

30<sup>th</sup> November 2021

s9(2)(a)  
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Dear s9(2)(a)  
[Redacted]

### **Official Information Act Request for – Covid - Refrigerated Containers**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021, you requested the following information:

- **Copies of any reports, documents, memoranda, correspondence, legal advice, aide memoires, or emails, both internal and external discussing using refrigerated containers to respond to Covid deaths.**

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

For context Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 8,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 601,490 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.

- **Copies of any reports, documents, memoranda, correspondence, legal advice, aide memoires, or emails, both internal and external discussing using refrigerated containers to respond to Covid deaths.**

Counties Manukau Health has not discussed using refrigerated containers to respond to a surge of Covid-19 deaths. We experienced an operational issue related to the collection of deceased bodies due to the lockdown level restrictions on funerals and Funeral Directors, this was not Covid-19 death related.

Current modelling and the positive trajectory of the vaccine rollout, suggests that there is not a need for extra temporary mortuary infrastructure. We are prepared for the impact of Covid-19 and an increase in cases, and we meet daily with the metro Auckland DHBs to discuss and coordinate the management of Covid-19 in the region. This response and information is consistent with related questions asked of the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC).

I trust this information answers your request. 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**