

Phone: 03 546 1723

Private Bag 18  
Nelson, New Zealand

28 May 2019

Gloria Fraser  
[fyi-request-10144-71bcf16c@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-10144-71bcf16c@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Gloria

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

Thank you for your request for official information received 12 April 2019 by Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH)<sup>1</sup>, followed by the necessary extension of time 15 May 2019, where you seek the following information:

*I am writing to request information about the gender-affirming healthcare services provided by the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, as a follow up to a similar request I made in May 2018.*

- 1. Could you please advise whether the following gender-affirming healthcare services are funded by the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board for transgender patients, and whether the services are currently available:**
  - A. Puberty blockers**
  - B. Hormone therapy**
  - C. Mastectomy**
  - D. Hysterectomy**
  - E. Orchidectomy**
  - F. Facial hair removal**
  - G. Breast augmentation**
  - H. Voice training**
  - I. Facial feminization surgery**

[A] Puberty blockers, [B] Hormone therapy, and [H] Voice training services, are funded by NMH and available through a contracted service provider.

- 2. Are transgender healthcare providers under the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board encouraged to follow Oliphant et al's (2018) Guidelines for gender affirming healthcare for gender diverse and transgender children, young people and adults in Aotearoa New Zealand? If not, which guidelines do they follow, if any?**

Transgender healthcare providers are aware of the *Guidelines for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Gender Diverse and Transgender Children, Young People and Adults in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Transgender Health Research Lab, University of Waikato, 2018).

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson Marlborough District Health Board

3. *Is a readiness assessment required to access gender-affirming healthcare services? (This is an assessment of readiness for treatment from a medical and psychosocial perspective, as well as whether the client understands the risks and benefits of treatment, and is sometimes referred to as a 'mental health assessment').*

*If a readiness assessment is required to access gender-affirming healthcare services, who carries out this assessment? Is this assessment funded by the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board? Does the assessment use an informed consent model?*

A psychological assessment, as a pre-requisite for a gender dysphoria client seeking endocrine therapy or surgery, is funded by NMH and available through a contracted service provider which manages the assessment

Ongoing support is provided by private practice clinical psychologists and General Practitioners (GPs) with special interest in gender dysphoria.

All assessments include informed consent.

4. *What steps is the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board taking to improve healthcare provision for transgender New Zealanders?*

The Gender Dysphoria section of the Nelson Marlborough *HealthPathways* website at [www.nm.pathways.org.nz](http://www.nm.pathways.org.nz) provides guidance on community-based care and management of trans-gender patients.

A gender dysphoria Steering Group made up of stakeholders and experts, including Medical Clinic practitioners, private practise clinical psychologists, GPs, NMH staff – paediatricians, specialists, psychology lead, and project manager, continues to review and discuss gender dysphoria client needs.

This response has been provided under the Official Information Act 1982. You have the right to seek an investigation by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or free phone 0800 802 602.

If you have any questions about this decision please feel free to email our OIA Coordinator [OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz](mailto:OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz)

Please note that this letter (with your personal information removed), or an edited version of this letter, may be published on the Nelson Marlborough Health website.

Yours sincerely



Dr Peter Bramley  
**Chief Executive**

cc: Ministry of Health via email: [SectorOIAs@moh.govt.nz](mailto:SectorOIAs@moh.govt.nz)