

17 October 2017

C88404

Ian Andrews  
[fyi-request-6467-221447fb@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-6467-221447fb@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Andrews

Thank you for your email of 22 August 2017, in which you request information about the work undertaken in prisons, by David Lim. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

As you may be aware, Corrections provides primary healthcare to prisoners and each prison is equipped with a health centre, with registered nurses employed by Corrections. Doctors and dentists are contracted to provide medical and dental care. Where a prisoner's health needs extend beyond Corrections' remit as their primary healthcare provider, they will be referred to secondary and tertiary healthcare services through the local District Health Board (DHB).

The safety, security and welfare of prisoners is the Department's foremost consideration, at all times. We are proud to advise that all Corrections' prison health centres have been presented with the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners' Cornerstone Accreditation.

You requested information related to the work undertaken at prison health centres by doctor David Lim. As you are aware, Mr Lim was recently sentenced for five charges of stupefying and indecently assaulting male patients. The offending for which he was convicted occurred between January and September 2014 at The Doctors Hastings Medical Centre.

Mr Lim was contracted by the Department as a locum doctor, between January 2013 and October 2015. As a locum doctor, Mr Lim periodically worked in prison health centres where the regular doctor was absent, or where they required a locum doctor present to meet demand. For Mr Lim, this included periods of work at Christchurch Men's Prison, Hawkes Bay Regional Prison, and Manawatu Prison. In these facilities, Mr Lim provided general practitioner services to prisoners.

When a prisoner visits the health centre, a custodial staff member (typically a Corrections Officer and/or nurse) will remain within the vicinity. They remain nearby and available to respond to situations as they arise, for the entirety of the health centre appointment.

Corrections was notified of Mr Lim's charges on 6 July 2015. At this time, the Medical Council of New Zealand outlined the court's decision to allow Mr Lim to continue practicing, on the condition that he be supervised. While practicing in prison, Mr Lim's supervisor was required to be a Corrections healthcare employee.

During the period of July 2015 (when Corrections received notification of Mr Lim's charges) to October 2015 (when we no longer contracted Mr Lim's services), Mr Lim did not work at Christchurch Men's Prison. During this period, any work undertaken by Mr Lim at Hawkes Bay Regional Prison was supervised by the prison's Health Centre Team Leader. Any work at Manawatu Prison was supervised by their Health Centre Manager.

Mr Lim did not practice in prisons unsupervised from the date Corrections was notified. Additionally, as advised above, standard practice means that custodial staff remain nearby during prison health services appointments. As such, notifying prisoners of Mr Lim's allegations was considered unnecessary due to the low likelihood that this type of offending took place under supervision.

In saying this, the Department acknowledges the seriousness of Mr Lim's offending. In assessing the circumstances regarding Mr Lim's work with Corrections, I note that the drug administered by Mr Lim as part of his offending is not available for use in prisons, and that Corrections has not received any complaints from prisoners regarding Mr Lim's conduct.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Leota', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rachel Leota  
National Commissioner