

06 August 2019

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us, on transfer from the Ministry of Health under section 14 of the Act on 11 July 2019. You noted the following, and requested information on the use of Electronic Health Records:

I am researching the impact of information technology investment in health across New Zealand, in regards to its impact on access and equity of access to health care. This is with the hypothesis that integrated electronic health records support and promote access to essential health care for the New Zealand population. To achieve this, I shall be taking advantage of discontinuities in the stages at which General Practices and District Health Boards have implemented electronic health records.

As such, I am requested whether each respective DHB and GP have implemented an electronic health record.

- ***For ease of the request, I have attached a template with the required information.***

For the DHB part of your question, and based on your clarification and definition of an Electronic Health Record (EHR) and cases of complete implementation, at CM Health we have not completed implementation of an EHR (nor has any NZ DHB). While we have good electronic information capability, we therefore do not yet have a full EHR.

We do use several electronic (computer-based) Clinical Records systems, which generate electronic documents, including holding information/ images and results on diagnostics and care planning, which are collated via interfaces and applications. This enables hospital and DHB community-based services to consolidate many documents pertaining to the care and treatment of each patient into a semi-centralised record, but paper based clinical records do remain. The implementation of a number of these inter-related systems has been ongoing since the late 1990's, with rollout occurring at various points in time.

Currently General Practice can access some DHB provided clinical information via the Testsafe portal, including Laboratory results and Radiology images, Pharmacy information, hospital discharge summaries and letters. Consumers can request copies of any of their personal medical information held by us, under the Privacy Act provisions. This is provided via our Clinical Information Services.

In our view, it may be useful for you to refer to a standard scale, such as the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) scale, to provide a consistent measure on how much of an EHR has been implemented across New Zealand health services. The results of the HIMSS scale for Electronic Medical Records Adoption Model (EMRAM) completed in 2016 for New Zealand are available publicly on this link:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/ehealth/digital-health-2020/digital-hospital>

That link notes that this assessment is currently being repeated, and this will be completed in the next year. In addition to EMRAM, nationally this process has added the adoption model assessments of Outpatient EMR, Continuity of Care and Infrastructure. Further information is available on:

<https://www.himssanalytics.org/>

For the General Practice part of your question, we note that DHBs do not generally hold information as to the status and implementation of Information Systems in general practices. However, we are aware that nationally the EHR practice management system adoption rate is over 99%, which has been the case for over 10 years. There are patient portals available for 65% of the NZ general practices, and currently 19% of enrolled patients have registered to use them.

Please note that in New Zealand, GP Practises are private businesses, and provide primary care services via Primary Health Organisations, who hold contracts with the District Health Boards. You can access the contact details of all Primary Health Organisations, by district/ area on <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/>

I trust this information satisfactorily answers your query. Should you have more particular questions, please contact us to discuss the scope and detail required, so that we can put you in contact with the most appropriate people in our organisation.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. Apa', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health