

15 April 2019



Mr Anthony Jordan  
[fyi-request-9876-f1e9a822@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-9876-f1e9a822@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Anthony

**Your Official Information Act request, reference: 0053903**

I refer to your email of 18 March 2019, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *Process for a claimant to use to seek assistance with weight related costs and/or surgery*
2. *Process ACC uses to assess entitlement of such application(s) made by a claimant*
3. *Any additional information to services that would assist a claimant with weight related issues, that ACC provides.*

**Process for assistance with weight related costs**

ACC does not have a specific process for assessing weight related treatment or surgery. A request to fund weight loss treatment should come from a registered medical practitioner and is considered on an individual basis. ACC's legislation requires ACC to ensure there is enough clinical evidence directly linking the need for any treatment or surgery, to a covered injury.

Obesity and weight gain may be a consequence of an injury but they are not considered a personal injury as described in the Accident Compensation Act (2001). An obesity diagnosis will be secondary to a covered injury and may have multiple causations such as side effects of medication, reduced mobility, or psychological factors. Weight loss treatment can range from dietary advice and support to invasive surgery, such as a gastric by-pass.

**Process to assess entitlement to weight related applications**

For a client to be eligible for weight loss treatment ACC would need to first establish that:

- Weight gain is a consequence of a covered injury; and
- Weight loss treatment is necessary and appropriate for the client's rehabilitation.

If the client is seeking elective surgery funding for weight loss they will need to have an assessment report and a treatment plan completed by a specialist to determine if an elective surgery funding request is acceptable.

Once the specialist establishes a causal link and that there is appropriate cover, the surgery decision is made.

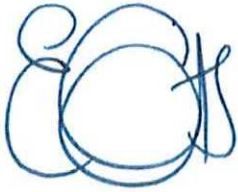
**Information on ACC services to assist with weight related issues**

A client should speak with their case owner to find out what kind of services ACC can provide to assist them with a weight related issue. These services may be one of the following: a gym membership, a pass to a local swimming pool, or a referral to a dietitian.

It is important to remember that any assistance the client requests must be based on an assessment to decide whether the assistance is necessary, suitable, and needed as a direct result of the covered personal injury.

If you have any questions, you can email me at [GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz](mailto:GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz).

All Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a final vertical stroke on the right side.

Emma Coats  
**Manager Official Information Act Services**  
Government Engagement & Support