

14 December 2007

Dear Sir / Madam

## Health support services for people exposed to dioxin - update

This letter gives a brief update on *Allen & Clarke's* work to develop options and recommendations for a health support service for people exposed to dioxin.

In June we sent out a copy of the terms of reference for the project to people who had registered an interest with the Ministry of Health in being kept informed on work regarding dioxin exposure, and to a number of other people.

In July we released a discussion document setting out a number of options for health support services and for defining the eligible population. This was again mailed out to those who had registered an interest with the Ministry of Health.

Over July/August we consulted on the options in the discussion document, holding a number of meetings in New Plymouth (as the project has a particular focus on dioxin exposure from the Ivon Watkins-Dow plant in Paritutu between 1962 and 1987) and running a public submissions process.

We completed an analysis of the submissions we received in September and set this out in a report in October. In this report we also outlined our early thinking on the options for a health support service. We did this so that people could scrutinise our preliminary thinking and provide us with any further relevant information before we developed our final recommendations to the Ministry of Health. This report was posted to everyone who made a submission, and is also available on our website ([www.allenandclarke.co.nz](http://www.allenandclarke.co.nz)).

Over the last two months we have continued to review issues raised within the public submissions and begun to identify the costs of delivering services and the likely uptake of such services. We have sought expert advice on two specific services – DNA damage testing and genetic counselling – and will make this public when it is available. We are also working through options on how a service could be managed, funded and delivered in New Zealand.

We are reaching a stage where we can put together our final recommendations to the Ministry of Health. We expect to do this in February 2008. At this time we will also report our recommendations to interested parties. We understand that the Ministry is still intending to roll out a service from mid-2008.

Thank you very much for your continued interest in this project and best wishes for the Christmas / New Year period.

Yours sincerely



PD Matthew Allen  
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Project Manager, Paritutu Health Support Service Project