



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

Bowen State Building, Bowen Street, Wellington 6011, PO Box 1556, Wellington 6140 • Telephone: 0-4-916 3300 • Facsimile: 0-4-918 0099

20 MAR 2014

A Wood

fyi-request-1483-a0560133@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear A Wood,

Thank you for your email of 19 February 2014 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Any and all information pertaining to the number of persons formerly on the sickness benefit who have since died during the transition period to the new jobseeker support allowance.*
- *Any information the Ministry may have about the impacts of this transition from sickness benefit to jobseeker allowance on the mental and physical health of the beneficiaries in question.*

Welfare Reform changes that took effect on 15 July 2013 resulted in Sickness Benefit clients automatically transferring to Jobseeker Support, with no transition period. All payments, exemptions from work, and ongoing assistance under Jobseeker Support remained the same as when clients received the Sickness Benefit. The Ministry is not aware of any client deaths as a result of the changes.

Given that there was no transition period for the transfer from Sickness Benefit to Jobseeker Support, no information is available concerning the impact on the mental and physical health of clients who were transferred. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Debbie Power
Deputy Chief Executive Work and Income

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