

12 February 2019

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Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us on 14 January 2019, on transfer from the Ministry of Health under Section 14 of the Official Information Act. You requested the following information:

- 1. Number and location of PET (positron emission tomography) and PET-CT (positron emission tomography-computed tomography) scanning machines in NZ.**
- 2. Current working condition of each of these machines - for example whether they are in top working condition, in need of upgrade/refurbishment, or broken.**
- 3. The timeline and anticipated cost for the repair or replacement of any PET or PET-CT machines which are currently broken or in need of upgrade/ refurbishment.**
- 4. Current patient waiting times for PET and PET-CT scans, with these figures broken down by DHB and reason for scan (i.e. breast cancer detection, prostate cancer detection etc).**
- 5. Forecast patient waiting times for PET and PET-CT scans over the next six months, with these figures broken down by DHB and reason for scan (i.e. breast cancer detection, prostate cancer detection etc.).**

I would like information on the above, for the timeframe of the last 12 months up to - and including the most current data.

Question 1-3:

Counties Manukau DHB does not currently own or operate any PET-CT scanners. Any PET- CT scans are referred to, and undertaken by two private community-based providers (Ascot Radiology / Mercy Radiology), and the CM Health referred volumes are equally shared between the two providers.

The two companies each have one PET-CT Scanner. The providers have supplied the following details related to your request.

- The Ascot Radiology machine is nine-months old, and in excellent working condition with a full-service contract to ensure regular scheduled maintenance. The machine will not need replacing for a minimum of 10 years.
- The Mercy Radiology machine is eight-years old, and has been under a scheduled services and maintenance contract over this time. The machine is in perfect working order. Mercy Radiology

anticipate that due to the excellent working order, a replacement of their current machine will be five years away.

There are no pending repair or upgrades needed for either machine, and no costing has occurred. The indicative cost to replace a PET-CT Scan machine, based on current information is between two million and three million dollars.

Question 4: the current waiting time for Counties Manukau patients referred to the private providers of PET scans is 1-2 weeks, unless specified by the specialist to be within a different time frame. In 2018, we averaged 31 PET Scans completed per month.

All patients who are referred for PET scans have indicator codes attached to their referral, which identify the reasons for referral and types of cancers involved. These indicator codes are agreed across metro-Auckland DHBs. These indicator codes, along with other relevant information are collated from referrals on behalf of the Auckland metro-hospitals, and are submitted quarterly to the Ministry of Health.

Question 5: Unless there are unforeseen capacity circumstances arising, we do not believe the waiting time for Counties Manukau patients will increase in 2019. We are not able to forecast the clinical reasons that will indicate a need for PET-CT scan for patient referrals not yet received.

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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fepulea'i Margie Apa', enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive