

31 October 2019

Gloria Ashton

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Tēnā koe Gloria

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-002013

Thank you for your request of 07 October 2019, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I am requesting any information held by ACC regarding the process by which ACC chooses a health practitioner to give External Clinical Advice on a Treatment Injury claim, any guidelines provided to the practitioner regarding how to give External Clinical Advice, the practitioners legal obligations to ACC and to the claimant in giving External Clinical Advice.

External Clinical Advisors

ACC has a database of External Clinical Advisors who have a wide range of clinical specialities and subspecialties, who are able to provide advice on claims made for injuries caused by treatment (i.e. a treatment injury).

When we require additional External Clinical Advisors, we contact the relevant professional body for recommendations. We then contact the recommended specialist and ask them to submit a CV for review. At the same time, we confirm the specialist is registered and holds an annual practicing certificate in the relevant discipline.

In instances where a specialist is not available to provide advice on a particular claim, or there is a potential or actual conflict of interest, ACC staff may approach a health practitioner directly to provide advice.

Typically, a conflict or potential conflict occurs when the health professional has seen the patient previously, or a colleague has treated the patient. Other times it may be a perceived or potential issue, such as having interactions in a social setting or serving on committees together. If any of these occur and there might be a perceived issue, the health practitioner should decline to provide advice.

Documents and guidelines provided to the specialist about External Medical Advice

Attached to this response are three documents we send to the specialist when external medical advice is needed for a claim. These documents are as follows:

1. *Providing External Advice*
2. *T140 Obtaining ECA on treatment injury claim* (example letter for Appendix 1, Document 1 and Appendix in Document 3)
3. *ACC Treatment Injury Cover Assessment Centre: External Clinical Advice Guide* (as at May 2018)

ACC takes privacy seriously

We have withheld a staff name in Document 1 under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the person's privacy. In doing so, we considered the public interest in making the name available and determined that it does not outweigh the need to protect their privacy.

ACC is happy to answer your questions

If you have any questions, you can email me at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a final vertical stroke on the right side.

Emma Coats

Manager Official Information Act Services
Government Engagement & Support