

15<sup>th</sup> December 2021

s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

### Official Information Act Request for – Youth Mental Health

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021, you requested the following information:

- **The number of young people under the care of Oranga Tamariki that are currently engaging with your mental health services within your DHB (District Health Board). This data will be used to work out how many young people in the region are having/accessing mental health services provided by the Government.**

#### 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 number of young people under the care of Oranga Tamariki that are currently engaging with your mental health services within your DHB (District Health Board). This data will be used to work out how many young people in the region are having/accessing mental health services provided by the Government.**

We do not hold the information you have requested in relation to young people under the care of Oranga Tamariki that are currently engaging with the CM Health Mental Health Service. Therefore, under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 we are declining to answer as the information requested is not held by us.

We can however provide you with the number of open referrals for outpatient services for Child and Adolescent Mental Health as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Please note that an open referral is defined as a request for service that has been received and accepted, with an intention to provide an appointment and/or offer a service.

During the Covid-19 lockdown period a number of clients who had been referred and accepted into the service (in both adult and child/ youth services) advised us that they preferred not to be seen face to face and instead opted for clinical appointments to occur via zoom or telephone (noting that zoom contacts are classed as face to face, but phone are not). There is wide variation across the Counties Manukau region in regards to accessibility to internet/ devices, therefore some clients only have access to telephone. Services have offered and continued to provide face to face appointments through lockdown (initially in level 4 alert level restriction, face to face contact was predominately for acute presentations, however availability of face to face appointments increased as the lockdown progressed).

| Open Referrals Outpatient Services for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services as at 30/11/2021 |  |   |   |                      |
|---|--|---|---|----------------------|
| Service   | Open referrals with no face-to-face contacts | Open referrals seen once and waiting for second appointment | Open referrals with more than two face-to-face contacts | Total open referrals |
| MH Child and Adolescent Services  | 237  | 195   | 923   | 1355                 |

This table shows that the Child and Adolescent Service had 1,355 service users with open referrals to the service as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, 82% (n=1,118) of whom had been seen face-to-face. Referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service are reviewed daily, Monday-to-Friday, and urgency is determined by a team of mental Health professionals in discussion with the young person and/or their family/whaanau, acute Child and Adolescent referrals are reviewed and responded to 24/7.

It is important to note that not all people referred to mental health services require more than one contact. The needs of each individual are determined clinically, in consultation with the person (and, where appropriate, their family/whaanau). Some needs may be best met by another service or agency. Others may choose not to continue their contact with the service.

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**