

23rd December 2021

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request for – Gender Reassignment

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 8th November 2021, you requested the following information:

1. Can you confirm if Dr Yang has performed the 2 surgeries since 2018? If yes, which and in what numbers
 - <https://www.countiesmanukau.health.nz/assets/Official-Information-Act/d8d3bef3b2/OIA-29052018-LAMBORN-Gender-Reassignment-techniques-Redacted.pdf>
2. Can you provide the updated numbers for
 - https://www.countiesmanukau.health.nz/assets/Official-Information-Act/OIA-05022020-HILL-Gender-Re-assignment-final_Redacted.pdf

Counties Manukau Health Response:

For context, Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 8,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 601,490 people). Our services are delivered via hospital, outpatient, ambulatory and community-based models of care. We provide regional and supra-regional specialist services i.e. for orthopaedics, plastics, burns and spinal services. There are also several specialist services provided including tertiary surgical services, medical services, mental health and addiction services.

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 Auckland Sexual Health Service (ASHS), which is part of Auckland District Health Board (ADHB).

Publicly available information on the Hauora Tāhine and Transgender Healthcare Services 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/hauora-tahine-pathways-to-transgender-healthcare/>
- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/paediatrics/kidz-first-centre-for-youth-health/>
- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/sexual-health/auckland-sexual-health-service/>

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 have requested, 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. Can you confirm if Dr Yang has performed the 2 surgeries (vaginoplasty and phalloplasty) since 2018? If yes, which and in what numbers

Dr Yang no longer works at Counties Manukau District Health Board and we have not performed either of these surgeries in the time period you have requested.

There is a national contract for gender affirming genital surgery which started in 2019 - further detail can be found at the following link:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/delivering-health-services-transgender-people/updates-gender-affirming-genital-surgery-service>

2. 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 Health domicile:

	2018	2019	2020
Adult Services – all referrals in year	47	97	46 (FY20/21)
CFYH ‘active cases’ - <u>at the end</u> of each calendar year	89	93	127
CFYH – new referrals received in year	30	36	61

Table 1 - Data provided by ASHS & CFYH

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.

3. 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: Auckland Sexual Health Service (ASHS) delivers an adult service, via Auckland DHB and the Centre for Youth Health (CFYH) 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.

The data in question 2 reflects all new referrals received in the year for both adult ASHS services and CFYH services.

4. 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 both the CFYH and ASHS for patients in the Counties Manukau domicile.

Years		2018	2019	2020
Counties Manukau DHB Domicile	Min age	<12	<12	<12
	Max age	77	78	76

Table 2

For the CFYH data for 2020, the youngest person seen for support was <12 years old with the eldest being 25 years old, median age 17 years. Prior to 2020, referrals received for patients younger than 12 years are only coded as being "Under 12". A further breakdown of these age bands for the CFYH service is not possible, without an extensive manual review of outpatient medical files.

5. 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	End of Dec 2020
Counties Manukau DHB domicile – CFYH service only	Male	32	37	58
	Female	54	48	59
	Non-binary/ gender explore	3	8	10 (4 non binary, 6 gender exploring)

Table 3

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

I trust this information answers your request. You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau Health website. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fepulea'i Margie Apa', written in a cursive style.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health