



20 November 2023

Tēnā koe

On 24 October 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

The number of people who are receiving the Disability Allowance as of the June 2023 and September 2023 quarter broken down by the primary cost the payment is intended for (prescription fees, heating, etc)

The aggregate total weekly amount payable to recipients of the work-ready Jobseeker support payment and the total weekly amount payable to recipients of the Disability Allowance as of the September 2023 quarter.

As at 1 April 2023, Work and Income may pay up to a maximum of \$75.10 a week for a Disability Allowance (DA), whilst children may receive \$56.60. The amount a client receives depends on the extra costs that client has because of their disability. As a part of the application for DA, clients are required to provide a Disability Certificate form, which is completed by a health practitioner, along with proof of their on-going disability-related costs (e.g., pharmacy and medical receipts and invoices, electricity bills, petrol receipts).

A client is required to advise Work and Income of any changes in their circumstances that might affect their entitlement to a DA. Furthermore, a Case Manager may also review a DA at any time to ensure a client is receiving the correct rate of payment.

Jobseeker Support (JS) is a temporary benefit paid for up to 52 weeks while clients look for work, are in training for work or unable to work due to a health condition, injury, or disability. Jobseeker Support 'Work Ready' grants, however, refer solely to those JS clients who are available for and seeking full-time employment.

Please find attached **Appendix One** which provides the following tables:

- **Table One:** The weekly amount payable for working age clients receiving Jobseeker Support Work Ready as at quarter ending September 2023
- **Table Two:** The weekly amount payable for clients receiving Disability Allowance as at quarter ending September 2023
- **Table Three:** Disability Allowance cost types as at quarter ending June and September 2023 by number of recipients

To protect confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data. These data tables have had random rounding where values have been randomly rounded to the nearest multiple of 3. This is applied to all cell counts in the table. The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals. The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.

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 attached appendix available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry'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 to your request, 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.

Ngā mihi nui

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
Manager
Issues Resolution

Appendix One

Table One: The weekly amount payable for working age clients receiving Jobseeker Support Work Ready as at quarter ending September 2023

As at quarter ending	Net Weekly Amount	Gross Weekly Amount
September 2023	\$33,542,356.18	\$38,323,512.20

Notes:

- The table includes working age only (18 to 64 years).
- This table only includes clients receiving Jobseeker Support Work Ready.
- The rate of benefit provided is the basic benefit rate reduced by an individual's income if they have any.
- It is not reduced by offsets and does not include supplementary assistance.
- This is a snapshot of the weekly benefit payment at given points in time. Adding up the values as at the end of each quarter does not equal the yearly amount payable.

Table Two: The weekly amount payable for clients receiving Disability Allowance as at quarter ending September 2023

As at quarter ending	Weekly Amount
September 2023	\$5,689,119.04

Notes:

- This included clients of all ages and all benefits, pensions, and non-Beneficiary.
- The amount of Disability Allowance costs claimed is the amount of the cost type the client has reported. It is not the amount of Disability Allowance paid for the cost type.
- Disability Allowance can be paid to a client or on behalf of a dependent.
- A client may receive one or more Disability Allowances.
- This is a table of costs declared - which is more than the number of clients receiving Disability Allowances.
- The costs declared does not relate to the money paid out as Disability Allowances is capped at a maximum payment even if loaded costs exceed this.

Table Three: Disability Allowance cost types as at quarter ending June and September 2023 by number of recipients and quarter ending.

As at quarter ending	Cost type	Number of recipients
30 June 2023	Additional Anywhere Medical Alarm	72
	Additional At-home Medical Alarm	2,175
	Alternative Medical Treatment	21,690
	Ambulance Fees	849
	Anywhere Medical Alarm	1,470
	At-home Medical Alarm	52,710
	Authorised Consumables	14,751
	Clothing	1,635
	Counselling	1,737
	Day Care for Elderly	126
	Equipment, Rental	1,320
	Foods, Special	7,320
	Gardening/Lawns	55,686
	Gym/Swimming Pool Fees	3,522
	Medical Fees	200,571
	MedicAlert Costs	981
	Nicotine Replacement Products	6
	Outside Window Cleaning	3,936
	Pharmaceutical Charges	2,100
	Power/Gas/Heating	14,394
	Prescription Charges	157,716
	Telephone	18,969
	Telephone Costs Payment	963
	Transport - Counselling	180
	Transport - Disability	16,317
	Transport - Personal Health	49,845
	Vitamin/Herbal/Supplements	1,740
	Other	159
	Unspecified	6
		Total

As at quarter ending	Cost type	Number of recipients
29 September 2023	Additional Anywhere Medical Alarm	99
	Additional At-home Medical Alarm	2,151
	Alternative Medical Treatment	21,882
	Ambulance Fees	882
	Anywhere Medical Alarm	2,442
	At-home Medical Alarm	52,155
	Authorised Consumables	14,919
	Clothing	1,653
	Counselling	1,818
	Day Care for Elderly	123
	Equipment, Rental	1,371
	Foods, Special	7,353
	Gardening/Lawns	55,476
	Gym/Swimming Pool Fees	3,780
	Medical Fees	199,839
	MedicAlert Costs	1,035
	Nicotine Replacement Products	6
	Outside Window Cleaning	4,110
	Pharmaceutical Charges	2,205
	Power/Gas/Heating	14,169
	Prescription Charges	145,866
	Telephone	18,699
	Telephone Costs Payment	903
	Transport - Counselling	231
	Transport - Disability	16,356
	Transport - Personal Health	49,536
	Vitamin/Herbal/Supplements	1,851
Other	153	
Unspecified	9	
Total	621,078	

Notes:

- Recipients of Disability Allowance may have more than one cost type so a client may be counted more than once.
- This is number of costs included in a Disability Allowance
- The cost types logged under "Other" category include but are not limited to podiatry, hearing aid batteries, lawns, and window cleaning.
- Where costs are logged under the "Unspecified" cost category, staff may have entered the incorrect coding when updating a client's Disability Allowance cost.

- To protect confidentiality the Ministry of Social Development uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.