

Clinical : Kidz First
Proactive Release: 10 July 2019

03 July 2019

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

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us on 06 June 2019. You requested the following information:

- 1. The number of children (0 - 13 years old) assessed for physical signs of being sexually abused in your DHB in 2018, 2017 and 2016?**
 - For how many of these cases did a DHB clinician attend a court hearing with respect to a report?
- 2. The number of people (aged 14 years and over) who were assessed for physical signs of being sexually abused in your DHB in 2018, 2017 and 2016?**
 - For how many of these cases in each of these years, did a DHB clinician attend a court hearing with respect to a report?

All acute sexual abuse presentations for children and young people are managed and treated by Auckland DHB's Child Protection Service, as providers of the regional service. The data for any cases seen by the regional service from the Counties Manukau district are included in the response provided to you by Auckland DHB.

The additional information provided (**below**) is for cases referred to our CM Health Kidz First 'Child Protection Clinic' team, following a disclosure of sexual abuse.

Sexual Abuse Clinic Appointments – referrals for *historical* abuse disclosure to the CMDHB Child Protection Service (Total number of referrals). This may not involve physical assessment.

YEAR	0-13 Years	14+ years
2016	37	29
2017	34	31
2018	29	27

Table 1

In the tables, age given relates to a patient’s age at time of medical assessment. Court delays and other issues such as other witness or forensic evidence can result in a considerable time passing between seeing a patient, and a Court appearance to give evidence, (i.e. A “Brief of Evidence” or Court appearance) occurring in one year may relate to a case seen in previous years.

1. **The number of children (0 - 13 years old) assessed for physical signs of being sexually abused in your DHB in 2018, 2017 and 2016?**
 - For how many of these cases did a DHB clinician attend a court hearing with respect to a report?

**Cases for the doctors at the CM Health Child Protection service only
0 – 13 Years olds**

YEAR	Number of cases with <i>Brief of Evidence</i> written for Police/ Crown Prosecutor (i)	Number of cases where doctor received <i>Court Summons</i> to appear in Court on set date (ii)	Number of cases where Doctor gave evidence in Court in person
2014	1	-	-
2015	2	1	1
2016	-	-	-
2017	1	1	-
2018	1	1	-

Table 1.

2. **The number of people (aged 14 years and over) who were assessed for physical signs of being sexually abused in your DHB in 2018, 2017 and 2016?**
 - For how many of these cases in each of these years, did a DHB clinician attend a court hearing with respect to a report?

**Cases for the doctors at the CM Health Child Protection service only
14 Years and over**

YEAR	Number of cases with <i>Brief of Evidence</i> written for Police/Crown Prosecutor (iii)	Number of cases where doctor received <i>Court Summons</i> to appear in Court on set date (iv)	Number of cases where Doctor gave evidence in Court in person
2014	3	2	-
2015	4	3	3
2016	2	2	-
2017	3	2	1
2018	4	2	1

Table 2

Further notes to above table:

- (i) Police will request “Brief of Evidence” if it is anticipated that a case will be progressing to Court.
- (ii) If the case proceeds the Doctor will receive a summons to appear in Court to give evidence. They may not actually have to appear due to developments in the case (e.g. a late Guilty Plea by the defendant during the Court case). It still requires the Doctor to reschedule clinical work, and be available to give evidence in person.
- (iii) Police will request “Brief of Evidence” if it is anticipated that a case will be progressing to Court.

(iv) If the case proceeds the Doctor will receive a summons to appear in Court to give evidence. They may not actually have to appear due to developments in the case (e.g. a late Guilty Plea by the defendant during the Court case). It still requires the Doctor to reschedule clinical work, and be available to give evidence in person

We note these types of assessments in children involve complex clinical issues. Sexually abused children and young people may not present with any physical signs, but may exhibit a wide range of concerns. Genital symptoms which raise initially concern can also be found on further investigation to have underlying medical reasons.

We do not keep formal records of every court attendance by other doctors working across CM Health services, and therefore declined this element of the request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act, being that “we do not hold this information.”

The Auckland regional Pohutukawa Adult Sexual Assault Service provides medical care and forensic medical examinations for patients aged ≥ 18 years, with disclosed or suspected physical or sexual abuse, or neglect. Between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm weekdays, patients aged 18 and 19 years are on-referred to Auckland DHB Te Puaruruhau (Child Protection). They will then manage all aspects of the case.

In addition, cases in south Auckland may initially be seen, or on-referred to the Counties Manukau multi-agency centre, which is a joint initiative between Counties Manukau Police, Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, and the Counties Manukau District Health Board. The centre enables the three statutory agencies to work together to provide co-ordinated services to the victims of abuse. The centre investigates all serious abuse of children, sexual assault against adults, and assesses and co-ordinates intervention with the families throughout the investigative process.

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 Officer
Counties Manukau Health