

23rd March 2022

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Official Information Act Request for – Women's Health Support Person Policy

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 14th March 2022, you requested the following information:

- **“If you could please respond to this email outlining your DHB's policies in regards to support people for Covid19 positive birthing people as a matter of urgency we would be very grateful.”**

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.

- **“If you could please respond to this email outlining your DHB's policies in regards to support people for Covid19 positive birthing people as a matter of urgency we would be very grateful.”**

CM Health was one of the first DHBs in New Zealand to rapidly respond to the Covid-19 omicron variant in the maternity setting. We quickly established our processes related to the new variant with the consideration of the vaccine status of pregnant people and staff, health of pregnant people who are birthing with or without Covid-19, input from our Infection Prevention Services and the wearing of appropriate PPE for all staff and patients to enable support people to be present.

Pregnant people at CM Health are always enabled to have their support person present during labour and birthing even if that person tests positive to Covid-19. However, if the support person is unwell with Covid then the pregnant person is supported to bring in a different support person. This process is in place for all of our birthing areas, including Primary Birthing Units.

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 blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Watson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Peter Watson
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health