

Clinical: Gender-affirming health services
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04 March 2020

9(2)(a)

E-mail: 9(2)(a)

Dear 9(2)(a)

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us on 05 February 2020. You requested the following information:

1. How many people were referred to the DHB for gender reassignment hormone therapy in each calendar year in 2018 and 2019?
2. How many were treated within the DHB, and how many were referred to another DHB?
 - a. If so, where?
3. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years (youngest/ oldest/ median age)?
4. How many were transitioning male to female and how many female to male in each of those years?

As context for this response, Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 569,400 people), as well as regional and supra-regional specialist services (Burns, Plastics and Orthopaedics). Our services are delivered via hospital, outpatient/ ambulatory and community-based models of care.

We note that we responded to similar questions from you in October 2018.

In the metro-Auckland region, referrals for most gender-affirming services are referred to the care of the Centre for Youth Health (CfYH - for young people up to 25 years), and to the Northern Region Transgender Health Services (NRTHS). Publicly available information on the Hauroa Tāhine and Northern Region Transgender Health Services (NRTHS) service can be accessed via the Health Point website at the following link, and may be of interest:

- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/sexual-health/northern-region-transgenderhealthservices/>
- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/paediatrics/kidz-first-centre-for-youth-health/>

Please refer to these links (above) for information on the available services, including current information on availability of a range of other supportive services and resources.

We are not able to provide all the data you request, due to the outpatient service model and data systems, which would require manually intensive review of patient files, which lack electronic flags

to indicate the individual patient files to be reviewed for this level of treatment detail. We are therefore refusing your request for some detailed data, under Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, due to substantial collation or research.

However, we acknowledge that there is interest in these services, and in our response we have sought to provide as much available information for your questions as we hold; using reporting from the Centre for Youth Health (CfYH) and Auckland Regional Sexual Health outpatient services. We are providing information that is reasonably accessible either from electronic coding, service reporting, or information prepared in response to other Official Information Act requests. Consequently, the information provided below has some limitations.

We also note that your query is specific to referrals for gender reassignment Hormone Therapy. However, the data collated and provided is for any patients referred for Gender Affirming Care. Therefore, there may be a cohort included who have been referred for Gender Affirming Care, but are not receiving Hormone Therapy. This is most notable for the CfYH service, where it is common for patients to be solely on hormone blockers, but not receiving gender reassignment hormone therapy.

1. How many people were referred to the DHB for gender reassignment hormone therapy in each calendar year in 2018 and 2019?

The number of people *referred* for any gender-affirming care as extracted from DHB databases across metro-Auckland DHBs (**Table 1**).

Counties Manukau DHB domicile:

	2018	Dec 19
Adult services – all referrals in year	47	97
CFYH ‘active cases’ - at the end of each calendar year	89	93
CFYH – new referrals received in year[#]	30	36

Table 1

#Note: CFYH provide report in 6 monthly periods, there may be duplicates seen in two reports - the referrals noted are a sum of two reports, and may be in the active cases at the end of the period

Note: These numbers represent first appointments with a person, for the purpose of receiving Gender Affirming Care that do not always include/ result in hormone therapy – at either the youth or adult service. We note these numbers may underestimate of the true number of people receiving hormone therapy, as some referrals are received by other specialty services. These other referrals are not coded electronically as specifically related to gender-affirming care.

2. How many were treated within the DHB, and how many were referred to another DHB? If so, where?

As noted, Specialist gender-affirming care across Metro Auckland is delivered by two services: Sexual Health delivers an Adult service, via Auckland DHB; Centre for Youth Health deliver a Youth

service, via Counties Manukau DHB. Both services offer outpatient clinics across Metro-Auckland to the populations of Waitemata, Auckland and Counties Manukau DHBs.

No referrals to other DHBs outside of Waitemata, Auckland or Counties Manukau DHBs are made for gender-affirming hormone therapy intervention.

3. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years (youngest/ oldest/ median age)?

The ages detailed below (**Table 2**) are inclusive of all people referred to, and seen by an adult Sexual Health Service (not at CYFH). It includes those who have been referred for gender exploration, but who have not received hormone therapy.

CFYH referrals received for patients younger than 12 years are only coded as being “Under 12”, and those over 20 are combined. A further breakdown of these age bands for the CFYH service is not possible, without an extensive manual review of outpatient medical files.

Years		2018	2019
Counties Manukau DHB Domicile	Min age	20	<12
	Max age	77	78
	Median age	30	28

Table 2

Note – table excludes the cases CFYH sees people up to age 25, but some young people will also go to sexual health service. Referrals received through the Centre for Youth Health for patients younger than 12 years are coded as being “Under 12”.

4. How many were transitioning male to female and how many female to male in each of those years?

This service is run on an outpatient basis, and this clinical treatment information is not coded electronically. The available information (**Table 3**) is based on the current caseloads at the end of each calendar year, and is a snapshot of all active cases at the CFYH. The information has been compiled on a limited basis, as previously described, for the youth service only.

	Gender identity	End of Dec 2018	End of Dec 2019
Counties Manukau DHB domicile – CFYH service only	Male	32	37
	Female	54	48
	Non-binary/ gender explore	3	8

Table 3

CFYH provide report in 6-monthly periods, this information is at the end of each calendar year.

Further collation of this data is not possible without extensive manual review of outpatient medical files.

I trust this information satisfactorily answers your query. We acknowledge that we are unable to provide specific responses to all elements of your request, due to the data not being readily available. If you are not satisfied with this response provided, 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,



Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health