

14 May 2015  
Grant Hill  
Fyi-request-2622-e9345851@requests.fyi.org.nz

Reference H201501333

Dear Mr Hill

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request for official information, received by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 20 April 2015.

You requested detailed information on the ethics review and informed consent processes for the following gambling projects:

1. Financial Literacy gambling
2. Multi-venue exclusion survey
3. Face-to-face clinical trial

The detailed information you requested under the Official Information Act, is a description of the step-by-step procedures used to get informed consent from people with gambling problems who are taking part in these projects.

The Financial Literacy and Budgeting for Māori and Pacific problem gamblers evaluation and the Effectiveness of Face-to-face Problem Gambling Interventions Clinical Trial projects are directly funded by the Ministry under the Preventing and Minimising Gambling Harm Strategy (2010/11-2015/16). The Multi Venue Exclusion (MVE) project is a collaboration involving the Ministry and the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). All three projects currently involve (or will involve) clients from Ministry funded problem gambling intervention services.

The protocol and informed consent process for the Financial Literacy and Budgeting for Māori and Pacific problem gamblers evaluation was reviewed and approved by the National Health & Disability Ethics Committee on 17 December 2014. All participants in the evaluation signed a consent form specifically relating to this project, and prior to participation in the project.

The MVE survey is part of a review to assess the effectiveness of the MVE process. The survey included participation from gambling sector stakeholders, including service users.

To recruit service users and to protect their anonymity, the MVE Review project team asked counsellors to explain the purpose of the survey to them and invite them to participate. At this point service users could agree or decline. The service users' survey included a statement on its cover which ensured anonymity for the participant.

The project group conducting the MVE survey sought expert advice on ethics approval and service users' informed consent from Dr Sean Sullivan, a Director at ABACUS Counselling, Training & Supervision Ltd. ABACUS is contracted by the Ministry to provide clinical advice and workforce development.

Dr Sullivan's advice stated that this evaluation does not require ethics approval and that alternatives to written consent are also appropriate.

The face-to-face clinical trial has not yet started recruiting participants. The supplier is in the process of preparing an application for ethical review of the informed consent procedures that will be used for this project.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review the Ministry's decision on this request. Information is on the website of the Office of the Ombudsman ([www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)). You can also contact the Ombudsman on freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathy O'Malley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

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

## Appendix 1 – Schedule of documents to be released

Name of Document	Any redactions or refusals	Reason for redactions or refusals
<p><b>Financial Literacy Education and Gambling-Related Harm Study</b></p> <p>Contract with Malatest International Consulting and Advisory Services</p> <p>Released the relevant page of the service specifications relating to informed consent</p>	Yes	<p>Material out of scope</p> <p>Section 16 (e) of the OIA Act 1982)</p>
<p>Information Sheet - Learning more about Managing Money</p>	No	
<p><b>Effectiveness of Face-to-Face Problem Gambling Interventions Clinical Trial</b></p> <p>Contract with Auckland University of Technology</p> <p>Released the relevant page of the service specifications relating to informed consent</p>	Yes	<p>Material out of scope</p> <p>Section 16 (e) of the OIA Act 1982)</p>
<p><b>Your Views on the Multi-Venue Exclusion Process</b></p> <p>Survey</p> <p>Released the relevant page of the survey relating to informed consent</p>	Yes	<p>Material out of scope</p> <p>Section 16 (e) of the OIA Act 1982)</p>
<p>Brief report: Informed Consent for Multi-Venue Problem Gambling Survey</p>	No	

