



20 JUN 2017

Dear

On 12 April 2017 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *For each financial year, since 1 July 2011; broken down into region:*
 - *How many people have applied for the Disability Allowance for Digestive System Disorders?*
 - *How many people have applied for the Child Disability Allowance for Physical reasons?*
 - *How many people have been declined the Disability Allowance for Digestive System Disorders?*
 - *How many people have been declined the Child Disability Allowance for Physical reasons?*

The Disability Allowance is an income tested, non-taxable form of additional financial assistance available to clients who have additional costs resulting from a disability or medical condition, such as visits to the doctor or hospital, medical alarms, counselling, pharmaceutical costs, special foods, or travel.

Please refer to table 1 attached, which details the applications for a Disability Allowance for Digestive system disorders, broken down by region and declined or granted status, for the financial years 2011/12 to 2015/16. Please note, the figures in table 1 do not capture declined applications for Disability Allowance where the medical condition was not recorded.

Child Disability Allowance is a non-taxable allowance available to the primary caregiver of a child who is diagnosed with a physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual disability. Child Disability Allowance is paid at a standard rate and is not income tested. It is usually paid to the primary carer in recognition of the extra care they provide to a child with a severe medical condition compared to that required for a child of a similar age who is not impaired. It is not related to any particular financial costs incurred in relation to the child's disability. People may also be eligible to receive a Disability Allowance to meet any additional costs the dependent child may have due to their disability.

A number of factors are considered when assessing a person's eligibility for these allowances and further details about criteria and payment are available on the Work and Income website at: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-

help/disability-allowance/ and <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/child-disability-allowance/> for the Disability Allowance and the Child Disability Allowance respectively.

Please refer to table 2 attached, which details the number of applications granted for a Child Disability Allowance for 'Physical' reasons, broken down by region, for the financial years 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Unlike for the Disability Allowance, the reason for an application for a Child Disability Allowance is not recorded in a reportable manner unless the application is granted. As such your request for the number of people that have been declined the Child Disability allowance for Physical reasons is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, as this information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review thousands of files. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

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

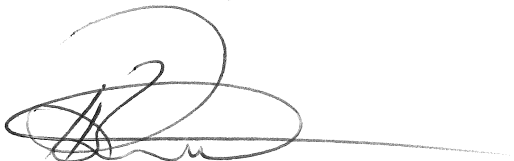
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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, 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

Table 1: Disability Allowance applications for digestive system disorders, broken down by region and declined or granted status, from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Digestive system disorders	Financial Year									
	2011/2012		2012/2013		2013/2014		2014/2015		2015/2016	
	Declined	Granted	Declined	Granted	Declined	Granted	Declined	Granted	Declined	Granted
Northland	18	107	17	92	S	68	0	141	11	186
Auckland Metro	76	509	56	527	38	452	45	488	59	768
Waikato	34	321	61	221	33	219	27	292	30	310
Taranaki	30	133	8	111	15	86	10	103	23	119
Bay of Plenty	47	235	57	201	24	165	27	231	43	348
East Coast	54	212	31	152	15	166	10	140	33	199
Central	49	221	18	229	35	226	11	245	13	323
Wellington	22	171	21	127	S	171	27	232	33	283
Nelson	48	230	25	134	20	213	39	213	26	308
Canterbury	93	599	124	506	32	354	65	426	77	739
Southern	41	334	54	334	16	299	51	336	69	479
Other	40	929	63	837	104	839	101	746	43	319
Total of Processed Applications	552	4,001	535	3,471	343	3,258	413	3,593	460	4,381

Notes:

- A client may receive one or more Disability Allowance
- These figures exclude those clients where the grant was a re-grant of the Allowance due to the benefit changes made on 13 July 2013.
- These figures do not capture declined applications where the medical condition was not recorded
- 'S' represents a suppressed cell to protect client's privacy
- The region 'Other' refers to those units that do not represent a geographic location such as Specialised Processing Services and Youth Service Support Unit

Table 2: Child Disability Allowance applications granted for 'Physical' reasons, broken down by region, from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Disability Type - Physical	Financial Year				
	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Northland	159	138	162	152	121
Auckland Metro	938	876	867	879	735
Waikato	233	204	205	241	200
Taranaki	227	234	259	219	204
Bay of Plenty	259	216	248	220	207
East Coast	535	440	452	399	350
Central	310	300	337	332	270
Wellington	270	173	179	200	176
Nelson	76	88	63	89	67
Canterbury	314	529	643	612	617
Southern	248	215	164	193	244
Other	33	51	60	49	44
Total of Granted Applications	3,602	3,464	3,639	3,585	3,235

Note:

- A client may receive one or more Child Disability Allowance
- The region 'Other' refers to those units that do not represent a geographic location such as Specialised Processing Services and Youth Service Support Unit