

13 OCT 2015

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A. D. Tait  
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Ref: H201504635

Dear A.D. Tait

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your two follow-up requests under the Official Information Act 1982. The first request, dated 24 September 2015, is for clarification about the release of information to you. The second request, dated 30 September 2015, is for information about assessments of USA and UK providers that were mentioned in an email from Ailsa Jacobson that was part of the information release to you.

The information relating to these requests is itemised below, with copies of documents attached.

I have decided under Section 9(2)(a) of the Act to withhold personal identification of individuals other than Ministry employees, in order to protect their privacy.

Request	Response
<p><u>24 September 2015</u></p> <p><i>To be clear, there has been only one overseas provider contacted in the year (approximate) since Dr Peter Walker retired?</i></p> <p><i>Also, the extent of the communication with that provider is limited to the single email sent inquiring and response?</i></p> <p><i>If there are other providers contacted or being considered I again request any correspondence to or information held by the Ministry of Health on them.</i></p>	<p>It is a District Health Board (DHB) specialist responsibility to identify providers for patients whom they refer overseas, not a Ministry responsibility. This point is emphasised in Ailsa Jacobson's email of 22 July 2015, which was part of the original information release.</p> <p>The correspondence with one provider in Australia occurred because the Ministry was alerted to the existence of this service and we requested some basic information from the provider about Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male surgery. Further interaction with this potential provider will come from DHB specialists.</p> <p>There is no other correspondence between the Ministry and overseas providers with regard to sending patients</p>

	overseas for Male-to-Female gender reassignment surgery.
<p><u>30 September 2015</u></p> <p><i>Upon rereading your initial release, I noticed this sentence, contained in Ailsa Jacobson's email:</i></p> <p><i>"I am currently assessing providers in USA and UK where we have sent patients previously"</i></p> <p><i>These assessments would have been covered by the scope of my original request, and were not included in your release. Please include these (with redactions where necessary) when you respond to my latest request for clarification or a complaint to the ombudsmen will be made.</i></p>	<p>The USA and UK providers mentioned are for Female-to-Male surgery only. Their assessments do not come under the scope of your original request because you specifically focused on "overseas providers of Male-to-Female SRS".</p> <p>The assessments have consisted of a review of the four Female-to-Male cases (two in the USA and two in the UK) undertaken by these two providers.</p> <p>Attached is the only documentation that relates to assessing these providers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An email dated 26 September 2014 from the provider in the USA.</li> <li>2. An email from a DHB specialist, dated 2 December 2014, and a response from Ailsa Jacobson, dated 11 December 2014.</li> <li>3. An email dated 17 April 2015 to the UK provider. (There has been no response to this).</li> </ol>

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold information under this request.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Don Mackie**  
**Chief Medical Officer**  
**Clinical Leadership, Protection & Regulation**