

27 May 2020

Sue Yates

By email: fyi-request-12807-6674152c@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202003118

Dear Ms Yates

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request of 7 May 2020 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for:

“Please provide information on the formal requirements for identifying lockdown stress, and how it is proposed for doctors to acknowledge and manage this.”

General Practitioners (GPs), practice nurses and other health professionals are trained to talk with people about stress and distress. The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) expects that these health professionals are doing this as part of their usual practice during lockdown and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is no formal advice on how to do this in relation to lockdown, we expect them to use their clinical skills and knowledge to assess and help manage people’s distress. As such, I am unable to provide you with any “formal requirements”, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and we have no grounds to believe it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

The Ministry has made a number of new resources available to help people manage their mental health and wellbeing, both throughout lockdown and over the next few months. We are working to ensure that GPs and other frontline health staff are aware of these resources so that the people who need them are aware of them. These can be found at the following link: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources>

You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made in response to your request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely



Robyn Shearer
**Deputy Director General
Mental Health and Addiction**