

7 JUL 2017

Karl Pearce

[fyi-request-5677-4594b19e@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5677-4594b19e@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5679-9ef15217@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5679-9ef15217@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5680-8e63850a@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5680-8e63850a@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5681-5053517c@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5681-5053517c@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5682-ac9707f4@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5682-ac9707f4@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5698-5594c569@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5698-5594c569@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[fyi-request-5699-f0a8174c@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5699-f0a8174c@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Pearce

On 5 April 2017, you emailed the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1) *How many women did CYFS (now MVC) offer to pay for sterilization in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 2) *How many women did CYFS (now MVC) pay to have sterilized in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 3) *How many of the women received their children back after being sterilized in 2014, 2015, 2016?*
- 4) *How many Home for Life placements did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 5) *How many women signed orders/papers allowing their future children to be taken from birth/ releasing future parental responsibility at birth by CYFS (now MVC) in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 6) *How many uplifts during child's first month of life did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 7) *How many uplifts while child and mother were in hospital did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16? of these how many were performed under Court Order?*
- 8) *How many COT/CIDS deaths have occurred in babies under 3 years of age while in CYFS (now MVC) care in 2014, 15, 16?*

On 8 April 2017, you also requested:

- 9) *How many suicides by children in the care of CYFS (now MVC) were there during 2014, 15, 16?*
- 10) *Can I have statistics on numbers of those who made notifications of abuse to CYFS (now MVC) where they were then investigated themselves in 2014, 15, 16? Can I have those statistics on Gender and relationship to child.*

For all ten questions, you requested the statistics be provided at a national level as well as being broken down to a regional level and to specific branches for the following areas:

- Lower Hutt,
- Upper Hutt,
- South Auckland,
- Onehunga,
- Tauranga,
- Palmerston North,
- Christchurch offices.

On 5 May 2017, the Ministry advised more time was required to prepare a response to your requests and that a decision would be with you by 18 June 2017. A notification of decision was sent to you on Monday 19 June 2017, advising that we would grant your request in part.

For clarity, each of your questions have been addressed in turn.

- 1) *How many women did CYFS (now MVC) offer to pay for sterilization in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 2) *How many women did CYFS (now MVC) pay to have sterilized in 2014, 15, 16?*
- 3) *How many of the women received their children back after being sterilized in 2014, 2015, 2016?*

The Ministry and the former Child, Youth and Family do not, and have not, paid for the sterilisation of women. As such, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

The Ministry for Social Development has a Special Needs Grant available through Work and Income to help clients with the additional costs of accessing subsidised long-acting reversible contraception (LARC). These grants do not need to be paid back. Further information about these grants are available here: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/health-and-disability-practitioners/guides/larc-info-for-health-practitioners.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/health-and-disability-practitioners/guides/larc-info-for-health-practitioners.html)

- 4) *How many Home for Life placements did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16?*

A permanent living arrangement gives tamariki (the child) a stable environment in which to grow up but, more than this, it gives them relationships for life which are enduring, secure and nurturing. You may find the following key information that discusses the importance of finding a permanent placement (Home for Life) for tamariki, and the options available for this, of interest and can be found online at: <https://practice.mvcot.govt.nz/policy/noho-ake-oranga/key-information/securing-permanency-for-mokopuna-in-care.html>

The following table provides the breakdown of children and young people that achieved Home for Life for the financial years 2014 to 2016.

The number of children and young people that achieved Home for Life (HFL) broken down by region, operational area and site for 2014 to 2016 financial years.

Region	Operations Area	Site	Fiscal Year ending 30 June		
			2014	2015	2016
Te Tai Tokerau	Te Tai Tokerau Operations	Kaikohe	S	S	S
		Kaitiaia	11	9	S
		Te Kaipara	S	S	0
		Whangarei	14	14	19
Auckland Region	Counties Manukau Operations	Homai	S	26	8
		Mangere	S	8	16
		Manurewa	19	14	30
		Otahuhu	7	9	S
		Otara	7	11	S
		Papakura	S	S	12
		Pukekohe	6	S	7
	Waitemata Operations	Grey Lynn	9	9	6
		Onehunga	9	S	S
		Orewa	S	S	S
		Panmure	S	S	S
		Takapuna	9	8	6
		Waitakere	14	S	16
		Westgate	17	S	5
Midlands Region	Bay of Plenty Operations	Rotorua	29	20	21
		Taupo	19	10	20
		Tauranga	9	23	24
		Whakatane	15	10	10
	Waikato Operations	Hauraki	S	11	S
		Waikato East	S	S	S
		Waikato West	17	28	17
Central Region	Eastern Operations	Gisborne	S	S	7
		Hastings	S	S	S
		Napier	10	11	S
	Greater Wellington Operations	Lower Hutt	S	S	14
		Porirua	11	S	9
		Upper Hutt	S	0	S
		Wellington	7	S	S
	Lower North Island Operations	Horowhenua	S	6	S
		Manawatu	8	11	19
		Wairarapa	S	0	S
	Western Operations	Taranaki	8	12	8



Region	Operations Area	Site	Fiscal Year ending 30 June		
			2014	2015	2016
		Taumarunui	0	0	S
	Western Operations	Whanganui	8	7	S
Southern Region	Canterbury Operations	Christchurch East	S	9	10
		Christchurch West	9	S	S
		Papanui	15	9	S
		Rangiora	S	10	7
		South Canterbury	15	13	12
		Sydenham	10	S	S
	Otago/Southland Operations	Otago Urban	6	S	S
		Southern Rural	S	S	S
		Southland	S	10	15
	Upper South Operations	Blenheim	10	10	S
		Nelson	S	S	7
		West Coast	S	S	S
Contact Centre/Adoptions			0	6	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>417</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>412</b>

**Note:**

- The number of children and young people achieving Home for Life for this time period may change as this is operational data and client case notes are continuously updated.
- This data is accurate as at 12 April 2017.
- 'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect identifying the client.
- The regions specified above no longer exist. 11 newly defined regions were established on 1 April 2017, when the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki began.

5) *How many women signed orders/papers allowing their future children to be taken from birth/ releasing future parental responsibility at birth by CYFS (now MVC) in 2014, 15, 16?*

On 15 April 2017, you provided further detail about what you were requesting in question five:

- *While interviewing several mothers dealing with the Palmerston North Branch in particular, however I have heard similar from other branches, these mothers have reported signing a legal document stating that all further children as yet unborn will become the direct responsibility/care of CYFS from the time of birth, and give permission for CYFS to uplift any further, as yet, future possible children at birth.*
- *Many have thought this was a legal document however if not can you please clarify in addition to the original Request please.*

The document you reference, as 'signed orders', is not a document that the Ministry is aware of as being in existence. As such, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

You may be interested to read about subsequent children. A description of the procedure to identify subsequent children and assess cases involving subsequent children is available on the Ministry's website: <https://practice.mvcot.govt.nz/documents/policy/assessment-and-decision-making/subsequent-children-step-by-step-guide-r-170401.pdf>

- 6) How many uplifts during child's first month of life did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16?
- 7) How many uplifts while child and mother were in hospital did CYFS (now MVC) perform in 2014, 15, 16? of these how many were performed under Court Order?

The decision to place a child or young person in an Oranga Tamariki residence or supervised group home, or with a service provider is never one that is made lightly. In these situations the child or young person will likely have complex needs that can't be met by our caregivers or by their family/whānau, and they may require extra support and oversight to keep them safe. It is important that when our children and young people are in these types of placements we don't lose sight of them or their specific needs, and we keep on track with planning for their future. Further information regarding out of home placements can be found online at: <https://practice.mvcot.govt.nz/policy/caring-for-children-and-young-people/key-information/working-with-children-and-young-people-who-are-placed-in-a-child-youth-and-family-residence-or-supervised-group-home-or-in-a-provider-placement.html>

The tables below provide the number of children in out of home placements within their first 30 days of birth, broken down by region operational area and site, for the financial years 2014 to 2016.

**The number of children in out of home placements within their first 30 days of birth, broken down by region and operational area, for the financial years 2014 to 2016.**

Region	Operations Area	Fiscal Year ending the 30th June		
		2014	2015	2016
Te Tai Tokerau	Te Tai Tokerau Operations	S	S	S
Auckland Region	Counties Manukau Operations	33	31	35
	Waitemata Operations	26	35	28
Midlands Region	Bay of Plenty Operations	10	14	13
	Waikato Operations	14	15	22
Central Region	Eastern Operations	8	7	6
	Greater Wellington Operations	14	16	25
	Lower North Island Operations	12	7	14
	Western Operations	S	S	6
Southern Region	Canterbury Operations	21	13	15
	Otago/Southland Operations	14	9	13
	Upper South Operations	6	7	S
<b>Total</b>		<b>167</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>187</b>

**Note:**

- Excludes placement types - 'Independent Living', 'Remain Home' and 'Return Home'.
- 'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect identifying the client.

- The regions specified above no longer exist. 11 newly defined regions were established on 1 April 2017, when the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki began.

**The number of children in out of home placements within their first 30 days of birth, broken down by region, operational area and site, for the financial years 2014 to 2016.**

Region	Operations Area	Site	Fiscal Year ending 30 June		
			2014	2015	2016
Te Tai Tokerau	Te Tai Tokerau Operations	Kaikohe	0	S	S
		Te Kaipara	0	0	S
		Whangarei	S	S	S
Auckland Region	Counties Manukau Operations	Homai	S	S	9
		Mangere	S	S	S
		Manurewa	7	7	7
		Otahuhu	7	7	S
		Otara	S	S	S
		Papakura	7	S	S
		Pukekohe	S	S	S
	Waitemata Operations	Grey Lynn	9	10	8
		Onehunga	S	S	S
		Orewa	S	0	S
		Panmure	S	S	S
		Takapuna	S	7	S
		Waitakere	S	S	S
Midlands Region	Bay of Plenty Operations	Rotorua	S	S	S
		Taupo	S	S	S
		Tauranga	S	6	S
		Whakatane	S	S	0
	Waikato Operations	Hauraki	S	S	S
		Waikato East	S	S	S
		Waikato West	8	7	14
Central Region	Eastern Operations	Gisborne	S	0	S
		Hastings	S	S	S
		Napier	S	S	S
	Greater Wellington Operations	Lower Hutt	6	S	10
		Porirua	S	S	S
		Upper Hutt	S	S	S
		Wellington	S	7	S
	Lower North Island Operations	Horowhenua	0	S	S
		Manawatu	6	S	7
		Wairarapa	6	0	S
Western Operations	Taranaki	S	0	S	
	Taumarunui	0	S	S	



Region	Operations Area	Site	Fiscal Year ending 30 June		
			2014	2015	2016
		Whanganui	S	S	S
Southern Region	Canterbury Operations	Christchurch East	S	S	0
		Christchurch West	6	S	S
		Papanui	6	S	S
		Rangiora	0	S	S
		South Canterbury	S	S	S
		Sydenham	S	S	S
	Otago/Southland Operations	Otago Urban	S	6	S
		Southern Rural	S	S	S
		Southland	6	S	7
	Upper South Operations	Blenheim	S	S	0
		Nelson	S	S	S
		West Coast	0	S	S
<b>Total</b>			<b>167</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>187</b>

**Note:**

- Excludes placement types – 'Independent Living', 'Remain Home' and 'Return Home'.
- 'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect identifying the client.
- The regions specified above no longer exist. 11 newly defined regions were established on 1 April 2017, when the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki began.

The Ministry is unable to provide you with information about whether an uplift occurred while the child and mother were in hospital as that information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with data, Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be provided without substantial manual collation and research. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

There are different court orders that have the effect of placing a child or young person in the care of the Chief Executive. It is important for the child or young person's social worker to understand the rights, powers and responsibilities that are applicable to each order and what is required of them as the delegated representative of the Chief Executive. The following link provides information about custody, guardianship and wardship and provides guidance around how to meet responsibilities when these orders are granted: <https://practice.mvcot.govt.nz/policy/caring-for-children-and-young-people/key-information/custody-guardianship-and-wardship.html#null>

8) *How many COT/CIDS deaths have occurred in babies under 3 years of age while in CYFS (now MVC) care in 2014, 15, 16?*

Information about the Ministry's policy for safe sleeping environments for children in the custody of the Chief Executive and information regarding Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) can be found online at: <https://practice-mvcot.ssi.govt.nz/policy/caring-for-children-and-young-people/resources/safe-sleep.html>

The Ministry recorded no deaths from SUDI in 2014 and 2015. In 2016, there was one SUDI death of a child in the care of the Chief Executive. In order to protect the identity of the individual, the site and region of the one related to this death is withheld in part under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of this individual and their family outweighs any public interest in this information.

For the answers to question eight and nine, it is worthwhile noting that custody or care of the Chief Executive is defined in section 9 of the Coroners Act 2006. The Coroners Act 2006 can be found on the New Zealand Legislation website at: [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2006/0038/latest/whole.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2006/0038/latest/whole.html)

On 8 April 2017, you also requested:

9) *How many suicides by children in the care of CYFS (now MVC) were there during 2014, 15, 16?*

Tragically, a small number of children and young people die while in the custody of the Chief Executive. When a child or young person involved with the Ministry, dies as a result of suicide or homicide, the Office of the Chief Social Worker examines each case and provides a report to the Deputy Chief Executive of the Ministry as well as to the Children's Commissioner who acts as an independent monitor of the Ministry.

Young people we work with often have a complex range of issues, so it's important we're vigilant and responsive to potential suicide risk. A recent review identified two relatively distinct groups of young people at risk of committing suicide:

- those with highly complex needs, with significant histories with us, who are identified as at risk
- those who are not well known to us, have little history with us, but go on to commit suicide.

Further information and resources are available online to help social workers to be vigilant and responsive to potential suicide risk and can be found at: <https://practice.mvcot.govt.nz/knowledge-base-practice-frameworks/suicide-and-self-harm/>

I can advise that between 2014 and 2015, there were no confirmed suicides. However, there are three suspected suicide deaths of children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive that are under investigation by the Coroner. Please note that the Coroner is yet to release findings of the deaths to confirm the suicides. In 2016, no child or young person died by way of suicide while in the care of the Chief Executive.



In order to protect the identities of the individuals, the site and region information is withheld in part under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals and their families outweighs any public interest in this information.

*10) Can I have statistics on numbers of those who made notifications of abuse to CYFS (now MVC) where they were then investigated themselves in 2014, 15, 16? Can I have those statistics on Gender and relationship to child.*

The Ministry is unable to provide you with this information as it is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with data relating to notifications of abuse, Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response regarding sterilisation, subsequent children policy, SUDI and Home for Life placements with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@mvcot.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@mvcot.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Pepi Batsos  
**General Manager, Organisational Support**