

Mrs Steve Chadwick
MP for Rotorua
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

17 MAY 2001

MINISTER OF HEALTH	
ORIGINAL SIGNATURE	SUBMITTED FOR YOUR SIGNATURE
	
..... for Director-General of Health	
Date:	8 May 2001
Ministerial Number:	00006168
Name of Section:	Corp & Min Services
Contact Person:	Sandra Cumming For Kevin Hillock
Phone:	496 2481
Peer Reviewer:	Cynthia Tarrant
File Number:	HC30-10-0 ✓

MINISTRY FILE

COPY

Dear Steve

Thank you for your letter of 4 December 2000 regarding Rotorua Health Camp. Please accept my apologies for the long delay in replying to you, particularly given the seriousness of the allegations of abuse. I would like to address each of your concerns in turn.

Safety of Children

Regarding the allegation of child abuse in relation to a specific child, the mother should be encouraged to report this matter to the Rotorua Police or to the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) for investigation. Without specific information health officials are unable to follow up on what are essentially anecdotal reports.

With regard to the issues raised about the safety of children, an Audit of Health Camps against the Health and Disability Sector Standards Draft Residential Tool was completed by the Health Funding Authority in April 2000. The Audit indicated that systems and processes were in place to ensure children's safety. I have enclosed a copy of the Audit and Stakeholder Evaluation for your information.

Physical Layout

The physical layout of buildings and dormitories was identified in the HFA's Audit. The Audit for Rotorua Health Camp states:

The camp is fortunate in the quality of its facilities. Effective management has created a safe and appropriate environment for children, families and staff at the camp. The physical privacy requirements of consumers are generally met by the design of facilities in the camp, although the dormitory areas for boys are not as suitable in this respect as those provided for girls.

Ongoing development at this point would appear to be maintenance of current standards, minor issues to be addressed in future refurbishment and adding to the already excellent amenities on site.'



Management

*** National**

Health camps are in a period of transition. In April 2000 the Children's Health Camps Act 1999 came into effect. This Act dissolved Health Camps Board and established a charitable trust known as the New Zealand Foundation for Child and Family Health and Development (the Foundation). This new structure is intended to provide greater flexibility in determining the types of services health camps can provide.

The Foundation has been working with officials in the Ministries of Health and Education and with CYFS to focus health camp services to effectively meet the needs of children and families. I understand an intersectorally developed new service specification for children's health camps is near completion. The new service specification will address nationally consistent intake criteria, mix of children and other issues raised in the Stakeholder Evaluation.

*** Rotorua**

I understand the Winsborough Report relates specifically to Rotorua Health Camp for a period prior to the HFA Audit, completed in April 2000. I am informed that the recommendations made in the report have been followed. The camp was closed for a term while the issues in the report were worked through. This culminated in the previous camp manager taking early retirement and a new manager being appointed.

I also understand the issues at Rotorua between the camp and the school are longstanding and entrenched, with the Principal and Deputy Principal having been on long-term stress leave. I support the Minister of Education's decision to close the health camp school in Rotorua as this will enable a new way of working at Rotorua Health Camp, which will benefit children and families.

I acknowledge that in the past there have been problems at Rotorua Health Camp. However, I am confident that the changes that have already been made and those planned will resolve these problems. I trust this addresses the issues raised, but I am happy to discuss this further if you feel it is necessary.

Yours sincerely

(Signed) Hon. Tariana Turia

Hon Annette King
MINISTER OF HEALTH

encl

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OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

RECEIVED
DUE: 8/1

PFS - Child & Family
Kevin

Our Reference: 00006168

Please draft response by 08 January 2001

8 December 2000

Executive Secretary to
Steve Chadwick
MP for Rotorua
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Dear Executive Secretary

I am in receipt of your MP's letter to the Hon Annette King, Minister of Health dated 04 December 2000 regarding Rotorua Health Camp.

The Minister is currently considering the issues raised and you will receive a personal reply shortly.

Yours sincerely



Kirsti Mouatt
Health Private Secretary

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OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT



Steve Chadwick
Member of Parliament for Rotorua

Parliament House
Wellington, New Zealand
Phone 64 4 470 6590
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4 December 2000



Hon. Annette King
Minister of Health
Floor 18 (18R)
Bowen House

AK
15/1
cc Jenni

00006168

Re: Rotorua Health Camp

Dear Annette,

Following Trevor's announcement on the closure of the school at the Camp as from April 6, 2001 I had a phone call from a mother who alleged her child was physically abused at the Camp many years ago. She also encouraged me to meet three women with a story to tell.

They came to see me today. They are the current Principal and Deputy Principal of the school and a previous Psychologist. The Psychologist has since left the Health Camp to work for the James Family Trust in Taupo. She went to the Press with allegations of abuse.

This was a very emotional visit for all three as I heard their story. I will summarise their impressions and concerns as follows:

1) **Safety of Children**

- 1.1) They believe **nothing** has changed in the Health Camp structure. They have no confidence in the Health Camp Board nor management as it exists. They see one nurse manager and a staff of kindly individuals as not having the skill sets nor professional knowledge base to deal with the complex children who present.
- 1.2) Many complaints of abuse or mismanagement of children have been swept under the carpet even through an audit trail may show actions had been taken.

Labour
New Zealand 2000



1.3) Too many children are admitted at each intake. Up to 40 children with complex learning and behaviour needs is too heavy a workload. There does not appear to be a Best Practice approach or evidence of Standards of Care.

2) Physical Layout

2.1) Open dormitories. Through the camp was commissioned 20 years ago and is a beautiful location, in good repair and very pleasant, all three believe the "open plan" does not fit a more appropriate "unit" or studio approach. I am unaware of what the appropriate housing needs are but this issue should be examined.

3) Management

- 3.1) They have felt that relationship issues were perceived to be primarily with the school. This side was made up of professional staff as opposed to "kindly", well-intentioned lay staff on the camp side.
- 3.2) Previous reports and audits have been commissioned. Recommendations have not been enacted.

In Conclusion:

- All three affirm they want to see a continuance of the Camp but only on the grounds it is safe for children
- They accept inevitable redundancy payment and want to move on from being victims of change.
- They remain highly concerned at the **perceived** inability of the Trust to manage a relationship with a new education provider because in essence no new skills are apparent.

I am concerned at the views presented and urge you to arrange an audit on site for at the least check recommendations in the Winsborough Report have been enacted. I would like the opportunity to meet and discuss my concerns with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Chadwick'.

Steve Chadwick
MP FOR ROTORUA