



6 JUL 2018



Dear 

On 21 May 2018 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Is it possible to get annual figures, for the last five years, of the total number of hardship grants made to people aged 65 and over?*
- *Can these figures be broken down into:*
 - *reason for grant (i.e. food, etc)*
 - *age group (can over-65 be broken down further, ie 65-70, 71-75 or similar?)*
 - *the amount granted (broken down into reason for grant)*

The Ministry of Social Development, through Work and Income, provides recoverable and non-recoverable financial assistance to help people meet an immediate need for essential items such as food, health costs, power and other costs.

These payments are available to any person as long as they meet the income and asset test, and they are unable to meet the cost for an essential need from any other source. Work and Income ensures that people receive their correct entitlement to any other financial assistance as part of the application and assessment process.

Work and Income assists people to manage their costs in the longer term, not just with immediate and urgent assistance. It is important to understand why the client cannot meet these costs, to provide the most appropriate form of assistance including helping them find other avenues of assistance such as from their District Health Board. The applicant also has an obligation to manage their own finances with the help of Work and Income. This may include seeking financial advice from budgeting services.

Further information about financial assistance and eligibility can be found on the Work and Income website: www.workandincome.govt.nz/individuals/a-z-benefits/index.html.

Please find attached a table that provides the number and amount of hardship grants for clients over 65 years of age broken down in to reason, age group and amount granted.

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 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 concerning hardship grants, 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



Kay Read
Group General Manager, Client Service Delivery

Table 1: The number and amount of Hardship Grants for clients over 65 years of age broken down in to reason; age group; amount granted.

| Year | Reason Group | Age Group | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | | 75-79 | | 80-84 | | 85+ | | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | | |
| | | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | | | | | | |
| 2013 | Accommodation | 525 | \$164,210.56 | 280 | \$76,285.82 | 149 | \$41,883.12 | 58 | \$16,548.72 | 16 | \$4,189.32 | 1,028 | \$303,117.54 | | |
| | Electricity and Gas | 605 | \$259,964.91 | 383 | \$161,233.78 | 167 | \$75,716.13 | 65 | \$32,486.61 | 24 | \$11,195.84 | 1,244 | \$540,597.27 | | |
| | Food | 4,496 | \$449,297.08 | 2,619 | \$262,371.58 | 1,249 | \$122,051.03 | 517 | \$49,853.61 | 162 | \$15,518.98 | 9,043 | \$899,092.28 | | |
| | Medical and Associated Costs | 4,085 | \$2,229,660.64 | 3,180 | \$1,760,964.65 | 1,979 | \$1,144,097.99 | 942 | \$611,212.49 | 393 | \$273,049.66 | 10,579 | \$6,018,985.43 | | |
| | Other | 7,217 | \$2,847,042.47 | 3,822 | \$1,680,200.56 | 1,959 | \$865,904.01 | 865 | \$387,058.51 | 307 | \$148,523.89 | 14,170 | \$5,928,729.44 | | |
| | Subtotal | 16,928 | \$5,950,175.66 | 10,264 | \$3,941,056.39 | 5,503 | \$2,249,652.28 | 2,447 | \$1,097,159.94 | 902 | \$452,477.69 | 36,064 | \$13,690,521.96 | | |
| 2014 | Accommodation | 626 | \$185,279.51 | 336 | \$100,664.61 | 194 | \$56,924.67 | 87 | \$30,610.65 | 28 | \$7,410.39 | 1,271 | \$380,889.83 | | |
| | Electricity and Gas | 517 | \$233,256.77 | 317 | \$137,334.71 | 145 | \$63,531.35 | 55 | \$29,422.35 | 20 | \$6,924.29 | 1,054 | \$470,469.47 | | |
| | Food | 4,673 | \$480,181.56 | 2,650 | \$270,642.32 | 1,282 | \$129,428.43 | 541 | \$53,164.27 | 197 | \$19,242.29 | 9,343 | \$952,658.87 | | |
| | Medical and Associated Costs | 4,284 | \$2,135,203.31 | 3,355 | \$1,746,470.67 | 2,172 | \$1,164,946.04 | 1,054 | \$621,814.25 | 443 | \$304,988.40 | 11,308 | \$5,973,392.67 | | |
| | Other | 8,154 | \$3,297,514.68 | 3,874 | \$1,715,838.36 | 2,107 | \$951,228.52 | 951 | \$444,801.27 | 329 | \$148,442.39 | 15,415 | \$6,557,825.22 | | |
| | Subtotal | 18,254 | \$6,331,435.83 | 10,532 | \$3,970,950.67 | 5,900 | \$2,366,059.01 | 2,688 | \$1,179,812.79 | 1,017 | \$486,977.76 | 38,391 | \$14,335,236.06 | | |

| Year | Reason Group | Age Group | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| | | 65-69 | | 70-74 | | 75-79 | | 80-84 | | 85+ | | Number | Amount Granted | | |
| | | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | | | | |
| 2015 | Accommodation | 713 | \$214,606.01 | 431 | \$132,145.66 | 209 | \$63,903.36 | 100 | \$28,934.68 | 27 | \$6,696.33 | 1,480 | \$446,286.04 | | |
| | Electricity and Gas | 558 | \$274,309.94 | 356 | \$165,233.09 | 169 | \$77,348.74 | 72 | \$33,220.24 | 21 | \$9,099.49 | 1,176 | \$559,211.50 | | |
| | Food | 5,109 | \$539,804.75 | 3,051 | \$316,961.74 | 1,524 | \$157,148.82 | 590 | \$59,529.79 | 215 | \$21,103.55 | 10,489 | \$1,094,548.65 | | |
| | Medical and Associated Costs | 4,557 | \$2,152,403.04 | 3,539 | \$1,791,980.43 | 2,329 | \$1,241,169.26 | 1,125 | \$648,418.93 | 457 | \$293,091.66 | 12,007 | \$6,127,063.32 | | |
| | Other | 8,999 | \$3,759,681.74 | 4,503 | \$2,082,545.96 | 2,348 | \$1,106,437.65 | 1,015 | \$467,158.25 | 344 | \$163,571.48 | 17,209 | \$7,579,395.08 | | |
| | Subtotal | 19,936 | \$6,940,805.48 | 11,880 | \$4,488,866.88 | 6,579 | \$2,646,007.83 | 2,902 | \$1,237,261.89 | 1,064 | \$493,562.51 | 42,361 | \$15,806,504.59 | | |
| 2016 | Accommodation | 789 | \$275,139.33 | 466 | \$159,915.08 | 247 | \$75,910.56 | 61 | \$21,742.87 | 33 | \$12,229.50 | 1,596 | \$544,937.34 | | |
| | Electricity and Gas | 598 | \$293,084.66 | 354 | \$175,037.31 | 182 | \$86,830.71 | 73 | \$40,536.33 | 36 | \$18,884.95 | 1,243 | \$614,373.96 | | |
| | Food | 5,773 | \$606,118.22 | 3,240 | \$339,576.37 | 1,606 | \$169,227.70 | 579 | \$60,047.17 | 234 | \$23,251.09 | 11,432 | \$1,198,220.55 | | |
| | Medical and Associated Costs | 4,820 | \$2,392,241.48 | 3,716 | \$1,942,441.68 | 2,472 | \$1,354,259.74 | 1,242 | \$766,532.57 | 544 | \$385,913.27 | 12,794 | \$6,841,388.74 | | |
| | Other | 10,005 | \$4,429,842.22 | 5,126 | \$2,516,575.02 | 2,853 | \$1,430,675.75 | 1,031 | \$503,028.66 | 403 | \$201,072.51 | 19,418 | \$9,081,194.16 | | |
| | Subtotal | 21,985 | \$7,996,425.91 | 12,902 | \$5,133,545.46 | 7,360 | \$3,116,904.46 | 2,986 | \$1,391,887.60 | 1,250 | \$641,351.32 | 46,483 | \$18,280,114.75 | | |

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| | | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | Number of Grants | Amount Granted | | | | |
| 2017 | Accommodation | 856 | \$299,416.34 | 507 | \$166,964.80 | 257 | \$82,524.58 | 105 | \$33,114.42 | 40 | \$12,516.35 | 1,765 | \$594,536.49 | | |
| | Electricity and Gas | 676 | \$309,497.95 | 449 | \$215,836.70 | 249 | \$109,926.80 | 74 | \$49,247.74 | 34 | \$17,363.77 | 1,482 | \$701,872.96 | | |
| | Food | 7,885 | \$816,301.28 | 4,507 | \$471,577.78 | 2,312 | \$239,057.08 | 786 | \$82,182.16 | 327 | \$33,658.93 | 15,817 | \$1,642,777.23 | | |
| | Medical and Associated Costs | 5,182 | \$2,731,654.72 | 4,045 | \$2,081,945.74 | 2,829 | \$1,597,240.24 | 1,214 | \$742,996.51 | 573 | \$386,465.83 | 13,843 | \$7,540,303.04 | | |
| | Other | 12,004 | \$5,517,685.76 | 5,826 | \$2,962,204.84 | 3,207 | \$1,663,790.02 | 1,253 | \$611,600.28 | 539 | \$280,659.38 | 22,829 | \$11,035,940.28 | | |
| | Subtotal | 26,603 | \$9,674,556.05 | 15,334 | \$5,898,529.86 | 8,854 | \$3,692,538.72 | 3,432 | \$1,519,141.11 | 1,513 | \$730,664.26 | 55,736 | \$21,515,430.00 | | |

Notes:

- This is a count of grants not individuals.
- The same individual may have been granted a benefit more than once.
- Hardship assistance includes Special Needs Grants, Benefit Advance Payments and Recoverable Assistance Payments.
- The 'Other' Reason Group includes Emergency Housing grants.
- Year is calendar year.