

Clinical - medication
Proactive release : 08 April 2020



23 March 2020

9(2)(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Email: 9(2)(a) [Redacted]

Dear 9(2)(a) [Redacted]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us on 16 March 2020. You requested the following information.

- 1. Is the drug Avastin - used to treat cancers - administered to any patients in the DHBs public hospitals?**
 - **If so, what is the drug used to treat and**
 - **How many patients are treated with it?**

As context, Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 569,400 people). Our services are delivered via hospital, outpatient/ ambulatory and community-based models of care. We employ more than 7,500 FTE staff, and see more than 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year. We receive more than \$1.6 billion from the Government to deliver these services.

We provide regional and supra-regional specialist services (for orthopaedics, plastics, burns and spinal services). There are also several specialist services provided for our community via other metro Auckland DHBs, including tertiary surgical/ medical services, some mental health and addiction services.

Our responses to each of your questions are below.

- 1. Is the drug Avastin - used to treat cancers - administered to any patients in the DHBs public hospitals?**

- **If so, what is the drug used to treat**

Yes, Avastin is used in our services for cancer treatment, and in ophthalmology.

Information about this drug is available on the Medsafe site;

- <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/Profs/Datasheet/a/Avastininf.pdf>

Initially, Avastin was approved for treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer. For Ophthalmology, Avastin is used to treat several eye and retina diseases, like age-related macular degeneration.

- **How many patients are treated with it?**

Medical oncology services for Counties Manukau residents are coordinated, and largely provided regionally from Auckland DHB, who is best placed to provide data on any use of this treatment for these individuals.

During February 2020, there were 537 attendances at ophthalmology minor procedure clinics receiving Avastin, (coded as 'PUC S40007 - Intraocular Injections'). These 537 attendances related to 243 individual patients, and we have removed any missed/ did not attend cases.

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