

Clinical : Mental Health
Proactive Release: 28 March 2019

18 March 2019

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request dated 31st January 2019. You requested the following information:

- I would like a copy of any and all information totaling the number of patients prescribed antidepressants in 2018.
 - Please include the age and gender of the patient(s).
- I ask that anything within the spirit of this request that is not mentioned be included in the response.

On 19 February 2019, we were advised via TAS (Technical Advisor Services) that you had agreed to receive the information related to Community Pharmacy dispensing of antidepressants for all of New Zealand via one report from them and that DHBs would provide information related to Hospital Pharmacy dispensing.

For Counties Manukau Health we are providing the information (**table 1**) using information extracted from both hospital pharmacy dispensing data and from Pyxis Machines data, that are used on wards and units to manage the administration of medications to hospital inpatients.

Number of patients dispensed antidepressants in CM Health services during calendar year 2018.

| Age (years) | Female | Male |
|-------------|--------|------|
| 11 to 20 | 49 | 37 |
| 21 to 30 | 150 | 85 |
| 31 to 40 | 196 | 137 |
| 41 to 50 | 338 | 198 |
| 51 to 60 | 498 | 284 |
| 61 to 70 | 452 | 355 |
| 71 to 80 | 495 | 349 |

| Age (years) | Female | Male |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 81 to 90 | 365 | 181 |
| 91 + | 80 | 30 |
| Total | 2,623 | 1,656 |

Table 1

We are supplying the data in age bands, to minimise the potential for individuals dispensed antidepressants to be identified based on their age and gender. We do this under section 9(2)(a) – protecting the privacy of natural persons. The patient age is captured based on how old they were on 01/01/2018.

This report shows information regarding the dispensing of the following medicines:

- Amitriptyline
- Citalopram
- Clomipramine
- Dosulepin
- Doxepin
- Escitalopram
- Fluoxetine
- Imipramine
- Mirtazapine
- Moclobemide
- Nortriptyline
- Paroxetine
- Sertraline
- Tranylcypromine
- Venlafaxine

We note the following limitations on this data:

This data reflects the numbers to whom an antidepressant medication was dispensed while in hospital, and does not capture the actual numbers of individuals prescribed antidepressants. This data only contains information for patients by NHI. This data does not contain information from all clinical areas. There are some units where antidepressants are kept as ward stock (e.g. satellite sites that do not currently use Pyxis machines).

This data is likely to duplicate some of the data provided by TAS for community dispensing, as most patients dispensed antidepressants in the community would continue to use them when admitted to hospital. We cannot provide information as to whether the dispensing was first commenced for a patient during an admission in 2018.

Some of the medications listed can be prescribed for indications other than depression. Bupropion has been excluded, as patients given this drug are more likely to be using this for smoking cessation than for treatment of depression.

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 enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive