

20 May 2016

C77741

Emmy Rākete  
[fyi-request-3957-91247192@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-3957-91247192@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Emmy Rākete

Thank you for your email dated 3 May 2016, requesting information about prisoners who are presently receiving psychological counselling. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

The Department of Corrections employ around 150 psychologists, all of whom are trained in offender rehabilitation and risk assessment and are recognised experts in criminal justice psychology.

All psychologists working for the Department are registered with the Psychologists Board in either the general or clinical scope of practise. The Department employs psychologists who hold either a post-graduate diploma in Clinical Psychology or an equivalent qualification obtained in New Zealand or overseas that is recognised by the New Zealand Registration Board. A small number have completed a supervision to registration programme run by the Department and accredited by the New Zealand Registration Board.

Psychologists are employed across both prison and the community including

- 11 Psychology Offices distributed across the country
- Six Special Treatment Units – Te Piriti, Karaka, Puna Tatari, Te Whare Manaakitanga, Kia Marama, Matapuna.
- One Residential Care facility – Tai Aroha Residential Care Centre.

The Chief Psychologists team in national office provides psychological advice and support to the psychologists in the field. They undertake applied research, programme development and review, professional development, and clinical assurance activities as well as providing psychological input into wider departmental activities. The team consists of nine psychologists including the Chief Psychologist.

The Department also employ psychologist interns, private providers and Special Treatment Units (STUs), like Kia Marama and Matapuna, have staff working as programme facilitators and reintegration workers.

The Department provides psychology services at a cost of approximately \$20 million a year. This includes the running of Special Treatment Units and the employment of psychologists.

Psychology is a key tool in the intervention and rehabilitation we provide to support offenders in making changes in their lives and moving toward crime free futures.

Psychologists provide psychological services, including clinical and risk assessment and treatment services, to offenders identified as the highest risk of harm and/or re-offending (primarily sexual or violent offenders) within prison and the community and provide referral to appropriate agencies where necessary.

You have asked "*how many prisoners are presently receiving psychological counselling services*". You have asked for the data to be broken down by facility, ethnicity and age group. The Department does not centrally collate this information within its electronic records. In order to identify this type of specific information, we would be required to manually review a large number of files.

In accordance with the OIA, we have considered whether to affix a charge or extend the time limit for responding. However, given the scale of the request we do not consider that this would be an appropriate use of our publicly funded resources. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(f) of the OIA, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

We can however, advise that each year, psychologists work with around 10 percent of the prison population through the STUs and other prison programmes. In 2014/15, we also provided a further 500 hours of targeted psychological treatment to offenders in the community.

Corrections psychologists also provide specialist assessment reports to the Courts for Preventive Detention, Extended Supervision and Public Protection Orders (over 200 last year), and around 1200 reports for the New Zealand Parole Board each year.

Special Treatment Units cater for around 400 violent offenders, child or adult sex offenders at any one time depending on the unit's speciality.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Department. 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.

Yours sincerely



Vincent Arbuckle  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Corporate Services