

16th March 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request for – MIQ Nursing

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 9th February 2021, you requested the following information:

- **All correspondence from 09/01/2020 to present on the nursing staff (at any Managed Isolation and Quarantine facilities under the jurisdiction of your office) raising concerns about on-going staffing and pay issues.**
- **I would also like to request information on whether there have been any proposals to or by the Northern Region DHB Covid-19 Response office on increasing staffing and pay. I would also like to request all correspondence from 09/01/2020 to present on these proposals if there are any.**

Counties Manukau Health Response:

The Northern Region DHBs are working together on a coordinated response to Covid-19, through the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC), drawing on resources and expertise from across the four DHB areas (Northland, Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau). We attempted to transfer your Official Information Act request to the NRHCC to respond to, they advised the following in relation to your questions.

Nursing staff in Managed Isolation & Quarantine (MIQ) facilities are covered by Multi-Employer Collective Agreements (MECA) negotiated between DHBs and nurse unions; the MECA is a public document and can be found on the New Zealand Nurses Organisation website at the below link. The MECA is currently under re-negotiation with the unions which precludes other negotiations from taking place, therefore there are no documents that can be disclosed. Furthermore, any discussions around pay or working conditions are part of the industrial negotiations and under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act cannot be disclosed.

- https://www.nzno.org.nz/support/collective_agreements

In addition to this, NRHCC will not be releasing correspondence under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act on the grounds of substantial collusion. NRHCC have considered extending the

timeframe for responding or charging for the work involved to manage the scale of the request but have concluded they would not, as it would involve diverting staff from current duties managing the current Covid-19 outbreak and vaccination rollout.

NRHCC has interpreted the second question regarding the Northern Region Covid-19 Response office correspondence on staffing and pay to be about MIQ Facilities nursing staff also, therefore the same applies.

In addition, prior to 1st August 2020, MIQ Facilities were managed by a private healthcare company which is not subject to the Official Information Act 1982.

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 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 'F. Apa', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health