

20 MAY 2014

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Mrs J Simpson
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Ref: H201401584

Dear Mrs Simpson

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for official information, submitted through the FYI website, which was received by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 22 April 2014.

You asked for the names of the people who made decisions on the Ministry's recent Request for Proposals (RFP) for regional and national services to prevent and minimise gambling harm, and for information on their professional backgrounds. This information was included in the evaluation pack cover document that was among the documents posted to the FYI website on 22 April 2014 in response to a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) from Mr Alex Harris (<https://fyi.org.nz/request/1555-advice-on-problem-gambling-foundation-funding>).

I have repeated the information below for ease of access.

The members of the panel that evaluated the proposals (the Panel) were:

1. Dion Williams, Ministry of Health
2. Chas McCarthy, Ministry of Health
3. Ben Everist, Ministry of Health
4. Jude West, Health Promotion Agency
5. Kirsty Pleace, Department of Internal Affairs
6. Fa'amatuainu Pereira, Pacific Health Consultant.

Natu Levy from the Ministry was the (non-scoring) chair of the Panel.

Derek Thompson from the Ministry reviewed the Panel's recommendations and made further recommendations. Rod Bartling from the Ministry made decisions on the recommendations from the Panel and from Mr Thompson.

Jude West, who was formerly employed by the Problem Gambling Foundation, contributed her experience and clinical expertise in terms of the treatment of problem gambling.

You also asked about the information provided to the Panel and for the key reasons for the decisions that the Ministry made on the proposals. All the documents that were provided to the Panel (other than the proposals themselves) were released to Mr Harris on 22 April 2014 and 9 May 2014, and have since been posted to the FYI website.

Copies of the minutes and two memoranda that resulted from the Panel's consideration of the proposals were released to Mr Harris on 22 April 2014 (some information was redacted from these documents). These documents, which outline the reasons for the Ministry's decisions, have also already been posted on the FYI website, along with the letter to Mr Harris, which sets out the reasons for the redactions.

As this information is already publicly available, I am refusing your request for information under section 18(d) of the Act.

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

Finally, you asked a number of questions about the evaluation of problem gambling services that the Ministry contracted Auckland University of Technology to undertake.

Section 317 of the Gambling Act 2003 requires the preventing and minimising gambling harm (PMGH) strategy developed and implemented by the Ministry to include independent research, and evaluation. An evaluation of services was last undertaken in 2008/09 and its findings are publicly available on the Ministry's website at the website address below.

<http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/mental-health-and-addictions/problem-gambling/research-and-evaluation/implementation-2007-2010/evaluation-problem-gambling-intervention-services>

The Ministry has engaged the Auckland University of Technology to undertake another evaluation of both the public health preventive and clinical treatment services funded under the PMGH strategy. While this study is under way, its field work phase will not begin until June 2014 and the final report is not due until March 2015. One of the purposes of this study is to provide information regarding what is working well and what should be improved. This information will inform the next three-year service plan and the details of the contracts for services in the period 2016/17 to 2018/19.

Yours sincerely



Cathy O'Malley
Deputy Director-General
Sector Capability and Implementation