

# Client choice of providers

Contact

Last review 04 Feb 2013

Next review 28 Feb 2013

## Introduction

### ACC selecting a service provider

It is ACC's responsibility to choose an appropriate provider for a client who is referred for the following:

- medical specialist assessments
- social rehabilitation assessments
- vocational rehabilitation: initial occupational and medical assessments
- vocational independence: occupational and medical assessments.

These assessments help determine cover or entitlements.

AC Act 2001, Section 72(1)(d) states that clients have a responsibility to undergo assessments conducted by a registered health professional specified by ACC.

### Client selection not limited for other services

The guidelines governing **other** areas of client choice are broader and allow the client greater flexibility to choose their own provider in the following areas:

- treatment that a client receives from a health provider, such as a General Practitioner, physiotherapist, acupuncturist, etc
- home-based care, such as home help, attendant care, etc
- audiologists who are required to fit hearing aids
- counselling.

### Considering client preferences

Always remember ACC's obligations under the Code of ACC Claimants' Rights (the ACC Code). See Working with the Code of ACC Claimants' Rights

### Clients may prefer a particular provider based on:

- their values
- their personal circumstances
- their culture
- the nature of the assessment itself.

These preferences should be accommodated where possible. For example:

- a female client with a medical misadventure birthing injury may wish to be assessed by a female specialist
- Māori or Pacific peoples may wish to be assessed by a Māori or Pacific provider.

### **If a client objects to the provider we have chosen**

If a client has concerns about the provider they've been referred to, but does not nominate another provider, then we must offer the client a choice of at least two alternative providers, if there are two available, and give the client five days to select one of the alternative providers.

If the client does not respond with their choice of provider within the five-day timeframe, we will continue to use the provider initially selected.

If the client nominates their own provider we must objectively consider the request

**If...**

**then...**

there will be more than a four week delay in getting an appointment with the client's preferred provider and this delay would impede the client's rehabilitation

we must decline the client's request

the client's nominated IMA or VIMA provider is not currently contracted to ACC

the client's nominated provider does not hold qualifications that meet the legislative requirements, however note we can invite the nominated provider to apply for a contract

the client needs a specialised assessment and their nominated provider does not cover that scope of practice

none of the above apply

we must agree to the client's request

### **When a client will not comply with our choice of provider**

If, after the considerations above have been taken into account, we are unable to reach agreement with the client then we may consider whether to decline the client's entitlement as a **last** resort. See *Decline entitlement when client is non-compliant*.

You must document all considerations and actions in detail.

### **Consider alternatives when a lack of provider may cause an unreasonable delay**

AC Act 2001, Section 54 requires ACC to make decisions in a timely manner. If there are difficulties finding an appropriate provider within the client's locality, then consider:

- transporting the client to a location or city where there is a greater number of available providers
- fully investigating appropriate providers who will travel to the client.

### **Code of ACC Clients' Rights**

Always remember ACC's obligations under the *Code of ACC Claimants' Rights* (the ACC Code). See *Working with the Code of ACC Claimants' Rights*

Before asking a provider to travel to a client's location, consider:

- any cultural or other specific requirements the client has, eg disability, language requirements, etc
- the provider's skills and competencies relevant to the client's particular needs.