

Clinical : Women's Health
Proactive Release : 30 May 2019

13 May 2019

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, dated 29 April 2019. You requested the following information:

- **Please send through any complaints that have been made to Counties Manukau Health regarding breastfeeding and formula feeding policies, or practice in hospitals/ birthing centres in the last 18 months. I understand the importance of patient privacy, and am more interested in the complaints made - rather than who wrote the complaint.**

During the 18-month period you have specified (01 November 2017 to 30 April 2019 inclusive); Counties Manukau Health has provided care to women and families involved in 11,165 births, (on average more than 620 per month) at Middlemore Hospital and three smaller community-based Primary Birthing Units.

We have reviewed our Feedback database for this period, which collates all complaints, compliments and patient/ whaanau feedback received by CM Health. We acknowledge all complaints, fully investigate these, and respond directly to all complainants, as per our Policy. During this time period, we have identified six (6) complaints related to breast or formula feeding practices (representing 0.053% of total births). We also received four (4) compliments, and a suggestion.

Providing full copies of that feedback would reveal a level on detail that would enable identification of individuals, and to protect those individual's privacy, redacting that detail would render the information largely meaningless. We are therefore withholding full copies of the complaints and compliments – under S9(2)(a) – protecting privacy of natural persons. Consequently, we are providing a summary of the feedback received, that we believe provides the details you are interested in.

Date received	Type of feedback
Jan 2018	complaint - feedback form
May 2018	complaint - feedback form
May 2018	complaint - advocacy services
August 2018	Compliment
September 2018	Compliment
October 2018	complaint - feedback form
October 2018	Compliment

Date received	Type of feedback
January 2019	Compliment
March 2019	complaint - email
March 2019	complaint
April 2019	Suggestion

On this topic, five complaints and three compliments related to admissions to the Middlemore Hospital Maternity ward, and one complaint related to the Middlemore Hospital Birthing and Assessment Unit. One compliment was for the Papakura Primary Birthing Unit.

Of the six complaints, four included comments that related to dissatisfaction with the level of support the women were given in relation to breastfeeding. One was related to support to express milk using a breast pump, and the sixth was in relation to the support given to a woman who was feeding her baby formula.

The four compliments were about the positive support given to women breastfeeding, and the one suggestion was specific to the current facilities available on the maternity ward to wash milk bottles.

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,



Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive