

Clinical: COVID-19 Response - Aged Residential Care
Proactive release: 16 June 2020



05 June 2020

9(2)(a)

Email: 9(2)(a)

Dear 9(2)(a)

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, received by us on 18 May 2020. You requested the following information.

- 1) **Copies of any correspondence with the NZ Nurses Organisation or its representatives, regarding DHB staff sent to help staff aged care facilities after the onset of COVID-19 restrictions in New Zealand.**
- 2) **Copies of any correspondence with the above aged care facilities, regarding any safe practice issues, including those identified by temporarily seconded DHB staff.**

For your information, I understand DHB staff sent to some aged care facilities in the greater Auckland region raised concerns about safe practice issues, including to the NZNO.

- *This request is intended to capture any related correspondence.*
- *The information sought in this request is to be used as part of a report by the New Zealand Herald.*

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. There are 43 contracted facilities providing Age-Related Residential Care in the CM Health region.

To date, there have not been any outbreaks of COVID-19 in Counties Manukau DHB contracted age-related residential care facilities. There has also not been any need for CM Health employed staff to be sent/seconded to help staff any contracted facilities.

As a consequence, we do not have any correspondence with the NZNO, or with aged care facilities regarding safe practice at affected facilities. We are therefore declining your request under section 18(e) of the Act – the information is not held.

A significant effort has been made since the start of the outbreak to work alongside our community contracted providers to ensure a robust response across all aspects of our health care system. Since early 2020 northern-region DHBs have been, and continue to work closely with aged residential care

providers on the COVID-19 response. This work has been co-ordinated by the northern region DHB HOP Programme Managers team, and mainly used the Eldernet messaging system to disseminate information.

This communication with providers sought information for the Ministry of Health requested assessments of, and support for facility-preparedness at each individual facility level. Processes and information have included confirming infection control protocols, managing PPE supply and use, and dissemination of consistent Ministry of Health information on matters such as COVID testing and planned changes to national alert levels.

None of the preparedness work generated any direct correspondence with NZNO about staff in aged care facilities, but the resources and links to information were widely shared with our staff and unions.

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