

14th March 2019

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request dated 22nd February 2019. You requested the following information:

- **Data/numbers/figures of all incidents involving any DHB staffer being harassed, assaulted, hurt, injured, threatened, maimed or implicated in an altercation with any patient from any ward/area under the DHB's jurisdiction over the last three years to date (ie from February 20, 2016, to present day, February 20, 2019).**

You requested the following information:

- The following violent incidents were specifically reported against staff members between 20 February 2016 and 20 February 2019:

Specific Incident Type	Total
assault - physical	363
behaviour - aggressive/threatening	185
assault - verbal/gesture	84
hit/bitten/scratched by person	74
behaviour - violent	23
behaviour - harassment	21
assault - sexual	14
Grand Total	764

Note:

This number includes incidents where the perpetrator of the violence has been a visitor or a member of the public.

We believe the following may provide you with useful context.

CM Health services provide health services to in excess of 569,400 people residing in South Auckland, both in hospital and community settings. Obviously, many of these people are acutely unwell and/or in distress when they require care and that can result in behaviours that our staff members need to manage and respond to.

We have derived the information provided for you from our Staff Incident Reporting System (RiskMPro). However, there are limitations in the ability to extract concise details for the incident reporting. We note that the system is intended to enable multiple staff to report individually on the same incident, with each being counted as a unique file, and that we use coding themes to guide the allocation of incidents. While there are 'nominated' codes for types of incidents reported, these may not always be consistently interpreted by everyone. In addition, there will be a range in the severity of incidents within the same code group.

Further, in preparing this response we note that this data shows reported incidents per annum, but accept that will not be the totality of the cases where staff deal with aggression or verbal abuse. Different services will have different numbers of incidents, and have different resources available and clinical skill levels to deal with these types of situations, that can affect reporting.

We employ over 7,000 staff, and are constantly working to create a safe work environment. We are clear that it is unacceptable for our staff to experience violence and abuse towards them in their workplaces in our services. We also provide staff with opportunities for training to learn risk assessment, de-escalation and effective communication techniques that aim to reduce the number of incidents, and the adverse impacts that can result. If appropriate, we will support individuals who need to work with Police, as they pursue investigations.

We note that this incident report system information should be interpreted with caution. Given the differences in reporting systems, and in the DHB sizes and services, comparisons between DHBs may also be misleading.

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