

Human Resources : Sonographer workforce  
Proactive Release : 03 July 2019

03 July 2019

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

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

#### Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, dated 24 May 2019, related to details of our employed sonographer workforce, and ultrasound services (sonography).

CM Health provides health services to the communities of Counties Manukau, and parts of Franklin and Hauraki districts. This comprises more than 569,400 people in a culturally diverse and socio-economically challenged area of New Zealand.

You requested the following information, and we have done our best to extract data for responses from a variety of CM Health data sets and systems, and these responses are correct as at 25 June 2019. While we have made every attempt to validate the answers, there is potential that the manual collation of these responses has created unintended errors.

#### Data requested:

	For the year ending 30 June 2017	For the year ending 30 June 2018	For the year ending 30 June 2019
<b>Actual FTE (Sonographers)</b>			
- Radiology	6.84	9.86	11.5
- Cardiology	5.10	5.30	6.5
<b>Budgeted FTE (Sonographers)</b>			
- Radiology	11.4	11.4	11.7
- Cardiology	6.4	6.4	6.4
<b>Actual FTE (Trainee Sonographers)</b>			
- Radiology	2	3	4
- Cardiology	3	3	3
<b>Budgeted FTE (Trainee Sonographers)</b>			
- Radiology	3	3	3
- Cardiology	3	3	3

	For the year ending 30 June 2017	For the year ending 30 June 2018	For the year ending 30 June 2019
<b>Total number of Trainee Sonographers achieving qualification (see notes below)</b> - Radiology	Details not held	1	2
<b>Total examinations (all sub-categories)</b>	26,325	27,145	See below
• <b>Total examinations (ultrasound/ general)</b>	18,035	19,197	19,021 (Extrapolated data)
• <b>Total examinations (cardiac)</b>	8,290	7,948	9,464 (YTD Mar19 data)
• <b>Total examinations (vascular)</b>	Included above	Included above	Included above
• <b>Total examinations (paediatric echo-cardio)</b>	Not provided at CM Health	Not provided at CM Health	Not provided at CM Health
<b>Total expenditure on overseas recruitment of Sonographers</b>	\$4,130	\$2,000	\$0

Table 1

Data requested	At 30 June 2017	At 30 June 2018	At 24 May 2019
<b>Sonographer Vacancies (all sub-categories)</b> - #excludes trainees	5.86	2.64	0.1
<b>Waitlist in days (ultrasound/ general)</b> - # monthly average	18	12	7
<b>Waitlist in days (cardiac)</b> - # median wait time	165	336	124
<b>Waitlist in days (vascular)</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Waitlist in days (paediatric echo-cardio)</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2

Please note: waitlist data is collated in different ways by services, to provide service specific management. These wait times and referral numbers will change on a daily basis, with referrals clinically triaged and prioritised (P1, P2 and P3, surveillance) to ensure that the most urgent cases are seen first. The numbers above should be treated with caution.

We provide regular information on Radiology wait times in publicly available reports to the Hospital Advisory Committee of the CMDHB Board.

#### A. Further Trainee workforce queries:

##### 1. In total, how many Trainee Sonographers have qualified, since 1 January 2017?

General - two

Cardiac – zero (Due to changes in ASUM qualification resulting in longer qualification period)

2. How many of those Trainees who qualified, since 1 January 2017 and remain employed by the DHB at 22 May 2019?

General - two

Cardiac – n/a

3. Please provide the total length(s) of post-qualification service, in months, for each of those Trainees who qualified since 1 January 2017, but who are no longer employed by the DHB at 24 May 2019.

General – n/a

Cardiac – n/a

**B. Further *Qualified* workforce queries: Please provide anonymised data on the following for all *non-trainee* Sonographers, as at 24 May 2019:**

1. Duration of service.

Periods of service	Staff per period (numbers)
>6 months	2
>12 months	1
1-2 years	9
2-3	1
3-4	2
6-7	5
7-8	4
9-10	1
10-11	1
11-12	1
12-13	2
13-14	2
14-15	1
19-20	1
29-30	2
33-34	1
36-37	1
>37 years	1

Table 3

2. Salary scale position; or gross remuneration (if above scale).

Salary Scale positions - All sonographers are on SONOGRAPHERS APEX Union grades and steps.

Salary Scale Steps	Staff per step (numbers)
1	2

Salary Scale Steps	Staff per step (numbers)
2	2
3	5
4	2
5	10
6	4
7	3
8	5
9	3
10	0
11	2

Table 4

3. Whether the employee is a 'Specialist' under the Sonographers MECA.

Manual information provided by Service managers.

In General (Radiology) services there are no sonographers, as per the MECA definitions, providing *"reporting on work that clinicians act on immediately"*, or *"involved in no-invasive tests"*. However, there are five Sonographers who are *'Teaching Special skills to qualified sonographers'*. They are on the following scales:

SONOGRAPHER	Class. Grade. Step Group. Trade Step
Staff 1	489.SO8.05
Staff 2	489.SO8.09
Staff 3	489.SO8.11
Staff 4	489.SO8.08
Staff 5	489.SO8.08

Table 5

In the Vascular Service, there are three sonographers designated as Specialist Sonographers, as per the MECA definitions, regarding providing *"reporting on work that clinicians act on immediately"*. They are on the following scales:

SONOGRAPHER	Class. Grade. Step Group. Trade Step
Staff 1	489.SO8.08
Staff 2	489.SO8.07
Staff 3	489.SO8.08

Table 6

**4. In total, how many Sonographers have been recruited from overseas, since 1 January 2017? Please also provide the totals for each country of origin.**

Since 01 January 2017, all our Sonographer staff recruited to permanent employment have been from within New Zealand. There has been no recruitment directly from overseas.

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 'F. Apa', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

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