

13 February 2020

Lana McCarthy

fyi-request-11941-7376970d@requests.fyi.org.nz

fyi-request-11942-23673975@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Lana

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-003195

Thank you for your two requests of 26 December 2019 made via the FYI website, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

We have a dedicated Sensitive Claims team and staff are specialised and experienced in supporting people affected by sexual abuse or assault"

1. Is this unit that decides whether a claim is accepted or declined?

2. What are the specific qualifications or expertise of those who make up the specified Sensitive Claims Unit at present?

How many claims were denied in your Integrated Service for Sensitive Claims process from the time period 26th of December 2018- 26th December 2019?

How many sensitive claims were made in total in the same time period, as in, what proportion of all claims made were declined?

We have combined your two requests as they are on the same subject.

Sensitive claims unit makes cover decisions

Service Coordinators and Recovery Partners within the sensitive claims unit are responsible for managing and making cover decisions on sensitive claims.

Staff qualifications and expertise

ACC employs people with appropriate experience and qualifications into Sensitive Claims roles. This includes being proactive, communicating effectively, and building good working relationships as well as having a relevant tertiary qualification or equivalent work experience. Attached for your information is the job description for a Recovery Partner position.

As the specific experience, expertise and qualifications of individual ACC staff is personal information, we have made the decision to decline this part of your request under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of those staff members. ACC has carefully considered whether there are reasons why it is desirable, in the public interest, to make this information available. ACC is of the view that maintaining the individual's privacy outweighs any public interest in making the information available.

Number of sensitive claims lodged, and the number declined for cover

Background

Under ACC's Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims (ISSC), survivors of sexual violence are able to access a range of support without having their claim assessed for cover. These claims are counted as lodged claims. People can access up to 14 hours of one-on-one therapist, social worker, and

family/whānau support. The provider can also access cultural support for the individual. Some people then proceed to a supported assessment to receive further entitlements. To receive this ACC will assess and either approve or decline the claim.

Our legislation requires that once a claim is lodged, we have to make a cover decision. If, after receiving the initial pre-cover support, a client decides they do not wish to proceed to an assessment for cover, we decline the claim and note it as withdrawn in our claims management system. However, a client who withdraws their claim after receiving the initial support can still have their claim progressed at a later stage. In these cases, a new decision will be issued regarding cover if they proceed to a supported assessment.

Many clients choose to only access the pre-cover support, and only a small proportion of clients opt to pursue the cover assessment process, as they receive treatment regardless.

Information provided

For the period 26 December 2018 to 26 December 2019, there were 10,983 new sensitive claims lodged with ACC. Of these, as at 22 January 2020, 303, 2.8%, were declined. The information provided does not include claims managed by an accredited employer.

Who to contact

If you have any questions, you can email me at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Sasha Wood

Acting Manager Official Information Act Services

Government Engagement & Support