

6 June 2023

Sarah Brodrick

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Kia ora Sarah

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-025316

Thank you for your email of 26 May 2023, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I would like ALL Official Information ACC holds about Functional Neurological Disorder (not asking for any personal details of ACC Claimants or staff)

- I have an interest in any guidelines, internal policies and or procedures of the ACC Clinical Advisor Department in the ACC internal assessment of the ACC funded service provider Neuro Psychological Assessment for an ACC Head Injury Claim, with an ACC Claimant that has a pre-existing medical condition of Functional Neurological Disorder.

I am wanting to request for a full disclosure of any information around symptoms and diagnosis ACC Clinical Advisors reference too, in making any assessments or decisions about an ACC Claimants Head Injury claim and entitlements in relation to a pre-existing medical condition of Functional Neurological Disorder

I would like ALL Official Information ACC holds about a Head Injury and guidelines around pre-existing medical conditions with an interest in neurological conditions, or conditions relevant to ACC requiring to seek further written guidance, or assessment (medical case review, neuro psychological assessment)

I would like ALL Official information ACC holds about the Neuro Psychological Assessment, this is not just limited to the external assessment with the ACC funded service provider, but the ACC internal policy, procedures and steps usually taken by ACC staff, prior to, and after the Neuro Psychological Assessment is conducted with the service provider.

ACC does not hold documents, guidelines or policies about Functional Neurological Disorder

We have searched internal webpages and document databases. However, we did not identify any information relating to Functional Neurological Symptom Disorder (FND), Somatic Symptom Disorder, or any variant of this disorder (such as somatoform disorder).

As such, we are refusing to respond to this part of the request as the information is not held by ACC and we do not believe it is held by another agency. This decision has been made under section 18(g)(i) of the Act.

No specific instructions are provided to assessors about how to evaluate claims

It is expected that assessors have the necessary competencies based on their clinical training. Assessors are required to draw on their clinical training and experience to provide advice in line with the evidence on the claim. They are also expected to have a clinical understanding of the relevant condition based on international scientific knowledge.

Decisions to seek further guidance, or to request further assessment, are not based on the specific diagnosis or condition

Rather, they are based on a consideration of the clinical information required to enable a decision to be made about cover, treatment, or other support. Processes and procedures related to the evaluation of a FND claim are consistent with that of any other ACC claim.

Documents related to neuropsychological assessments

Appendix 1 contains the following six documents related to neuropsychological assessment, as well as those that reference referrals for neuropsychological assessments (Concussion Services and Training for Independence):

- Assess and Arrange Neuropsychological Assessment
- Neuropsychological Assessment Overview Service Page
- Neuropsychological Assessment Referrals Service Page
- Concussion Service Assessments Service Page
- Concussion Services Service Page
- Training For Independence Services Service Page

As staff names were not requested, they have been deemed out of the scope of your request and removed.

If you have any questions about this response, please get in touch

You can email me at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz. If you are not happy with this response, you can also contact the Ombudsman via info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Ngā mihi



Sara Freitag

Acting Manager Official Information Act Services
Government Engagement