

19 February 2016

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Dear Mr Lawson

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your string of emails received from 18 to 21 December 2015.

We have treated these emails as requests under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Your questions and our corresponding responses are set out below. Due to the similarity in some subject matter, some of your questions have been grouped for response. The wording of your specific requests is set out in ACC's response, written in *italics*.

Request One

- I. *It would be appreciated if you could confirm whether ACC use the Partially Paid indicator, to identify encounters between an ACC approved treatment provider and an ACC client, where the ACC treatment provider has provided information to ACC that maybe used in circumstances such as the review process.*
- II. *Would a partially paid indicator be used/retained in circumstances where an ACC contracted treatment provider, is requested further information about an encounter between them and the ACC client by ACC or asked to appear on behalf of ACC at a review hearing or district court on behalf of ACC.*
- III. *Do ACC pay a fee for treatment providers that appear on behalf of ACC at review hearings and District Court? If so does this payment then get placed under the Partially Paid indicator when the service is provided to ACC and then the indicator changed to Paid.*
- IV. *It would also be appreciated if you could provide all available information on the charges that ACC pay for/to a treatment provider to appear at either a review hearing and or district court.*

[All parts, 18 December 2015]

Response to Request One

Question I: Partially Paid status indicator not used to identify 'encounters'

As noted in our response of 16 December 2015, the partially paid status refers to the payment status of an invoice. Payment status of an invoice is not a useful method for identifying 'encounters' between a treatment provider and an ACC client.

ACC claims management staff use Eos, ACC's claims management system, to record and search for information relating to services provided to ACC clients by treatment providers.

Question II: Status of invoice not activated by circumstances outside of payment

Again, as noted in our response of 16 December 2015, the partially paid status is activated when a service listed on a provider invoice has not been paid.

The payment status of an invoice is not activated by any circumstances outside of payment of an invoice.

Question III: Payment status of invoices for costs linked to appearances

On very limited occasions, ACC will call upon a medical professional to give evidence in person at court. ACC will usually pay for this professional's time, as well as travel and accommodation costs (if required). These payments are agreed on a case-by-case basis.

It is extremely rare for a medical professional to appear for ACC at review hearings. Anecdotally, this typically only occurs with respect to treatment injury claims where complex medical issues are raised, and involves perhaps one or two cases a year. The costs for appearing at a review hearing are agreed beforehand, so payment of these costs is straightforward.

ACC will only consider asking a medical professional to appear at a review hearing if:

- the ACC client who lodged the review has arranged a medical professional to appear for them, and
- the independent reviewer agrees to medical professionals attending

Medical professionals will invoice ACC for payment of the costs agreed. In general, ACC would pay these invoices in full upon receipt. This means that the payment status of any such invoice would only ever be recorded as paid.

Question IV: Costs paid by ACC for or to a treatment provider for appearances

Noting the details set out in response to *Question III* above, ACC will pay an hourly rate for a medical professional's appearance - as well as transport and accommodation costs (if required). There is no prescribed rate, although for reviews ACC would typically pay around \$200 per hour.

In some cases, ACC may contribute toward the costs of a medical professional engaged by the ACC client in relation to a dispute. For court cases, any contribution will be determined by the Court.

At review hearings, costs awarded to an ACC client are prescribed by regulations. In regards to medical professional costs, an ACC client can claim for the cost of a medical report. Below is a link to the regulations that specify costs that can be awarded at review:

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2002/0081/latest/DLM117456.html>

Request Two

In terms of your reply [of 16 December 2015] it would be appreciated if you could confirm that all activities, transactions in terms of records management includes ACC staff contact relating to;

phone calls, land lines and mobile phone communication voice messages left on ACC staff members mobile and or landlines text messages faxes email communication face to face conversations... etc

are required to be treated equally in terms of the way that staff record information on the EOS system or other ACC party level system/relevant system.

[18 December 2015]

Response to Request Two

Records management

ACC's records management policy applies equally to all forms of communication. It does not specify an order of priority.

Request Three

- I. *I note that the Guidelines for managing and monitoring rehabilitation that you have sourced from <http://thesauce/team-spaces/chips/treatment-rehabilitation/vocational-rehabilitation/ref...> was due for review as at 9 September 2015 and it would be appreciated if you could provide me with a copy of the latest 2015 reviewed information thanks as opposed to the 2014 edition.*
- II. *I also respectfully request that I be provided with a full PDF copy of all client communication policy by return email (not just limited to email-when to save) that is stored on ACC's intranet The Sauce, so that ACC policy guidelines covering what information is required to be recorded by ACC staff on Eos and or a claimant's Party Records, inclusive of all sources of that communication (for example, face to face contact, land line and mobile phone voice and text calls and messages, intranet, health link information, faxes, handwritten letters, and information handed over to an ACC branch etc to name a few circumstances.*

[Both parts, 19 December 2015]

Response to Request Three

Question 1: Guidelines for managing and monitoring rehabilitation

The copy of these guidelines provided to you in November 2015 continues to be current, until any reviewed version is completed and signed off for use.

The date referred to by you is the date proposed for review. We note a review process is now underway and expected to be completed in March 2016. Advice indicates it is unlikely there will be significant changes to these guidelines once that review is completed.

Question 2: Policy guidelines on what communication is recorded in Eos

Our response of 16 December 2015 notes that our *Records Management Policy* is the overarching policy for managing records. Under this policy, ACC case management staff are required to record all contacts (by email, letter or otherwise) that are relevant to or for managing a claim. ACC staff are also obliged to deal with ACC clients and communications with them in a manner aligned to the Code of Claimants' Rights and the Privacy Act 1993 (Privacy Act).

Case management staff are very aware of this overall approach, and expectations around compliance with it. Staff receive training on records management when they begin working for ACC. Expectations regarding observance of the noted approach are also communicated regularly in branches and service centres – with regular quality checks of claims to reinforce how case managers should manage claims and records connected to claims.

The only records management policy that is specific to a single type of communication is ACC's *When to save emails in Eos* policy. A copy of this has already been provided to you. This policy was designed to deal with the large volume of email correspondence that ACC case management staff receive and send.

ACC considers that all policy documents relevant to your request have been provided to you.

Request Four

- I. *'I am writing to request information on how an individual is able to obtain full copies of their complete and unabridged ACC 45 screen shots with both Display Sub-Case Documents and Display Removed Documents indicators ticked... So that an ACC claimant is able to receive in chronological order the best summary of what has been sent from ACC and what has been received to ACC and from whom.'* [18 December 2015]
- II. *'It would also be appreciated if you could confirm what timeframe would be considered reasonable by Government Services for an individual to expect that the above information would be readied for their collection, or alternatively be able to be couriered to the individual to whom had requested the information'* [18 December 2015]

- III. 'At the same time would you please confirm whether the screenshots referred to form part of a person's Party Status Files, or form part of a person's EOS files.'
- [18 and 21 December 2015]
- IV. 'There are also tabs to the right of the Documents screen shot that are obscured from view and I would appreciate receiving a copy of a training template which details the full screen inclusive of all tabs.'
- [18 December 2015]
- V. 'It would be appreciated if you would provide me with all information as to how an ACC client can request the timely receipt of copies their full, complete and unabridged copies of of all screenshots for all tabs (i.e. including but not limited to Case Map, General, Entitlements, Plan, Managing, Contacts, Documents, which also show Documents for Claim and also Document Groups, Tasks, Injury, Medical, Employment, and any other screen tab that is associated with these screens but not shown), for each ACC45 Claim, with both the Display Sub-Case Documents and Display Removed Documents tabs selected so that full information is forwarded to the ACC Client.
So to recap OIA Request 2- please advise how an ACC Claimant can receive copies of their full, complete and unabridged screenshots held/stored under all tabs noted above and any further that are not shown on the ACC 45 Screenshot PDF example.'
- [21 December 2015]

Response to Request Four

Questions I, II & V: Requesting screenshots from Eos

Any request by a client for information regarding their claim or claim records would usually be treated as a request under the Privacy Act. These requests, in the first instance, should be directed to the ACC staff member who manages the claim. There is no specified format for making these types of requests for personal information.

The Privacy Act stipulates a 20-day period for making a decision on any request. Agencies are entitled to extend this period in certain circumstances. The Privacy Commissioner's website has further information on making privacy requests at www.privacy.org.nz.

Question III: Documents and Contacts pages in Eos

The particular screens identified by the screenshots to which you refer are the Documents and Contacts screens in Eos. These screens can be accessed at both party level and claim level in Eos. A screenshot is not something that is held on a client's file, rather it is something that gets created as and when required.

Claim level contains the documents or contacts related to a single claim of a client. Party level contains the documents and contacts applicable to all ACC claims of a client.

Question IV: Template of Eos screen

Please find an image of a full Documents screen from Eos attached, showing all tabs displayed on this screen. For privacy reasons, ACC has blacked out names of identifiable people. The full details though of this screen are provided in accordance with this part of your request.

Questions or concerns about ACC's response

If you have further questions, contact us by email at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

You have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman regarding our decision. You can call them on 0800 802 602, 9am to 5pm weekdays, or write to: The Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10 152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely

Government Services
Government Services
ACC