



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

25 JAN 2017

Privacy of another: section 9(2)(a)

Dear Privacy of another: section 9(2)(a)

On 15 December 2016 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, information about Government funding and providers of head lice eradication programmes.

NitBusters is the name given to a head lice eradication initiative delivered by KidsCan, and launched by Hon Paula Bennett, former Minister for Social Development, on 8 May 2014. Details about the programme can be found on KidsCan's website at www.kidscan.org.nz/our-work/nit-busters-programme

For clarity, each of your questions have been addressed in turn.

- *How much money is allocated to nit eradication per year by the Ministry of Social Development?*

Hon Anne Tolley, Minister for Social Development, announced on 14 December 2015, that funding for the NitBusters programme was to be continued into the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial years. The funding covers the treatment of head lice in 117 low-decile schools for 24,000 students in Christchurch, Napier, Hastings, South Hamilton, Taumarunui, Porirua, Lower Hutt, Kaitaia, Opotiki and Auckland. The programme also provides treatment for family members who need it. Minister Tolley's announcement regarding the funding for NitBusters is available online at www.beehive.govt.nz/release/more-funding-tackle-nits

All funding that KidsCan has received for NitBusters has been re-appropriated from underspends in the KickStart Breakfast programme. The initial funding for the NitBuster programme to be implemented in schools for the 2015 school year was \$0.926m, disbursed from the 2013/14 KickStart Breakfast underspend. The programme received further funding of \$1.152m for delivery of the programme in the 2016 school year. That funding was sourced from the KickStart underspends in 2015/16 and 2016/17, being \$0.886m and \$0.266m respectively.

- *How many providers is this money allocated to?*
- *How have providers been selected to date?*
- *Is this a contestable process? If not, why not?*

The NitBusters initiative is the only nit eradication programme receiving funding from the Ministry of Social Development and has been funded at the discretion of Hon Anne Tolley, Minister for Social Development. Given the discretionary nature of the funding for the NitBusters, the way in which the funding is allocated is not contestable.

- *What evaluation has been undertaken since funding began in 2014 about the treatments the Government is funding? If so, I would like to request a copy of this evaluation.*

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No evaluations have been undertaken to date for the NitBusters programme. As such, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as this information does not exist.

- *Do any other Government agencies, apart from MSD fund nit eradication programmes?*

The Ministry of Social Development can only comment on the Ministry's own funding. The Ministry is not aware of any other government agencies funding head lice eradication programmes. To address your request the Ministry has enquired with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, neither of which fund a head lice eradication programme. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

- *Does the Government plan to continue with funding nit eradication in 2017?*

The funding for the programme finishes at the end of the current funding year, 30 June 2017. The Ministry has no plans to continue to fund nit eradication programmes.

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 after ten working days. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter 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



Maree Roberts

Associate Deputy Chief Executive, Community Investment