

19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

#### **Official Information Act Request for – Occupancy**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021, you had requested further information following an external media request as follows:

- **Can you then tell me the overall number of beds occupied each day last week (Monday, 11 – Sunday, 18 January) out of the 630 available?**
- **Could tell me how many beds the maternity ward has available and how many beds on average were available last week (Monday, 11 – Sunday, 18 January)?**

#### **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). We see over 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year, and over 2,000 visitors come through Middlemore Hospital daily.

- **Can you then tell me the overall number of beds occupied each day last week (Monday, 11 – Sunday, 18 January) out of the 630 available?**

CM Health monitors in real-time the demand for hospital beds and capacity across the entire system, with a focus on maintaining availability and flow through the hospital. We manage staffing levels proactively to match clinical needs, safe skill mix and use of additional resources as required.

Please note that the figure of 630 beds does not represent beds available for any patient that presents as some beds can be used only for certain speciality conditions. There is variation of occupancy rates on an hourly, daily and seasonal basis, and for different clinical areas. We cannot provide you with the number of beds occupied each day as this is not how occupancy is reported however the occupancy rate in figure 1 below reflects the number of patients under Medical, Surgical, Adult Rehabilitation Health of Older People (ARHOP), Kidz First, Women's Health and Mental Health services in an inpatient bed at 0700 hours divided by the number of

beds open in these areas at 0700 hours. We have also included the Emergency Department request rate at that time for the week 11<sup>th</sup> January to 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

The hospital occupancy data in figure 1 includes a number of specialist clinical areas (such as Women’s Health, Paediatrics and Mental Health facilities). These areas have different clinical parameters and occupancy requirements to ‘typical wards’ and this inclusion can appear to inflate available occupancy for acute patients. Figure 2 below reflects the number of patients under Medical, Surgical and ARHOP specialities (acute ward areas) in an inpatient bed at 0700 hours divided by the number of beds open in these areas at 0700 hours. Again, we have included the Emergency Department request rate at that time.

The graphs below provide a snapshot of hospital occupancy only at a specific time (0700 hours). When interpreting these, it is important to consider the work that is required to reduce that volume and manage the patient churn (incoming and outgoing patients) across the whole of the system and the continuous nature of that work over a short period of time.

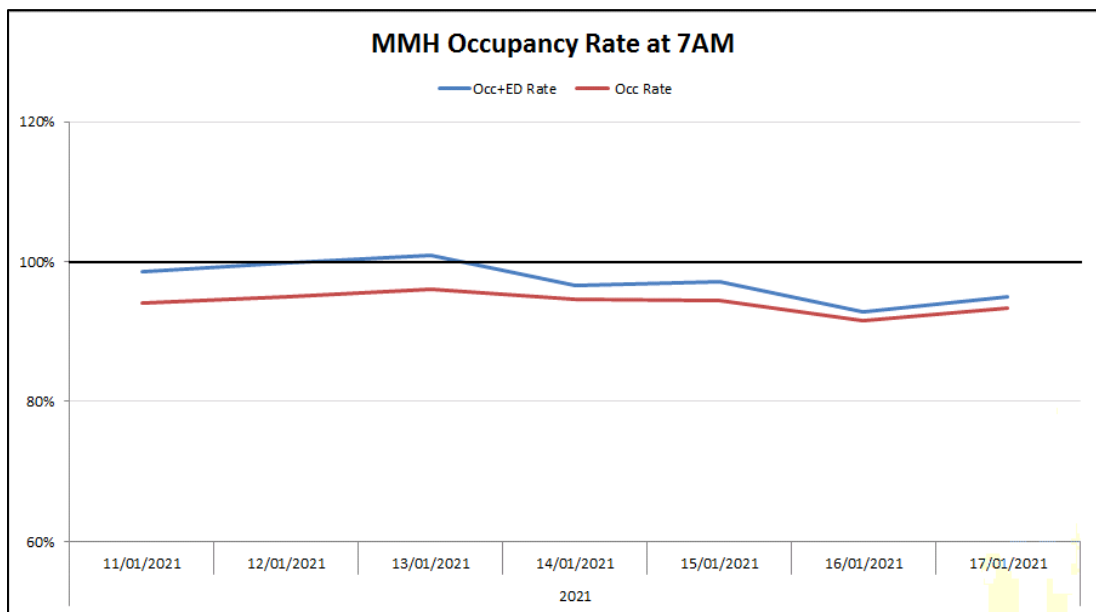


Figure 1: Source Middlemore Central Information Systems

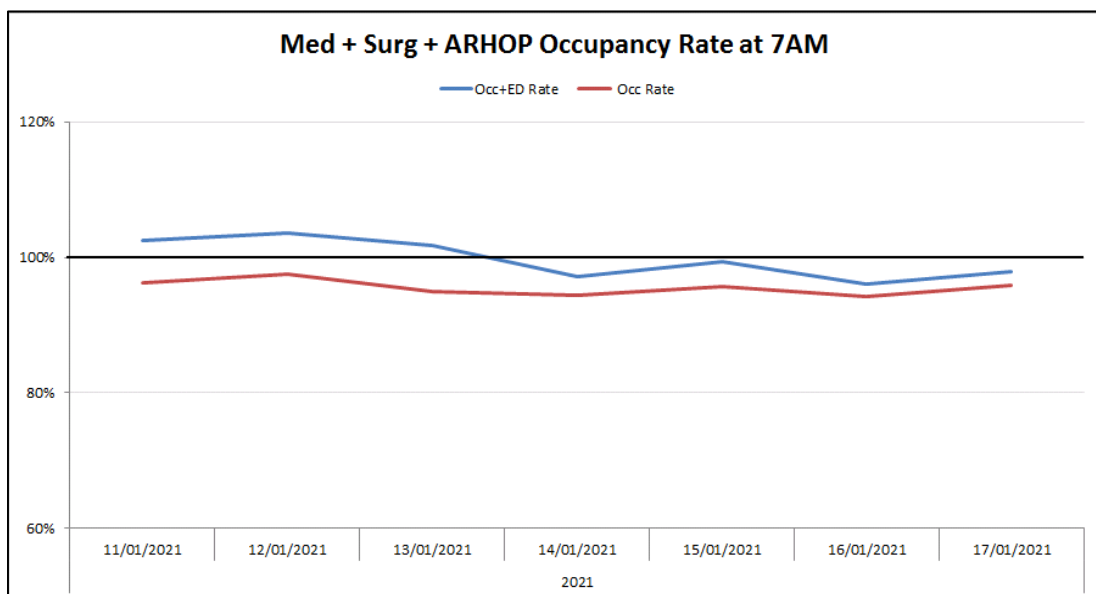


Figure 2: Source Middlemore Central Information Systems

Figure 3 below indicates the high volume demand in Medical, Surgical and ARHOP versus the capacity available at 0700 hours for the 11<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021. This clearly demonstrates the pressure in the Emergency Department on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Note the gap between inpatient beds occupied and the Emergency Department volume in this graph which shows high patient numbers in the Emergency Department. An incredible effort was required to meet that demand and stabilise the impending inpatient numbers which could have grown exponentially without a mitigation plan. All efforts were diverted to ensure safe discharge of current inpatients ready to go home and towards early attention to patients seeking attention in the Emergency Department. By Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 we see some more normal volumes return.

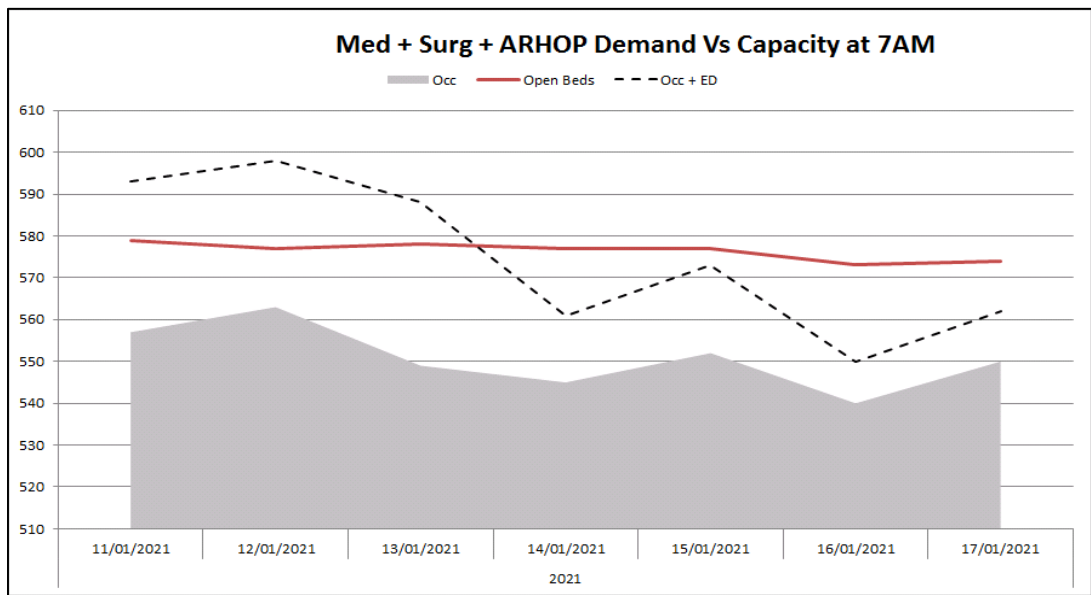


Figure 3: Source Middlemore Central Information Systems

- **Could tell me how many beds the maternity ward has available and how many beds on average were available last week (Monday, 11 – Sunday, 18 January)?**

The CM Health Maternity Service has 60 beds available at all times for antenatal and postnatal women (20 antenatal and 40 postnatal). Figure 4 below reflects occupancy in Ward 21 (antenatal) and Maternity North & South (postnatal) during the week 11<sup>th</sup> January – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Note this figure does not include the services/beds provided in the Birthing & Assessment Unit where 26 beds must be kept available for birthing women.

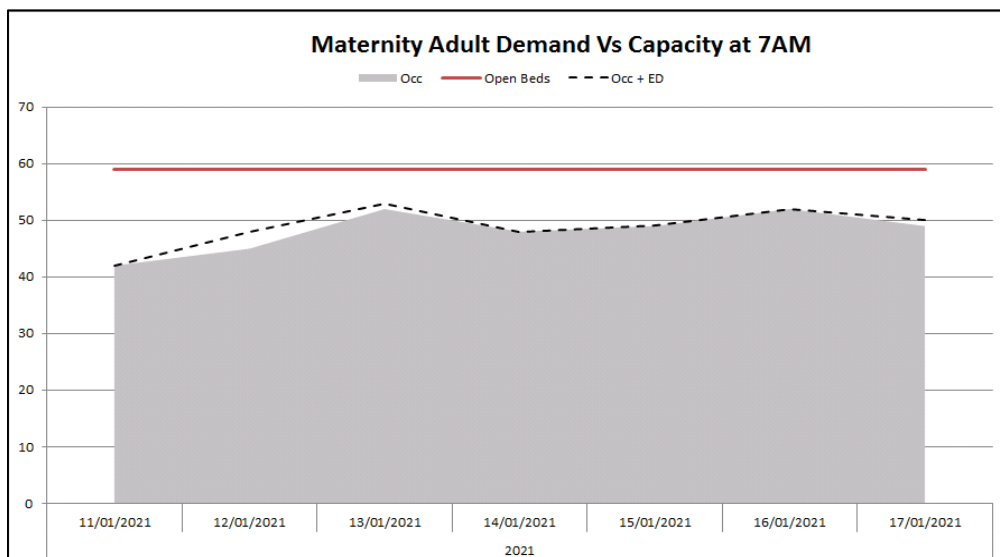


Figure 4: Source Middlemore Central Information Systems

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](http://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 'F. Apa', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

**Fepulea'i Margie Apa**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Counties Manukau Health**