He Kaupare. He Manaaki.
He Whakaora.
prevention. care. recovery.

Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims (ISSC) Hui | December 2021

We're aware that the decision to seek support can be significant for survivors and we are continuously looking to improve the experience for people needing support.

This short FAQ is intended as a supplement to the specific points that will be addressed within the Hui and the broader discussion about the challenges faced in this area.

What supports are survivors able to access?

We offer fully funded pre cover support, treatment, and assessment services for survivors of sexual abuse or assault. Survivors can access up to 14 hours of one-to-one therapy, 10 hours of social work, and up to 20 hours of whānau support before having their claim assessed for cover. If longer term supports are needed a supported assessment is undertaken to determine what help a survivor might need.

ACC funded treatment and support services can continue for as long as is required for the client's recovery from their mental injury. Clients can access up to 48 hours of one-to-one therapy per year plus group counselling, social work and whānau sessions.

It doesn't matter if the sexual abuse or assault happened recently or a long time ago, survivors can access ACC support services whenever they're ready.

Survivors don't have to make a report to Police or take legal action to access our support. At present, we have over 27,000 sensitive claims being managed at ACC. Access to these files are strictly restricted to those who need to access the file to provide or organise support.

What can we cover?

ACC can provide cover for a sensitive claim where:

- there has been an event of sexual abuse or assault(s), or 'certain criminal acts', as listed in sections of the Crimes Act 1961 and Schedule 3 of the AC Act 2001, and
- there is a mental injury and the sexual abuse / assault event(s) is a material or substantial cause of that mental injury, and
- the event occurred in New Zealand or, if the event occurred outside of New Zealand, the Client was ordinarily resident in New Zealand when the event occurred.

Unlike most physical injuries, cover for a sensitive claim is not provided immediately when lodging the claim. The ISSC ensures that support and assistance is provided 'pre-cover' and throughout the cover determination process. For some Clients the pre cover support may be all they need, and they may choose to withdraw their claim at this time.

How long is it taking survivors to access support from us?

The average number of weeks that survivors spend on a waitlist across all regions in New Zealand is 9.3 weeks. This is based on around 60 suppliers who manage a waitlist. Wait times to see a therapist vary significantly throughout New Zealand, both from region to region and within the same region, depending on the client's requirements, including gender and cultural background, the therapist's area of expertise, and time of day or days for appointment.

What are we doing to improve wait times?

We've continued to increase the number and range of therapy providers working with us to meet the growing demand for services and have more than doubled the number of providers since 2014.

We've made changes to our application process for potential suppliers to bring in more providers. New providers who are not already on a contract can apply to work on an existing contract, this makes the application process easier and faster for providers.

We have also enabled the use of telehealth to deliver the Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims. Providers can use telehealth to deliver services without pre-approval, which offers more flexibility in how services are delivered and received.

Who can see information about a sensitive claim?

The information we collect is confidential. We take extra steps to protect information provided to us by clients with a sensitive claim. Our claims management system holds information such as your name, contact and payment details, claim notes, reports, and medical records. Sensitive claims are also held and managed in this system. Access to sensitive claims is restricted. This means that only our staff who need to access sensitive claims can do so, and only for the purpose of carrying out their role. There is a two-step approval process before this access is granted.

A Recovery Partner or Recovery Assistant will only access a sensitive claim file when they need to work with you to facilitate the provision of services and support. Other team members also have access if they need it to carry out their role. For example:

- a member of our contact centre will access information to resolve a query if you call our 0800 number or if your provider calls us about your claim
- a member of our Payments team may access the payments tab of a sensitive claim to set up,

process or approve a payment for weekly compensation or reimburse your travel

- a member of our Customer Resolution team will access information on a claim if you lodge a complaint or a review of a decision we have made.

We also review our processes each quarter to make sure access to sensitive claims is only available to team members who need it as part of their duties.

How do we protect privacy?

We take our responsibilities about privacy very seriously. ACC is governed by New Zealand's privacy laws, and we also have our own rules that we require our team to follow.

Everyone at ACC must sign and agree to a Code of Conduct to maintain the highest standards of integrity, discretion and ethical behaviour when performing their duties. This means not accessing claims information that is not required for them to carry out their jobs.

All our staff are also required to sign up to our Code of Claimants' Rights, which sets out the right of claimants to have their privacy respected.

More information on privacy can be found here: https://www.acc.co.nz/newsroom/stories/protecting-our-clients-privacy/

Why was it we only accepted 32% of sensitive claims lodged?

Of the 10,335 sensitive claims lodged in FY 2019/20, 3,291 (32 percent) of claims were accepted for cover.

The process we use for sensitive claims assessments means that clients who did not wish to proceed with a supported assessment for cover and are categorised as 'declined' in our system. It also includes clients who may still be in the supported assessment component of our Integrated Support for Sensitive Claims, so while the 32% statistic is correct, it doesn't fully reflect the support our clients with a sensitive claim access.

For those clients who did not wish to proceed with a supported assessment for cover will have their claim declined as they have withdrawn from the ISSC, but they can come back to ACC for support whenever they are ready.

More than 90% of people who do go through a supported assessment have their ACC claim accepted.

How has Next Generation Case Management changed a survivor of sexual abuse or assault's claim being processed?

Survivors continue to receive the same one-to-one support from specially- trained ACC staff. We have,

however, made a number of changes that have resulted in a better and more responsive service. The key change is that instead of a centralised unit, we now have dedicated teams of Recovery Partners managing sensitive claims across eight locations: Whangarei, Newmarket, Hamilton, Tauranga, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. At the same time, the number of people working with 1:1 with survivors has increased from 85 to 140.

ACC knows that over time, needs change, and for many clients once they are in treatment and are well supported, their need for contact with ACC reduces. For many clients, this means that their needs could be best met by a small team of Recovery Assistants (Assisted Recovery).

We have also centralised administrative functions, which frees up more time for Recovery Partners and Recovery Assistants to support their clients.

The decision to transition a claim is done collaboratively and must be discussed with the client and/or their provider prior to transition. Please note that the transition discussion happens with the client, but for some clients, they may elect for this conversation be with their provider – hence the and/or.

The changes began in September 2019 and were completed in September 2020.

Further details on how we're better supporting survivors of sexual abuse and assault can be found on our Newsroom site

How are we contributing to Te Aorerekura?

We are proud to support Aotearoa's first national strategy aimed at eliminating family violence and sexual violence and to create fundamental, society-wide change in Aotearoa. Te Aorerekura sets outs a collective path for government, tangata whenua, specialist sectors, and communities to work together to eliminate family violence and sexual violence in Aotearoa.

Find out more here.

History of Sensitive Claims

From:
Clinical Pathway (2009 – 2010)

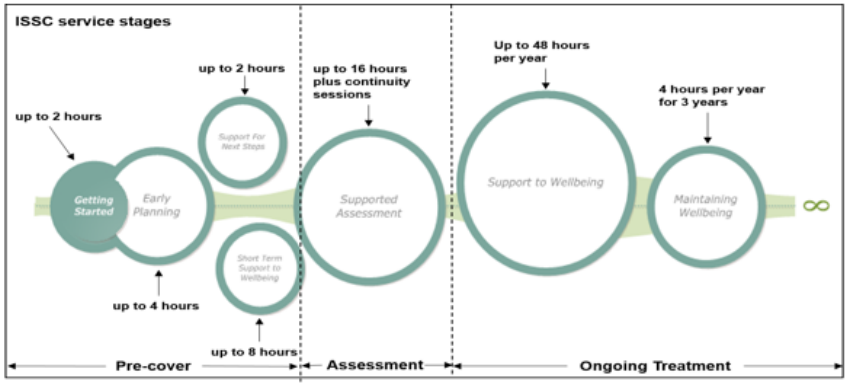
- Introduced a strengthened clinical model for managing sensitive claims
- Provider, client and public concerns that pathway excluded people and provided minimal immediate support
- Dr Barbara Disley was asked to undertake an independent review which produced 14 critical recommendations for change.

To:
Support Sessions (2010 – 2014)

- From 2010 the Integrated Services for Sensitives Claims (ISSC) was being developed. Through this time survivors continued to receive support through ACC.

Now: Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims (ISSC) (2014 – 2024)

- In response to Dr Disley's recommendations, ACC launched Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims in November 2014.
- It allows for immediate short-term support for those clients and their whanau.
- For longer term treatment, a diagnosis of a mental injury linked to the sexual assault or abuse is required.
- Supported assessment to ensure that clients are supported through the assessment process.
- Through the introduction of ISSC barriers for clients were removed to ensure equitable access and choice; consistency across New Zealand.



What we offer:
Integrated Services for Sensitive Claims

Anyone who has experienced sexual abuse or assault in New Zealand can seek assistance from ACC, including visitors.

Fully funded support, treatment and assessment is available even if the abuse happened a long time ago. It is flexible and adaptable and people can come back for more support.

Support services available alongside therapy:

- Up to 10 hours of social work
- Up to 20 hours of family/whanau support
- Up to 10 hours of cultural advice for the provider