

17 September 2020

C124283

Moka Harris via Caleb Lane  
[fyi-request-13297-9e323e13@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-13297-9e323e13@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ms Harris

I refer to your email of 13 July 2020, requesting information about counselling in prison. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested:

- *What availability does New Zealand Prisons have in regards to family counselling and/or couple counselling? Is there a criteria an inmate has to fit to be allowed this request? If available, how dose one go about it? Also if available by case by case, prison by prison, please include information response for North Island Prisons.*

Corrections does not offer family counselling or couple counselling in a traditional sense. As such, your request is declined pursuant to section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held by the department and we have no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department.

Although Corrections does not offer traditional family or couples counselling, we are committed to achieving better outcomes for people under our management and their whānau. *Hōkai Rangī* represents Corrections' new strategic direction, and is focused on finding new and alternative ways of doing things. Where they are willing, whānau will be supported to walk alongside people under our management on their rehabilitation and reintegration journey. For more information about the strategy please refer to our website at: [https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/strategic\\_reports/corrections\\_strategy\\_plans/hokai\\_rangi](https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/strategic_reports/corrections_strategy_plans/hokai_rangi)

People under Corrections oversight with rehabilitative needs in relation to domestic violence, can be referred to a domestic violence programme. These programmes will help them identify thinking patterns and lifestyle factors that contribute to their use of violence. It will also teach them the skills needed to live without violence in the context of a famililal relationship. The programmes each person undertakes, and when, will depend on their assessed risk, needs,

readiness, the nature of their offending, and programme availability. The availability of some programmes is dependent on location. For more information on programmes offered by Corrections, you can visit our website at: [www.corrections.govt.nz/working\\_with\\_offenders/prison\\_sentences/employment\\_and\\_support\\_programmes/rehabilitation\\_programmes](http://www.corrections.govt.nz/working_with_offenders/prison_sentences/employment_and_support_programmes/rehabilitation_programmes).

In addition to rehabilitation programmes, we also provide mental health services which promote self-care, independence and increase positive engagement of people who offend, their families and community support services. The services include:

### **Mental Health Clinicians Working with People on Sentence and Remand and with Staff**

Teams of contracted mental health clinicians, such as nurses, occupational therapists, and psychologists, work with people in prison and the community across 16 prisons (excluding Mt Eden Corrections Facility and Auckland South Corrections Facility) and four Community Corrections sites (Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, and Dunedin). These professionals work directly with individuals to support them to manage their mental health needs. They also provide mental health education to Corrections staff with the intention of supporting staff to upskill and feel more confident with supporting people with mental health needs. Clinicians may also refer people to appropriate community service agencies that can help facilitate a successful reintegration with their families and communities and increase the engagement of people in prison in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

### **Wrap Around Whānau Support**

The Wrap Around Whānau Support service supports the families of people who are engaged in mental health services during their imprisonment or while serving a sentence or order in the community. The initiative connects children and families of individuals in prison with community services to improve their social skills, health and education. Families will be supported to reunite with people following a term of imprisonment or to stay united while they are in the community. In turn, this will support the progress made by the person whilst in prison or under the oversight of Community Corrections. This service is currently available at four selected community sites (Auckland Hamilton, Palmerston North, and Dunedin). The programme will help navigate families towards the existing community services, including Whānau Ora providers.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JR' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Juanita Ryan  
Deputy Chief Executive Health