

**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

28 June 2022

Tēnā koe

On 25 March 2022, you emailed the Office of the Hon Andrew Little requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

We ask that you confirm the amount of funds pledged by your government for Mental Health and confirm the amount actually spent for the year ended 31 March 2022 in relation to the budgeted sum for that year. If the amount spent is less than the budgeted sum, please explain why this was not spent and what were the unspent allocated funds spent on in preference.

On 5 May 2022, you were advised that to capture the full spend of the Mental Wellbeing Budget 2019 across several government agencies, that your request had partially been transferred to the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) for response.

On 30 May 2022, the Ministry advised you that more time was required to make a decision on your request, and that a decision would be with you on or before 24 June 2022. The reason for the extension is that the consultations necessary to make a decision on the request were such that a proper response to the request could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

On 23 June 2022, the Ministry issued a Notification of Decision informing more time was required to prepare the information for release. This information will be with you on or before 29 June 2022.

The \$1.9 billion dollars was provided across agencies to implement initiatives to assist with the Wellbeing of New Zealanders of which \$138.9 million was provided to Vote Social Development administered by the Ministry to implement the initiatives.

Please find below details of relevant funds the Ministry received in the Wellbeing Budget 2019.

Disabled People and People with Health Conditions Improving Employment and Wider Wellbeing Outcomes.

This initiative aims to support an additional 2,600 disabled people and people with health conditions, including those with mental health needs, to find and stay in meaningful employment, increase their knowledge and skills, and improve their health and wider wellbeing.

The Ministry can confirm that the amounts for all five financial years as listed in the Wellbeing Budget 2019 as related to this initiative were received by the Ministry.

The funding for this initiative has provided additional capacity for the Ministry's contracted employment service, particularly for mental health support.

Disabled People and People with Health Conditions Improving Employment and Wider Wellbeing Outcomes is an initiative which consists of two other initiatives, Oranga Mahi and Disability Employment Services and Support Fund.

Please see enclosed an excel spreadsheet, titled **Appendix A**, that contains the 'Overview of the Budget 2019 mental wellbeing package: Cross-agency' initiatives as at the end of March 2022.

Please note that the financial year ends 30 June.

Oranga Mahi

Oranga Mahi is a programme of cross-agency trials and services delivered in partnership with the Ministry, District Health Boards, Primary Health Organisations and Community/Iwi providers that trials new ways of working with clients receiving a health-related benefit. Oranga Mahi aims to enhance the experience of care for its participants, to support them to improve their health and wellbeing, leading to sustainable social and employment outcomes.

It is important to note that some Oranga Mahi services were delayed due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Disability Employment Services and Support Fund

Employment Service

These services are outcome based and the funding paid is based on the number of clients engaged each year and the milestones achieved by the provider for each client. Therefore, the contract value represents the total amount the provider could claim if all clients achieve all milestones available and payments are the actual result of clients being engaged and actual milestones achieved for each.

Support Funds

The Support Funds service is currently administered by Workbridge on behalf of MSD and helps to meet the additional costs disabled people may face when undertaking the same training or employment as a person without a disability. The contract value is made up of the Support Funds and the administration fee paid to Workbridge.

Historic Claims

As part of the Budget 2019, the Government invested \$93.8 million over three years (which has been extended to four years) to enable claimants of abuse in state care to have a sense of justice, validation and empowerment, with increased staffing and support changes to the Historic Claims process, enabling the Ministry to respond to and settle more claims and provide appropriate support to claimants. This allocation of \$93.8 million does not relate to funding for mental health or addiction support. However, the Historic Claims initiative supports the priority of Supporting Mental Wellbeing, even though it is not specifically related to the funding for mental health.

As part of responding to Historic Claims, claimants are assisted to access counselling and are linked with other services where necessary. Where ACC or community support options

are not appropriate for the claimant to access, Historic Claims will fund counselling sessions for claimants while they are undergoing the historic claims process. The Ministry can advise that up until 31 March 2022, Historic Claims has funded a total of \$48,101.96 (excluding GST accruals) in client counselling costs since the receipt of funding under the Wellbeing Budget 2019.

In October 2020, the Ministry signed a service agreement with Emerge Aotearoa NZ who are piloting a navigation service to link claimants to existing services in Wellington. As at 31 March 2022, Historic Claims has funded a total of \$219,666.63 (excluding GST and accruals) to Emerge Aotearoa. The budget allocation remaining from the Wellbeing Budget 2019 for this aspect of Historic Claims funding is \$2,667,832.37. When funding was sought for this service, it was anticipated that this wraparound navigation service would progress from a pilot and be rolled out throughout New Zealand. However, due to a number of factors, significantly the impacts of COVID-19 and the need for further testing to understand demand for this type of service amongst historic abuse claimants, the pilot has not been extended beyond Wellington. It may also be helpful to understand that the Government has announced that it is developing a new integrated, independent survivor-focused redress system that acknowledges the harm and trauma people have experienced and supports them to improve their wellbeing. As part of this work, further work will be carried out on how the new redress system can provide supports for claimants.

The principles and purposes of the Act 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
- 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. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments 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 the 2019 Wellbeing Budget, 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.

Nāku noa, nā



Magnus O'Neill
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