



29 NOV 2017

Dear

On 1 November 2017, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information regarding the five accredited providers of medical alarms as of November 2017.

For the sake of clarity, each of your questions will be addressed in turn.

- *Has the Ministry given any written permission to suppliers to telemarket, cold call or door knock in the last 24 months? If so, how many times, and to whom?*

The Ministry has never given permission for any providers of medical alarms to conduct telemarketing, cold-calling, or door-knocking.

- *Have there been any complaints to the Ministry regarding the supplier of a medical alarm in the last 24 months? If so, how many have been received?*

Telecare Services Association New Zealand registers and accredits Telecare Service Providers who have been independently assessed as being competent to provide services in New Zealand, and investigates complaints.

The Ministry recently received one complaint from a General Practitioner in the Waikato Region that a medical alarm company was cold-calling in their area. However, they were unable to advise which medical alarm company was conducting this cold-calling. No other complaints have been received in the last 24 months.

- *What is the Ministry's annual spend on medical alarms through the disability allowance?*

As discussed on 7 November 2017, the Ministry does not report annual expenditure on Medical Alarms through the Disability Allowance. The Ministry does, however, record the weekly amount claimed for Medical Alarms through the Disability Allowance at a given point in time.

The table below shows the Disability Allowance costs claimed per week for Medical Alarms, and the number of associated clients, as at the end of each month from October 2016 to September 2017.

Month	Amount claimed per week	Number of clients
October 2016	\$737,401.16	51,947
November 2016	\$739,567.25	52,120
December 2016	\$738,572.42	52,056
January 2017	\$734,369.57	51,768
February 2017	\$733,183.29	51,691
March 2017	\$735,805.55	51,894
April 2017	\$734,982.57	51,855
May 2017	\$722,223.32	51,550
June 2017	\$722,275.65	51,583
July 2017	\$720,305.94	51,474
August 2017	\$718,612.77	51,392
September 2017	\$718,873.60	51,448

Note:

- The Disability Allowance is currently capped at \$62.37 per week, and may include costs claimed for multiple reasons.
- The amount claimed for Medical Alarms may differ from the amount paid out where the aggregate amount claimed exceeds the \$62.37 weekly cap.
- The Disability Allowance can be paid to a client or on behalf of a dependant.
- *Copies of the monthly reports submitted to the Ministry under clause 7.5 of the Code of Professional Conduct for Accredited Suppliers of Monitored Medical Alarms for the last year from the five accredited suppliers.*

In order to ensure the security of sensitive client information in these reports, the Ministry suspended the use of the cloud-based file transfer system that was previously used to provide reports. Until a secure alternative is identified and introduced, the provision of monthly reporting is also suspended. As such, your request for copies of the monthly reports submitted to the Ministry by each of the five accredited suppliers for the last year is refused under section 18(e) as this information does not exist.

Please note that while the Ministry does not currently receive monthly reports from these suppliers, quarterly meetings continue to take place to ensure on-going communication.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

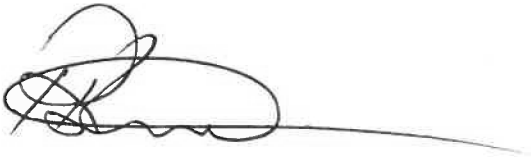
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding medical alarms, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ruth Bound', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ruth Bound
Deputy Chief Executive, Service Delivery