

Office of Hon James Shaw



Minister for Climate Change

Minita mō Te Rerekētanga o Te Āhuarangi

Minister of Statistics

Minita Tatauranga

Associate Minister of Finance

Hoa Minita Tahua Moni

09 NOV 2018

Ms Amanda Ashley
fyi-request-8642-7f38c3dc@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: J180259

Tēnā koe Amanda

Thank you for your email of 11 October 2018, submitted as an Official Information Act request on fyi.org.nz, regarding transgender health plans. Your request is more appropriately answered by a Ministerial response and I am responding to you in my capacity as Acting Associate Minister of Health while Hon Julie Anne Genter is on maternity leave. I appreciate you taking the time to write.

I want to assure you that the Government is committed to better meeting the health needs of transgender New Zealanders, and transgender health is an important issue for both Minister Genter and myself.

You may be aware of recent media coverage on gender affirming surgeries through the High Cost Treatment Pool. As a first step, there are now a minimum of three feminising gender affirmation surgeries and one masculinising surgery every two years, and the surgeries will continue to be funded from the High Cost Treatment Pool. A small number of additional surgeries may be accommodated through the existing High Cost Treatment Pool budget, depending upon the competing demands from other medical treatments.

I am currently taking advice on what the next steps are to improve health care for transgender New Zealanders. Improving health care for all our rainbow communities remains a priority for Minister Genter in her role as Associate Minister of Health. The Government recognises how important it is that health services, including mental health services, are gender-affirming and inclusive. Our Government will be encouraging district health boards to reduce barriers for trans and gender-diverse people to access gender-affirming health care.

I am considering advice from the Ministry on a ten-year Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan, which has a strong emphasis on health equity for different groups including the rainbow community. It proposes actions in five key areas, including sexuality and gender, with a focus on inclusive schools, communities and health care.

I hope you find this information useful. Thank you again for writing.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Shaw'.

Hon James Shaw
Acting Associate Minister of Health