



31 OCT 2018



Dear 

On 22 August 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *How many vasectomies and tubal ligation procedures did Work and Income pay for in 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 to date? Please break down by procedure and year.*
2. *How much did this amount to? Please break down by year.*
3. *Please include any associated travel or accommodation costs covered by Work and Income.*

The District Health Board does not always provide for vasectomies. When clients are required to travel away from home to receive this treatment or to pay private hospital fees, Special Needs Grants towards the cost may be considered.

Unless exceptional circumstances exist, the maximum amount payable towards the cost of travel, accommodation and surgery is \$300. Special Needs Grants for this purpose are non-recoverable and restricted to one payment in any 52 week period.

More information on Special Needs Grants for vasectomies can be found on the Ministry's website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/vasectomies-and-termination-of-pregnancies-01.html and here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/vasectomies-01.html.

Please find attached a table showing the number of Special Needs Grants (SNGs) and the amount granted for the reason 'vasectomy' for each calendar year from 2015 to 30 June 2018, including grants for the procedure and associated travel costs. The Ministry did not pay Special Needs Grants for vasectomy associated accommodation during this time period.

The Ministry does not offer funding for tubal ligations, as such your request for information about tubal ligation procedures is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not.

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 and attachments 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 vasectomies and tubal ligations, 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



Kay Read
Group General Manager, Client Service Delivery

The number of Special Needs Grants (SNGs) and the amount granted for the reason 'vasectomy surgery only' and 'vasectomy travel' for each calendar year from 2015 to 30 June 2018.

Calendar year	Reason for grant	Number of grants	Amount granted
2015	Vasectomy Surgery only	28	\$8,801
	Vasectomy Travel	1	\$30
	Total	29	\$8,831
2016	Vasectomy Surgery only	24	\$7,750
	Vasectomy Travel	2	\$90
	Total	26	\$7,840
2017	Vasectomy Surgery only	40	\$13,405
	Total	40	\$13,405
to 30 June 2018	Vasectomy Surgery only	26	\$8,570
	Total	26	\$8,570

Notes:

- This is not a count of clients, it is a count of grants made.
- This is the amount granted, it may not be the same as the amount spent.