

Ms Jill Adams
Fyi-request-1234-bf21f4c5@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Adams

Request Under the Official Information Act 1982 – Ref H201304362

Thank you for your email dated 21 October 2013 requesting official information about recent changes to support for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). You have asked for the following information:

“I would like information about the origins of this decision to cut services for people with ASD. Whose decision was it to do this and what written information do you have, as background material to this decision, given there must have been some sort of discussion, meetings, policies developed, or lead up to this decision, which must be in some written form somewhere within the MOH?”

This email follows a similar request from you in July 2013.

It was explained to you at the time of your original request, that other than the flow chart that was provided, there was no further information available. This is because there had been no specific decision or cut in services, rather, it had been recognised by Disability Support Services that the approach to ASD eligibility nationally was inconsistent. The flow chart was adopted to provide some consistency to the Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination (NASC) agencies until a position could be determined.

Since your previous request and as advised to you by telephone at the time, Disability Support Services have been working to clarify our position on ASD eligibility to achieve greater national consistency of practice going forward. We are now at the stage of developing that advice for the Minister of Health (the Minister) on this issue.

Given the need for the Minister to be able to consider the advice, I have decided to withhold the information requested under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act 1982.

The Ministry of Health anticipates providing this advice to the Minister over the next few months. Following Ministerial consideration of that advice, the information you have requested will be made available. I expect to be able to release this information by March 2014.

You have the right to complain to the Ombudsman about my decision. Information about making a complaint is on the website of the Office of the Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.parliament.nz). You can also contact the Office on freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Chai Chuah
National Director
National Health Board