



Mr Patric Turnock
fyi-request-10379-08bfc724@requests.fyi.org.nz

30 SEP 2019

Ref. C191161-5

Dear Mr Turnock

Thank you for your email of 25 May 2019 to the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, regarding support for people with narcolepsy. Your correspondence has been referred to me for response as the matters you raise fall within my responsibilities as Minister of Health. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your experience with narcolepsy and the impact that this has had on your quality of life and wellbeing. I am sorry to hear that you do not feel you are receiving the support you need, and I recognise the challenge of managing a condition such as narcolepsy. I acknowledge your advocacy on behalf of others in situations similar to your own.

The Ministry recognises the important role that good sleep plays in the health and wellbeing of our population. The Ministry publishes general sleep advice for all age groups on its official website (www.health.govt.nz), which can be found by searching 'Clinical Guidelines for Weight Management in New Zealand Adults'. This information is reviewed by Professor Alastair Neil of Otago University and the Wellington School of the Medicine.

You have asked about what the health and disability system is doing to support individuals with narcolepsy. I have been advised by Ministry of Health officials that there are a number of respiratory and sleep medicine specialists in New Zealand who are based in district health boards. Additionally, there is an advanced training programme for general practitioners conducted by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians to specialise in respiratory and sleep medicine.

I am further advised that the main organisation which provides information and support for people suffering from sleep disorders is Sleep Health New Zealand, which operates in partnership with the Australasian Sleep Association (ASA) and the Australian Sleep Health Foundation. Sleep Health New Zealand can be contacted via its website (www.sleephealth.org.nz) through its online form under the 'Contact Us' tab. You may also be interested to know that the Sleep/Wake Research Centre is actively conducting research within this field, more information on its research can be found on its website (www.sleepwake.ac.nz) under 'What we do'.

Thank you again for writing. I hope this information helps and wish you the very best.

Yours sincerely

Hon Dr David Clark
Minister of Health