

14 June 2018

OIA: 2018/043

Mx Jem Traylen

fyi-request-7654-d7282d8d@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mx Traylen

RE: Information Additional to OIA Response 2018 043

Thank you for your request for additional information regarding your Official Information Act (OIA) request received by Capital & Coast District Health Board (CCDHB) on 9 March 2018 and your follow up email requesting clarification.

I have responded to your questions below.

On 9 March you asked:

What screening and prosthetic support do you provide?

Do you have to have been assigned a female gender at birth to have full access to these services?

Our reply of 17 April 2018 stated:

CCDHB only provides prosthetic services such as implants for reconstructive surgeries associated with cancer. Transgender women have access in this situation.

In your email of 9 March you asked:

I am seeking information about breast prosthetic services provided by your DHB and whether transwomen have access to them.

Please see our response above. Transwomen have access to the service where the service is associated with cancer treatment.

On 18 April you asked:

"In a recent OIA response, you stated that your policy is that breast prosthetic services are only provided to transwomen in the context of cancer treatment but not for the purposes of gender reassignment.

In our reply dated 8 May 2018 we stated:

CCDHB has only one breast reconstruction surgeon and she is not trained in gender reassignment surgery. The primary objective in this hospital for providing breast surgery is cancer surgery and reconstruction. Prosthetics for males to females are technically challenging due to differences in anatomical structures of the chest and require surgeons skilled in gender reassignment for that reason.

Gender reassignment requires an infrastructure of which the surgeon is a small part. They require psychology/endocrinology and specialist follow up. There is one surgeon in New Zealand trained in gender reassignment, who is based in Auckland.

In your email of 11 May you commented in response to our letter of 8 May:

That clarifies the surgical aspect but I was also seeking information about non-surgically inserted breastforms that transwomen commonly wear prior to or instead of surgery.

I have asked one of our Breast Surgeons to respond to your query. Her response is below:

“There are breast forms (fake silicon breasts) used by women after breast cancer surgery, funded by the government since about 1972. The funding is for about \$600 (adjusted for inflation) and is available to women who have had a mastectomy or partial mastectomy and no reconstruction. It will typically cover a breast form and a bra or two. The funding comes available every four years.”

CCDHB only provides breast forms for patients who have had surgical treatment for cancer as we do not have breast surgeons who are trained in gender reassignment surgery.

When providing breast prostheses CCDHB follows the Ministry of Health guidelines. More information about this, and funding for breast prostheses, is available on the Ministry of Health (MoH) website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/claims-provider-payments-and-entitlements/breast-prosthesis-subsidy>.

This response has been provided under the Official Information Act 1982. You have the right to request an investigation and review in accordance with s 28(3) Official Information Act by complaint being made to an Ombudsman in writing or orally.

Yours sincerely,



Delwyn Hunter
Executive Director Operations
Surgery, Women and Children's Directorate