

13 September 2018

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Dear Ms Martin,

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, dated 08 August 2018. You requested the following information, related to wait times for surgery for people diagnosed with Cancers as at 01 August 2018. Our responses are provided under each question below.

For reference, it was not possible for us to retrospectively review the surgical waiting list and identify the patients listed solely by a Cancer diagnosis at 01 August 2018. This is mainly because many patients are listed by the relevant Service speciality, rather than by a Cancer diagnosis. In addition, clinicians may commence treatments or procedures while still waiting for other (e.g. Histology) results obtained by a surgical or diagnostic procedure to confirm a Cancer diagnosis. We also note that some patients in the Counties Manukau catchment will be referred to and /or treated by other DHBs and visibility of that waiting list data is limited.

Therefore, the data used to respond to these questions is from that detail collected by the Cancer Tracking team for “*Faster Cancer Treatment (FCT)*” targets. This data includes all patients tracked under the current 62-day FCT Health Target. These are defined as patients referred with a “high suspicion of cancer”, and therefore needing to be seen at First Specialist Appointment (FSA) within 2 weeks of referral.

This data also includes the 31-day FCT priority indicator cases for all other Cancer patients. The data does not include those patients treated by Private Health facilities, non-eligible patients (overseas and non-resident), or those with minor skin cancers (basal / squamous cell cancers).

In discussion with our regional DHB colleagues, we understand that they have also used the FCT Tracker data for this response. We provide detail on the FCT performance in publicly available report to the Hospital Advisory Committee of the Board.

1. How many patients were on lung, bowel, prostate, breast, cervical and skin cancer surgical waiting lists?

From the FCT data sources available, on 01 August 2018 the numbers of patients waiting for surgery were (**Table 1**):

Speciality	Surgical Treatment Wait list (numbers)
Lung	1
Bowel	6
Prostate	7 - Further 5 patients - waiting for diagnostic Surgical procedures
Breast	1
Cervical	6 - Further 31 patients - waiting for diagnostic Surgical procedures
Skin	4

Table 1

2. What is the longest time for a patient on the waiting list for lung, bowel, prostate, breast, cervical and skin cancer surgery?

On 1 August 2018, the longest times on the waiting list per type were (**Table 2**):

Speciality	Longest time on Wait list (days)
Lung	17 days
Bowel	81 days
Prostate	94 days
Breast	57 days
Cervical	18 days
Skin	23 days

Table 2

Please note that patients may experience a longer wait-time for surgery for a number of reasons. These reasons can include available system capacity (i.e. staff / theatre availability), complex surgery (such as when more than one specialty surgeon is required to operate at the same time), patient clinical considerations, (i.e. treating co-morbid conditions to ensure a patient is well enough to have the required operation), and patient choice factors (such as patient asking to wait until after an overseas trip/ special event) or the patient needing more time to accept the cancer diagnosis and the impact of the surgery.

3. What the average wait time is for patients on lung, bowel, prostate, breast, cervical and skin cancer surgical waiting lists?

We work hard to achieve the FCT 31-day priority indicator for all Cancer treatment. This indicator is that Surgery occurs within 31 days of a decision-to-treat (when the patient and surgeon agree to the operation plan). The current collation of FCT results for reporting is in 6 monthly rolling increments (reflecting an overlap of results each quarter).

The average time from *decision-to-treat to treatment* for Aug 2016 – Aug 2018 (noting that July - August 18 is not a full quarter) was (**Table 3**):

Average days Decision to treat - Treatment									
Tumour stream	Apr16 - Sept16	Jul16-Dec16	Oct16-Mar17	Jan17-Jun17	Apr17-Sep17	July17-Dec17	Oct17-Mar18	Jan18-Jun18	July-Aug18
Lung	9	9	10	8	7	8	9	8	7
Bowel	12	14	17	13	13	12	12	11	10
Prostate	17	16	15	15	16	14	16	25	20
Breast	19	19	17	16	20	19	18	17	22
Cervical	16	16	17	13	12	20	22	15	20
Skin	13	12	14	16	13	9	10	12	9

Table 3

4. Whether the DHB is meeting FCT health targets (by quarter, from Aug 2016 to Aug 2018)

Reporting for the FCT target is in 6 month rolling increments. Since April 2017, CM Health has been exceeding the FCT health target, (noting that July - August 2018 is not a full quarter).

CM Health performance against FCT target for the timeframe (August 2016-August 18) was (**Table 4**):

Value	Apr16 - Sept16	Jul16-Dec16	Oct16-Mar17	Jan17-Jun17	Apr17-Sep17	July17-Dec17	Oct17-Mar18	Jan18-Jun18	July-Aug18
Target %	85	85	85	85	90	90	90	90	90
MoH Reported performance %	76	75.9	78.1	80.2	92.9	93.8	95.8	94.2	85.5

Table 4

I trust this information satisfactorily answers your query. If you are not satisfied with this response you are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau DHB website.

Yours sincerely,



Margie Apa
Chief Executive