

Corporate: Eligibility
Proactive Release : 18 December 2019

29 November 2019

9(2)(a)

Email 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 28 November. You requested the following information:

- 1) **The number of ineligible patients treated by your DHB, each year for the past five years.**
- 2) **The total amount invoiced to ineligible patients, each year for the past five years.**
- 3) **The amount recovered from ineligible patients, each year for the past five years.**
- 4) **Your policy for recovering funds from patients ineligible for publicly-funded healthcare.**

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 employ more than 7,500 staff, and see more than 118,000 presentations at the Middlemore Hospital Emergency Department each year.

We regularly receive requests for this information under the Official Information Act process, and have recently (08 November 2019) responded to Ms Hannah Martin, also working for Stuff on similar questions. Our response to her covered:

- 1) **The total amount of debt incurred by the District Health Board in treating ineligible patients, or those from overseas,**
 - a. *For the financial years of 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, and 2018/19.*
- 2) **A breakdown of the number of patients which incurred these debts, (the totals as above)**
 - a. *For the financial years of 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19.*
- 3) **Can the DHB then please also advise what happens to these debts incurred by ineligible patients?**
 - a. *Are they struck out?*
 - b. *Does the DHB cover the costs - how does this process work?*

We proactively publish most Official Information Act responses on our website, and that response here is now available:

- <https://countiesmanukau.health.nz/about-us/official-information-act-requests/publicly-released-oias//show/215>

In addition, on this particular topic there is information summarising the costs incurred, both invoiced and transferred to debt collection by CM Health, due to people who received services, but were assessed as 'non-eligible' for NZ publicly funded health services. This information is updated approximately 6-monthly, with the current information covering financial year 2012/13 to 2018/19.

- <https://countiesmanukau.health.nz/about-us/official-information-act-requests/publicly-released-oias//show/203>

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. Apa', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health