

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

s9(2)(a)

Email: s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

### **Official Information Act Request for – Diabetic Retinopathy**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021, you requested the following information:

- **If measured or estimated, can I please ask for the percentage coverage for diabetic retinal screening (i.e the proportion of people with diabetes who have had a retinal screen within the last two years, or other reporting period)?**

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

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. 595,590 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.

- **If measured or estimated, can I please ask for the percentage coverage for diabetic retinal screening (i.e the proportion of people with diabetes who have had a retinal screen within the last two years, or other reporting period)?**

COVID-19 has had an impact on retinal screening coverage across the region. This impact is believed to be multifactorial with several contributing factors i.e. clinics closed during lockdown periods, reduced clinic capacity when clinics did reopen during level two to three and also people with diabetes preferring to defer their retinal screen.

Note: The Ministry of Health (MoH) recommends that all people with diabetes undergo regular screening for diabetic eye disease. The MoH's target for diabetic retinal screening coverage is 90% for all ethnicities. This target assumes that 10% of people with diabetes are ineligible for screening (eg already under ophthalmology care for treatment of disease, are blind or have some other life limiting condition). The standard screening interval is two years. For low risk individuals, this screening interval can be extended to three years and for higher risk individuals the interval is shortened.

Table 1 below reflects Retinal screening coverage (percentage of patients who have a diagnosis of diabetes that have been screened) between December 2019 and December 2020.

Retinal Screening Coverage				
DHB	Percentage screened in past 2 years		Percentage screened in past 3 years	
	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2019	Dec 2020
Counties Manukau	49% (16,993/34,419)	44% (16,810/38,118)	55% (19,096/34,419)	54% (20,748/38,118)

**Table 1: Retinal Screening Service**

**Data Definition:**

Percentages and numbers are for 15-74 year olds and only include data from practices that are located in CM Health and have submitted data to HealthSafe (NB: More practices submitted data in Dec 2020 (100) than Dec 2019 (89) which has added to the increase in absolute numbers between 2019 and 2020).

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



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