

30th April 2021

[REDACTED]

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Official Information Act Request for – Dog Bites

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 17th April 2021, you requested the following information:

- 1. How many children aged 0-14 have presented to hospital with a dog-related injury in the last year?**
- 2. How many of those children required a procedure (e.g sutures), or admission?**
- 3. What were the ethnic and age demographics of the those children?**

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.

In response to your request, it is important to note when a patient presents to our Emergency Department for care, their presenting medical condition is recorded in our admission system, rather than necessarily the underlying cause of their condition. We do not have a specific presentation coding for the presenting condition of 'dog bite', however we have conducted a search for presenting symptoms of 'dog' as a presenting symptom in the Emergency Department and have then manually reviewed each of the numbers to identify if these were all related to a 'dog bite'.

- 1. How many children aged 0-14 have presented to hospital with a dog-related injury in the last year?**

In the last year, between 23rd April 2020 to 22nd April 2021 there has been a total of eighty-five (85) presentations to the Emergency Department for dog bites in children (aged 0-14).

- 2. How many of those children required a procedure (e.g sutures), or admission?**

We are unable to provide the information on procedures e.g. sutures as this would require the review of individual clinical records of patients. Due to the sensitivity of this information, frontline clinical staff would need to review these individual clinical files and it would not be

appropriate to use a contractor to review the records. This would take the frontline staff away from their clinical work and prejudice our ability to provide core clinical services.

We can however provide the number of admissions of children who presented to our Emergency Department with a dog bite injury which can be found below in table 1.

Admissions of Children with Dog Bites 23/04/2020-22/04/2021	
Cases	Percentage
29	34%

Table 1: Sourced Health Intelligence & Informatics 22/04/2021

3. What were the ethnic and age demographics of the those children?

Tables 2 and 3 below reflect the ethnicity and age of children who have presented to the Emergency Department with a dog bite injury between 23rd April 2020 to 22nd April 2021.

Ethnicity of Children Presenting with Dog Bites 23/04/2020-22/04/2021		
Ethnicity	Cases	%
Maaori	39	46%
Pacific	23	27%
Asian	6	7%
Other	17	20%
Total	85	100%

Table 2: Sourced Health Intelligence & Informatics 22/04/2021

Age of Children Presenting with Dog Bites 23/04/2020-22/04/2021													
Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13/14
Cases	7	7	4	13	12	7	8	4	7	4	3	4	5
%	8%	8%	5%	15%	14%	8%	9%	5%	8%	5%	4%	5%	6%

Table 3: Sourced Health Intelligence & Informatics 22/04/2021

Please note in table 3, due to privacy reasons we have combined the information for ages 13 and 14 and have withheld the exact number individually as stating the exact number may make the individuals identifiable. Withholding to protect the privacy of individuals is permitted under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982.

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 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