

14 April 2014

Mr David Nicholas
fyi-request-1546-52cc1a51@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Nicholas

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your request of 18 March 2014 asking for information regarding complaints about third party providers under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I have responded to your questions below.

1. A copy of any internal ACC complaints process about third party doctors.

Clients may raise concerns with ACC about a variety of issues involving referrals to contracted assessors, the assessment itself, their perception of an assessor, or the wording of a report. These issues are recorded on individual claim files and case managers raise the concerns with the provider or supplier. If concerns cannot be resolved, the case manager may initiate contractual performance management.

A copy of ACC's provider performance policy is attached.

In addition to the above, depending on the type of complaint raised, ACC may refer the matter to an external body. This is likely in situations where the client is unhappy about conduct, behaviour or service provided by the health professional. In the first instance, ACC may seek to refer the client to the professional body that the provider is affiliated with, such as the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons or the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners to name only two. Alternatively, a complaint investigation by the Medical Council or the Health and Disability Commissioner may be appropriate.

For more information about making a complaint, please visit ACC's website, www.acc.co.nz.

- 2. How many complaints has ACC received about third party doctors by year 2007-2013?*
- 3. How many times has ACC referred a third party doctor to the Medical Council or HDC?*
- 4. Has the HDC done an audit of ACC's complaints process with regard to third party doctors and if so, what was the outcome?*

The role of the Health and Disability Commissioner is to support individuals who have a complaint about a health or disability service provider and to ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly and efficiently. The Commissioner's role does not encompass conducting audits of other organisations' complaints processes. This information therefore cannot be provided because there is no audit process or documentation. This decision complies with section 18(e) of the Act.

ACC does not keep a central record of complaints received about third party doctors because complaints resolution is not part of ACC's statutory purpose. A manual search through all of ACC's claim files would therefore be necessary.

We estimate that manual search would take more than 60 hours to complete before ACC could determine how many times ACC has referred a doctor to the Medical Council or HDC.

ACC is therefore considering refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(f) on the grounds of substantial collation and research. Before it makes this decision, ACC would like to offer you the opportunity to refine your request. Please let us know within 5 working days if you wish to refine.

Alternatively, the Medical Council and HDC may collect such data and be able to assist you with your request.

Please contact me at Miroslava.Mijic@acc.co.nz if you have any queries about this letter.

If you're unhappy with ACC's response, you may make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman. You can call them on 0800 802 602 between 9am and 5pm on weekdays, or write to:

The Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10 152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Miroslava Mijic
Advisor, Government Services