



11 NOV 2015

Ms Sheree Vluggen
fyi-request-3153-306af8dd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Vluggen

On 16 September 2015 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information regarding the recent audits the Ministry of Social Development has conducted regarding Wellstop's processes and performance against their contract deliverables for the 'Early Intervention' and 'Youth, contracts.

The Ministry of Social Development delivers social services to more than one million New Zealanders. To deliver these services, the Ministry through its various service delivery lines, provides funding to a number of organisations.

The Ministry has robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Care providers undergo a robust annual verification and monitoring visit by the Ministry's Approval Assessors that provides quantitative and qualitative measures of the delivery on contracted services.

Non-government organisations seeking to contract with the Ministry for the provision of services for children, young people and families must demonstrate the capacity and ability to provide effective services to their clients. They are required to adhere to current Ministry approval standards under section 396 of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989, to provide residential care under guardianship and under section 403 of the Act, to provide community-based services to support at-risk children, young people and their families.

Approval standards set foundations for the Ministry's relationship with organisations who provide services, care and support to children, young people and their families across New Zealand. The approvals process involves regular contact and assessment visits to a provider.

For the sake of clarity I will address your questions in turn.

1. *When was WellStop last audited by the Ministry and what period of time did this audit cover?*

The last approval assessments were completed on, 27 May and 9 June 2015. The assessments provide a point in time review of Wellstop. However, the assessments cover retrospective information back to the previous assessment undertaken in April 2013. Wellstop is currently on a two yearly assessment cycle hence no approval assessment was completed in 2014.

2. *When will WellStop next be audited by the Ministry and what period of time will this audit cover?*

The Ministry of Social Development assesses WellStop against a set of standards every two years. The standards ensure that organisations maintain appropriate policies and procedures in a number of areas. These policies and procedures help ensure the organisation is providing safe and effective services therefore mitigating risk to clients and staff. Wellstop's next approval assessment is scheduled for May 2017. This assessment will provide a point in time review of the provider and will cover the information backdated to the May 2015 approval assessment.

3. *What are WellStop's contract deliverables and service standards for both their 'Early Intervention' and 'Youth' contracts?*

Specific contract deliverables are measured by the Ministry of Social Development's Community Outcome and Services team. The Ministry Approvals team assess against the two Social Sector Accreditation Standards which are provided on the Ministry's website at:

<http://www.msdc.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/providers/approvals/accreditation-standards.htm>

4. *What was WellStop's performance against those contract deliverables and service standards at their last audit?*

Confirmation of Approval was granted to Wellstop in May 2015. Three required actions were identified at the Taranaki site; Wellstop must make some amendments to their practice which will be assessed for compliance in the next review in May 2017.

5. *What WellStop documentation is reviewed as part of the audits on both these contracts?*

A wide range of evidence including documentation is used to assess compliance with each standard. This documentation includes, but is not limited to; organisational policy and procedure, client files, staff files including training registers and qualifications, safety planning, strategic and annual planning, programme material, and financial documentation.

6. *Is WellStop's 'Critical Incident Report Register' reviewed as part of the audits on both these contracts?*

7. *Is WellStop's 'Notifications to CYF Register' reviewed as part of the audit on both these contracts?*

Both the Critical Incident Report Register and the Notifications to Child, Youth and Family Register are reviewed as a part of the Approval assessment.

8. *What, if any, other processes do the Ministry utilise to satisfy itself that WellStop Inc. takes actions that appropriately identify and manage risk for both the clients WellStop Inc. is contracted to provide service to, and for the staff that provide those services on the 'Early Intervention' and 'Youth' contracts?*

The Social Sector Accreditation Standards require organisations to maintain appropriate policies and procedures for themes such as: appropriate vetting and management of staff including training and supervision, a safe physical and emotional environment for all who enter the organisations premises, continuous improvement based on the evaluation of risk, appropriate financial procedures, assessment of clients' needs including risk assessment and the requirement that client interventions are not closed until safety has been considered

I hope you find this information regarding the audit of Wellstop helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Murray Edridge
Deputy Chief Executive, Community Investment