

1<sup>st</sup> December 2020

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

### **Official Information Act Request for –Formal Complaints Surgical Equipment**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, you requested the following information:

**“I wish to receive information regarding the number of formal complaints about surgical equipment mistakenly being left behind in patients in the last three years, which went to the Health and Disability Commissioner or resulted in a review of hospital policy.**

**Can this information be broken down by year, what the item was, how long it was mistakenly left in the patient for, when it was removed and the effect(s) on the patient.”**

#### **Counties Manukau Health Response:**

For context Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 7,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 569,400 people). We see over 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year, and over 2,000 visitors come through Middlemore Hospital daily.

Our services are delivered via hospital, outpatient, ambulatory and community-based models of care. We provide regional and supra-regional specialist services i.e. for orthopaedics, plastics, burns and spinal services. There are also several specialist services provided including tertiary surgical services, medical services, mental health and addiction services.

We have reviewed all Health & Disability Commission complaints and can confirm that we have no complaints relating to retained surgical equipment.

All District Health Boards in New Zealand report adverse events including retained items to the Health Quality & Safety Commission New Zealand (HQSC). Annually the HQSC publishes an adverse events report which details adverse events that have occurred in District Health Boards. More information is publically available on the HQSC website at the link below:

- <https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/>

Information directly related to events that have happened in our DHB are publicly available on our website at the link below. Counties Manukau Health has a healthy reporting culture which is one that is aimed at identifying preventable adverse events and learning from them. This is so every best effort is made to try and avoid events such as these occurring again.

- <https://countiesmanukau.health.nz/about-us/performance-and-planning/serious-adverse-events/>

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau Health website. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fepulea'i Margie Apa', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

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