



21 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 7 March 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Do you have a list of the msd read codes that are used in the work capacity medical certificates?*

In 2018, the Ministry moved from using READ codes to a type of coding called SNOMED codes. SNOMED codes provide a more specific understanding of the client's medical condition and the likely impact their condition may have on their ability to work. However, there are a large number of General Practitioners who still use READ codes. The Ministry implemented a manual process to map the translation of a READ code to a SNOMED code to ensure we are capturing the correct medical diagnosis for our clients, from their practitioner. More information about SNOMED codes is publicly available on the Ministry of Health website: [www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/classification-and-terminology/new-zealand-snomed-ct-national-release-centre/snomed-ct](http://www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/classification-and-terminology/new-zealand-snomed-ct-national-release-centre/snomed-ct).

General practitioners submit a READ code through HealthLink. Where a corresponding SNOMED code does not already exist, Ministry systems then manually map a new SNOMED code. Following this process, the mapping then exists and will automatically apply to any other future instances of the same READ code.

There are 42,000 READ codes that a Health Provider can choose from. There are also thousands of possible SNOMED codes that can be used. It would require substantial collation to capture, map and release a full list of the codes that may be used in Work Capacity Medical Certificates. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested.

I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

However, in the spirit of being helpful, I can provide you with a full READ code list that is publicly available on the Accident Compensation Corporation website:

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aac.co.nz%2Fassets%2Fprovider%2Facc6343-read-code-reference-list-2022.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK> .

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. 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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



Craig Dixon  
**Manager Business Enterprise**