

19 July 2018

[REDACTED]
Waikato Reporter
NZ Herald

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act Request, dated 05 July 2018. You requested the following information related to assisted delivery and caesarean section births.

Please provide:

- 1) The number of babies injured or who died during birth at CMDHB when assisted delivery was used. Please provide the same number for c-section births.**
 - Please state if ventouse or forceps were used in c-section

In the case of injuries, please state:

- **what the injuries were, or the seriousness of the injuries.**
 - Separate out by type of birth –(e.g. ventouse, forceps, c-section, all of the above)
- **if the baby survived past 30 days.**
- **state whether the baby spent time in a neo-natal unit as a result, and if so how long.**
- **the cost of any injuries to the DHB.**
 - (e.g., baby required surgery or extensive stay in neo-natal care etc.)

- 2) Please state if the mother was injured or died in any of the deliveries, and if so please state type of intervention.**

- 3) In the case of injury or death what action was taken;**

- (E.g. complaint to HDC, coroner's inquest, recorded as serious and sentinel event, internal review, apology, change of process/ procedure etc.)

The time frame for the request is for the past five years.

You have further clarified that you want only details on injuries/ harm due to the use of assisted delivery, and were not seeking details of cases of harm due to unrelated illness, congenital abnormality or other causes for babies delivered using these techniques.

We can confirm that for Counties Manukau DHB, over the last five years, there have been:

- No baby or maternal deaths due to assisted delivery methods, and
- No Serious or Sentinel Events have been recorded as due to an assisted delivery method

For context, each year over 7,000 women will use CM Health services and facilities to give birth.

Further information on these services is publicly available on our website in the *“Annual Women’s Health and New Born Report 2017”*. This includes further information on the numbers of births, assisted birth outcomes and neonatal care provision. The report providing the updated details for 2017/18 will be published and be publicly available in September 2018. We also contribute to and work closely with the national Perinatal & Maternal Mortality Review Committee to review and improve perinatal outcomes.

Further analysing all our “assisted births” medical records over the last 5 years to collate data for your questions would require us to do significant research, and take some time, as we do not hold all the information that you are seeking in an easily obtainable way. The data we keep in electronic repository does not specify the seriousness of individual injury; many are minor with no longstanding consequences. For example, forceps marks or a mark on the head from a ventouse are an expected part of this intervention, rather than harm. To determine long-term injury and outcomes (survival) after birth; and costing of care for individual cases would require us to review numerous case notes, and create new information. We would need a senior clinician to be diverted from providing patient care to complete such a review.

I trust this information satisfactorily answers your query. You may wish to consider a further refined request, including details to help us understand your particular interests in this topic; and we can consider this, although we would still need to seek further time to work with clinicians to prepare our response. Please contact us, and advise of any more specific circumstances or information which you are seeking a response on.

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



Gloria Johnson
Chief Executive (Acting)