' completed by the person and an EMS Assessor section regarding the person's ability to benefit from the item of equipment or modification.

Previously a waiting list system and a Prioritisation Tool (from 2014 to March 2019) have both been utilised to manage access to services in a fair and consistent way.

15. *“What mental, psychological, spiritual and cultural support do you provide to Māori with lived experience with disability?”*

16. *“What mental, psychological, spiritual and cultural support do you provide to the whānau of Māori with lived experience with disability?”*

Access to mental, psychological, spiritual and cultural supports for Māori with lived experience with disability and their whānau are enabled and provided through a range of mechanisms, including:

- Responsiveness to Māori disabled (tāngata whaikaha) and whānau is embedded in all the Disability directorate’s strategies and plans, including the Disability Support Services Strategic Plan 2014 to 2018 (currently being updated), Whāia Te Ao Mārama Māori Disability Action Plan 2018 to 2022 (the Action Plan), and the service specifications. These documents are published on the Ministry’s website.
- Whāia Te Ao Mārama is a culturally anchored approach to supporting Māori disabled (and their whānau). The Action Plan requires responsive disability services for Māori. It is recognised that most tāngata whaikaha identify as Māori first, so access to Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) is important to them. The Action Plan is available at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan>
- The Disability directorate monitors and audits/evaluates the quality of funded disability services. The Quality Team has an internal recording spreadsheet which captures excerpts from audits and evaluations that identify quality issues and concerns and what is working well for the people in the service. There is a responsiveness to Māori data category which explains some examples of what the provider is doing to support the implementation of Whāia Te Ao Mārama. This can assess things like whether the persons interests in Māori culture is being supported. This data is pulled directly from audit and evaluation reports and is not an interpretation of the data itself.
- All contracted disability providers, whose service users may include Māori, are expected to demonstrate how their policies address the needs and priorities of Māori, and ensure services are accessible to, and culturally appropriate for Māori disabled and their whānau. This approach also reflects the priorities for Whāia Te Ao Mārama. There is also active encouragement, promotion and development of Māori, Pacific and other ethnically diverse staff to be employed at all levels of the organisation to reflect the culture of the people using the facility.
- Māori disabled receiving residential supports funded by the Ministry will have a Personal Plan that will support their quality of life goals and objectives. This includes physical wellbeing, emotional wellbeing, and social inclusion. Services are expected to be culturally safe and appropriate for Māori disabled. This will cover activities of daily living and personal care, recognise emotional, physical and spiritual needs, and support access to social, recreational and other interests. This includes Māori residents having access to Māori social and community and support groups (ie local Kaumatua, marae, and whānau groups).
- The Ministry funds Māori Disability Information Advisory Services (DIAS) around the country. These information centres provide information where possible and refer people to any relevant organisation in which to get the right information on health and disability matters. Māori DIAS are expected to ensure services provided for disabled Māori are culturally appropriate and disability accessible. They employ a holistic model of Māori health to service delivery, which are based on Māori thinking and behaviour and Māori ways of healing, health, care, and rehabilitation. Information is provided in Te Reo Māori or in bilingual form, where appropriate.

17. *“Does National Travel Assistance fund the travel of a caregiver or carer and the disabled persons?”*

Yes, if the caregivers and disabled person are eligible for scheme assistance. Information on the National Travel Assistance Scheme can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/hospitals-and-specialist-care/national-travel-assistance-scheme>

18. *“Do disabled persons living in rural areas have access to Supported Living?”*

Yes, if the person is eligible and assessed to receive the services and the service supports can be provided. Services cannot be provided in rural areas where there are no available providers. This means that some people may not be able to access this type of support in some geographically isolated places. Information on supported living can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/disability-services/types-disability-support/supported-living>

Appendix Three

		<u>Year ending 30 June</u>							
Number of clients accessing disability support services		2016		2017		2018		2019	
NASC provider	DHB region	Māori clients	All clients	Māori clients	All clients	Māori clients	All clients	Māori clients	All clients
Access Ability Southern	Southern	206	2,669	216	2,668	217	2,695	225	2,738
Access Ability Taranaki	Taranaki	187	1,009	201	1,052	203	1,060	213	1,093
Access Ability Whanganui	Whanganui	112	500	118	517	122	531	124	544
Capital Support	Capital and Coast	183	1,508	191	1,588	213	1,708	238	1,818
Disability Support Link	Waikato	737	2,943	728	2,921	779	3,076	868	3,286
Enable New Zealand	MidCentral	254	1,545	260	1,577	285	1,626	301	1,704
Focus	Wairarapa	75	346	84	351	88	367	88	357
Life Links	West Coast Canterbury South Canterbury	442	4,663	497	4,807	581	5,097	640	5,426
Life Unlimited Hutt	Hutt	168	1,164	163	1,155	170	1,183	195	1,263
Life Unlimited Tairāwhiti	Tairāwhiti	199	345	200	341	196	339	204	345
Options Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	291	1,169	312	1,218	324	1,250	330	1,261
NorthABLE	Northland	612	1,391	653	1,478	692	1,554	713	1,621
Support Net	Lakes Bay of Plenty	791	2,511	837	2,631	881	2,830	946	3,031
Support Works	Nelson Marlborough	146	1,321	148	1,315	153	1,362	158	1,399
Taikura Trust	Waitemata Auckland Counties Manukau	1,487	10,198	1,468	10,179	1,536	10,503	1,614	10,856
NIDCA regions	Auckland	37	79	32	84	31	79	29	73
	Central	31	71	28	62	25	55	21	53
	Midland	20	32	24	38	23	39	22	39
	South Island	13	63	14	70	17	70	13	65
Total number of unique clients		5,974	33,453	6,161	33,990	6,517	35,362	6,922	36,900

Note: The count of clients accessing disability support per NASC is higher than the total for each year as some clients move between NASC regions so will be counted in more than one NASC in that year, whereas the overall client count is of unique clients.