26 MAR 2019

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your email of 22 February 2019 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- how many frontline staff work for Oranga Tamariki?
- how many of these staff have full registration for social work - in line with the legislation just passed?
- how many have partial registration?
- what difference will the Social Work Registration bill make to Oranga Tamariki?

It is Oranga Tamariki policy to only employ social workers registered or those we consider ‘registerable’ with the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). It is an Oranga Tamariki requirement that SWRB registration is maintained for the duration of their employment with us. Our ‘registerable’ social workers are largely comprised of graduates of qualifications recognised by the SWRB who are working to attain the level of on-the-job experience the SWRB requires for registration. Until the recent law change, requirements for social worker registration and compliance were determined in-line with the Social Worker Registration Act 2003.

Under the SWRB Code of Conduct, it is incumbent on all registered social workers to advise the SWRB when they are the subject of a complaint or facing criminal charges in order to maintain their registration. Currently, the expectation is that this should be disclosed as soon as possible, and must be disclosed when applying for an Annual Practicing Certificate, a requirement for acquiring and maintaining SWRB registration. A copy of the SWRB Code of Conduct can be found at:


Additionally, Oranga Tamariki has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the SWRB regarding information disclosure relating to complaints about practice or competence of registered social workers employed by Oranga Tamariki. A copy of the MoU can be found at:

Oranga Tamariki is the largest single employer of registered social workers in Aotearoa /New Zealand, and has supported social worker registration since 2004. Our organisation has been a longstanding advocate of registration because it affirms the professionalism of social workers, ensures engagement in continuing professional development and bolsters accountability for social work practice.

- how many frontline staff work for Oranga Tamariki?
- how many of these staff have full registration for social work - in line with the legislation just passed?
- how many have partial registration?

Oranga Tamariki does not categorise staff into ‘frontline’ and ‘back office’ categories, however, in accordance with the Vulnerable Children’s Act 2014, we do distinguish between those who are Children’s Workers (this includes Core and Non-Core Children’s Workers) and those who do not have direct contact with children in their role and provide support to Children’s Workers.

As at 5 March 2019, we had 1508 registered social workers, who work directly with clients, in family group conferencing, social work advisory positions and management roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Registered</th>
<th>Unregistered</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Practitioners</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Leaders</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Roles #</td>
<td>296</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1508</strong></td>
<td><strong>456</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- what difference will the Social Work Registration bill make to Oranga Tamariki?

The Social Worker Registration Act will immediately impact Oranga Tamariki as an employer of registered social workers in terms of the mandatory disclosure to the SWRB if we have concerns about a social worker in relation to:

- Competence
- Serious misconduct
- Their mental or physical condition.

Oranga Tamariki will work with the SWRB to develop guidelines about how serious misconduct is defined, and at what point in any investigation of concerns disclosure should be made to the SWRB. This is a significant change from current procedure, where such disclosure was generally the exception to the rule, as employer obligations to respect the employee's rights to privacy are taken seriously. The new law requires public
safety to be above an individual's right to privacy, and employers of registered social workers to be more transparent in how they respond to concerns about a social worker's fitness to practice.

In the medium term, Oranga Tamariki will ensure any unregistered social workers engaged in face to face work with clients will become registered. The Social Workers Registration Act requires all unregistered social workers to be registered by 2021, and Oranga Tamariki needs to develop its scope of social work practice within this time frame as well. This will require careful consideration, as Oranga Tamariki employs a range of professionals who work with tamariki and whānau, but must determine which roles are within the scope of practice and require registration, and the roles outside this scope. This will include consultation with the SWRB, as they must sign off on the Oranga Tamariki scope of practice.

Oranga Tamariki intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public shortly. We will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and we 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@ot.govt.nz. If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

Steve Groom
General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services