



1 July 2021

DOIA20/21060582

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your requests of 2 June and 9 June 2021 seeking further information and data on transitional housing. These requests were further to my response of 21 May 2021 to your earlier Official Information Act request.

Your questions and the responses to these are provided below.

#### **Questions received 2 June**

- *You mentioned you expect "to have more up to date data available in the next month". What data do you expect to be available? New data or just more recent data?*

I can advise that the more up to date data referred to in my response refers to more recent data rather than new data. In effect, it is the same metrics applied to a different time period.

- *In the OIA response you said 1500 people were placed in motel units during lockdown last year and are receiving ongoing support while long-term accommodation is sought for them. How many of those people remain in motel units? Are they classified as staying in transitional housing, receiving Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants or other?*

As at 31 March 2021, we continued to contract 971 motel places supporting about 1000 people. These clients are not classified as staying in in transitional housing or receiving Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants.

For your information, many of the high needs individuals housed under our COVID-19 response continue to receive support through the Housing First programme, which offers tailored support for as long as it is needed to help people stay housed and address the underlying needs that led to their experience of homelessness. Others are supported through the Rapid Rehousing programme, which caters to individuals who require low to medium levels of support to access and maintain permanent housing. The aim is that these people will be able to move into longer term housing as we continue to deliver extra transitional and public housing places funded through Budgets 2018 and 2020.

- *You included information about the five longest terms in transitional housing, and said they are five individuals who have stayed for more than 248 weeks in the same facility since it received funding for transitional housing. What is the name of this facility, where is it and who manages it? Why have people stayed there for so long? How many people in total*

*are staying there and how many people in total (including the five mentioned in the OIA response) have stayed there for more than 248 days?*

I am unable to provide the name or location of the facility or its manager under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act. We don't disclose the names of these accommodation providers, in order to protect the privacy and personal security of the individuals/whanau staying at such facilities.

As at the end of April 2021, there were 55 individuals in this facility. Nine individuals have been in this facility for 248 weeks as at 30 April 2021. These nine include the five previously advised in the earlier response<sup>1</sup>.

Transitional housing is provided to households with an emergency need for accommodation and the service includes wrap-around supports administered by housing providers that aim at helping households address the barriers they may be facing in obtaining a long-term, sustainable housing solution. However, the barriers that households face can be complex and multi-faceted and obtaining a solution for households can be difficult. As such, the time taken to achieve a suitable outcome can vary and providers continue to support households through this journey whilst they remain in transitional housing.

#### **Questions received 9 June**

- *Of the 1500 people placed in motel units during lockdown last year, how many have moved to permanent homes, how many are still in the units, how many are in other forms of emergency or transitional housing, and how many are no longer in the units but also not in permanent homes (please give some examples of where they might have moved to).*

The Ministry's COVID-19 response required agencies and providers to work at pace. As such, the Ministry did not require providers to submit comprehensive reporting until some months after the nationwide lockdown. Based on information received from providers (note, data from some providers has not been submitted in full), as at December 2020:

- 3,826 individuals had been housed under the Ministry's COVID-19 response since March 2020
- 308 people still in COVID-19 motels were part of the original cohort of about 1,500 people housed during the first lockdown
- about 805 people had transitioned into longer term housing
- the Ministry does not know the housing outcome for about 42% of the COVID motel exits.

In addition, as at 31 March 2021 (indicated in my response above) we continued to contract 971 motel places supporting about 1000 people.

- *Where were the 1500 people based before lockdown? I don't require a break-down of every location for each person, but more general information – where were the majority (including how many) and what other centres were they based in?*

We don't hold specific information on where people came from but the following table shows the new supply of places across locations for homeless and vulnerable people as part of the COVID-19 Response. It includes the places offered by motels across nine different regions including 17 different towns or cities as at 1 May 2020. Given the speed of the response as

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<sup>1</sup> Your request asked for more than 248 days . We've taken this to be 248 weeks consistent with your previous request.

New Zealand entered into lockdown, it is reasonable to assume the majority were already living in the area where they were then placed into a COVID motel.

Region	Motels	Places Offered
Northland	7	58
Auckland	27	462
Bay of Plenty	21	315
Waikato	4	45
East Coast	6	80
Central	2	16
Wellington	9	112
Nelson/Tasman	6	46
Canterbury	10	74
Total	92	1,208

As previously advised, as part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Yours sincerely



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Housing Supply, Response and Partnerships