

11 April 2017

Mr David Lawson  
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Dear Mr Lawson

### Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your requests of 17 February 2017, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

#### Request One

*a) of a copy of all the policy documents dating from the 1 December 2008 that relate to ACC's management of long term claims, excluding only the following two items which were forwarded to Mr Gibson on the 4 August 2009 for which I have a copy of;*

*1: Ms Gabby Boag's 2 page Official Information response dated 4 August 2009 to Mr M Gibson, in reply to Mr M Gibson's Official Information request of 5 June 2009, and the*

*2: The 13 page Executive Leadership Team Issues Paper dated 16 February 2009 from Phil Riley, Long-term Claims Project Lead, via Denise Cosgrove, then General Manager, People & Business Services to the ACC Executive Leadership Team....also commonly referred to as "The Riley Report"*

*It would be greatly appreciated if you could ensure that all previously withheld information/policy documents ("withheld other information" & "papers" as referred to by Ms Boag on 4 August 2009) dating from the 1 December 2008, until the 5 June 2009 that relate to ACC's management of long term claims that ACC withheld from Mr Gibson on the 4 August 2009, are now provided to me in full and unabridged, irrespective of whether they were implemented, or were implemented with further amendments, or not implemented by ACC.*

*Please also differentiate/confirm as to whether the long terms policy documents, and or ACC "other information"/papers" that ACC withheld pursuant to Section 9 (g) (i) of the OIA 1982 from Mr Gibson on the 4 August 2009, and which were generated between the 1 December 2008 and the 5 June 2009 and have been either;-*

- a) Implemented and the date that they can into effect, or were*
- b) amended, and implemented, describing the amendments and the date the amended policy documents were put into effect, or were*
- c) not implemented and the date that ACC decided not to implement the policy document/ and or withheld information/pending decisions,*

*are fully included in ACC's pending release of the Official Information that I have requested today under the Official Information Act 1982.*

## **Request Two**

1. ACC's current definition, and professional scope of medicinal practice of the following 3 distinct recognised branches of medicine, together with the recognised professional registrations/ qualifications that must be held for each;

*h) neurosurgery*

*l) orthopaedic Surgery*

*(m) otolaryngology head and neck surgery:*

*together with each of the above named 3 branches of medicine's treatment provider's costs that ACC pay, differentiating for the level of complexity that ACC distinguish. Please confirm whether ACC pay the same amount for a first opinion treatment/assessment the above medical specialists as ACC would with a second treatment/assessment, excluding of course the cost of any diagnostic imaging or testing, confirmed to each specialists consultation costs, on a like for like basis...ie simple initial/primary assessment compared with second simple assessment, and initial/primary complex assessment with second complex assessment*

2. *It is noted also that the branch of medicine termed neurology is not specifically listed within the the Accident Compensation ( Liability to Pay or Contribute to Cost of Treatment) Regulations 2003.*

*It would be appreciated if you could confirm whether ACC pays or contributes to the cost of treatment for any medical professionals trained in the branch of medicine Neurology.*

3. *ACC's current definition, and professional scope of medicinal practice of the branch of medicine Neurology, together with the recognised professional registrations/ qualifications that must be held by a neurologist, together with the Neurologist branch of medicine's treatment provider's costs that ACC pay, differentiating for the level of complexity that ACC distinguish for instance a simple vs complex assessment/consultation.*

4. *It would be appreciated if you could please explain the distinction for the purposed of ACC treatment provider funding, and ACC claimant entitlements the distinct differences between the fields of the following branches of medicine:-*

*h) neurosurgery*

*l) orthopaedic Surgery*

*(m) otolaryngology head and neck surgery:*

*And neurology.*

On 14 March 2017 we advised you that we required more time to provide a response to your requests. The timeframe for responding to you was extended to 3 May 2017.

## **Request One**

Please find enclosed two policy documents relating to ACC's management of long term claimants. They are: "*Subsidised employment – Agreement in Principle*", dated 2 March 2009, and "*Subsidised employment for long term clients*", dated 1 June 2009, which we have confirmed are the documents that were withheld from the response to Mr Gibson on 4 August 2009. These documents outline a proposal for a subsidised employment scheme for

long term clients of ACC. We have withheld the names and contact details of staff from these documents in order to protect the privacy of individuals. In deciding to withhold that information, we have carefully considered whether the privacy interests we have identified are outweighed by the public interest in making it available. Our decision to withhold this information is made in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

We can advise that the employer subsidy for long term clients was never implemented, however we have been unable to determine the exact date at which the decision was made not to implement the policy. We are declining this part of your request as the information does not exist, or cannot be found. This decision complies with section 18(e) of the Act.

## **Request Two**

### ***Medical scopes of practice and funding***

ACC does not define the scopes of practice of medical specialists. This is the role of the Medical Council of New Zealand. You can find information regarding vocational scopes of practice for medical specialists on their website through the following link: [www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/scopes-of-practice/](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/get-registered/scopes-of-practice/)

Furthermore, we can confirm that there is no distinction made by ACC between different medical specialist groups in relation to provider funding or client entitlements.

ACC contributes the following costs of treatment to contracted medical specialists for non-acute assessments:

Simple assessment: \$165.66 excl. GST

Complex assessment: \$253.81 excl. GST

ACC contributes the same costs for first and subsequent assessments, and the same costs are paid to all the medical specialist groups named in your request.

### ***ACC funding of Neurology specialists***

Internal Medicine is listed as a recognised branch of medicine in the Accident Compensation (Liability to Pay or Contribute to Cost of Treatment) Regulations 2003. A medical specialist trained in Neurology is listed under the vocational scope Internal Medicine on the Medical Council of New Zealand website. Therefore, we can confirm that ACC contributes to the cost of treatment for assessments provided by medical specialists trained in Neurology. The costs of treatment paid to contracted medical specialists trained in Internal Medicine are the same as those listed above.

### **Queries or concerns**

If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided, ACC will be happy to work with you to resolve these. Please address any concerns by emailing [GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz](mailto:GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz) or in writing to *Government Services, PO Box 242, Wellington 6140*.

You have the right to 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 10152, Wellington 6143*.

Yours sincerely

**Government Services**