

19 October 2020

Ref: H202007543

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 2 October 2020 for:

"What clinical evidence do you have to support your statement, referring to puberty blockers, that they are "safe and fully reversible". This statement is found on your website under Transgender New Zealanders: Children and young people."

The Ministry refers to the *Guidelines for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Gender Diverse and Transgender Children, Young People and Adults in Aotearoa New Zealand* available on the University of Waikato's Research Commons' website:

<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/12160>. This guide for gender-affirming health care was developed by an independent group of health professionals and community stakeholders and states on page 29 that 'puberty blockers are considered to be fully reversible'.

The Ministry also notes that Standards of Care developed by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) lists the use of GnRH analogues to suppress estrogen or testosterone production and consequently delay the physical changes of puberty as 'fully reversible intervention'. Please refer to page 18 at the following link:

<https://www.wpath.org/publications/soc>.

It is important to note that the Ministry's website is intended to provide general health advice. For the treatment of young transgender New Zealanders, it is the responsibility of the treating clinician to consider the appropriateness of a particular treatment for a particular patient, and to ensure that the patient is informed of the risks and benefits associated with that treatment. Informed consent should be obtained by the clinician from the patient before the choice is made to prescribe the medicine.

I trust 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



Dr Andrew Simpson
Chief Medical Officer