

27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

**Official Information Act Request for – Vulnerable Persons Register**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us by way of partial transfer (Questions 1-8 & 10) from the Department of Internal Affairs on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021, in relation to Vulnerable Persons Register, you requested the following information:

1. What the cost of maintaining this list is for each dhb.
2. What are the observers having to observe and where is the critical point that would be addressed by making contact with a listee in order to assist.
3. I would like to know how many people are on this list. either
  - a. with knowledge and consent or
  - b. completely unaware
4. How and who collates the data collected.
5. How many persons have committed suicide whilst either
  - a. Being on the list
  - b. Having family members on this list for extended period with no contact.
6. I would like to know who is the administrator and who is responsible for the inadequate and inhumane structure of observing without any contact to the persons being observed, even after a family member may commit suicide.
7. Under what human and legal rights as well as privacy laws does this 'observing and collating data' use or fail to use
8. What funding is allocated for this VPL and for the varied govt services that are coerced to perform this.
10. Have you heard of the cartwright enquiry?

The Department of Internal Affairs transferred questions 1 to 8 and question 10 to us. Question 9 was transferred to the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).

**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.

The Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR) is only compiled when there is evidence of a cluster or contagion (e.g. a number of deaths from suspected suicide within a geographical area or time period) of suicidal behaviour as a direct psycho-social connection with a suspected suicide. This is compiled by individuals/organisations such as school counsellors, Ministry of Education, Police, Victim Support, Oranga Tamariki and the District Health Board.

We notified you on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 that questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8 were transferred to the Ministry of Health (MoH) as Counties Manukau Health does not maintain, administer or fund the Vulnerable Persons Register (VPR) and we are, therefore unable to provide a response to these questions. The VPR is maintained by Clinical Advisory Services Aotearoa (CASA), this service is funded by the Ministry of Health to provide a community suicide post-vention response service. In these circumstances, we are required under section 14 of the Official Information Act 1982 to transfer your request.

1. **What the cost of maintaining this list is for each dhb.**
2. **What are the observers having to observe and where is the critical point that would be addressed by making contact with a listee in order to assist.**
3. **I would like to know how many people are on this list. either**
  - c. **with knowledge and consent or**
  - d. **completely unaware**

4. **How and who collates the data collected.**

As per the above information, this has been transferred to MoH to respond to.

5. **How many persons have committed suicide whilst either**

- c. **Being on the list**
- d. **Having family members on this list for extended period with no contact.**

In the past year (2020-2021) there have not been any suicide deaths associated with the Vulnerable Persons Register.

6. **I would like to know who is the administrator and who is responsible for the inadequate and inhumane structure of observing without any contact to the persons being observed, even after a family member may commit suicide.**
7. **Under what human and legal rights as well as privacy laws does this 'observing and collating data' use or fail to use**
8. **What funding is allocated for this VPL and for the varied govt services that are coerced to perform this.**

As per the above information, this has been transferred to MoH to respond to.

10. **Have you heard of the cartwright enquiry?**

Yes, CM Health has heard of the Cartwright enquiry.

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**