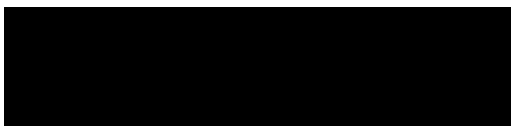


2 February 2022



Dear 

Re: OIA request – Cost of providing health care to COVID-19-positive patients

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received as a partial transfer from the Ministry of Health on 16 December 2021, seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the costs of providing health care to COVID-19-positive patients.

You requested the following information:

- 1. *Costs to the DHBs for health care provided to the COVID-19-positive patients, including the High Dependency Unit and Intensive Care Unit (HDU and ICU).***
- 2. *Costs of the incentives / bribes, music, food, and other draw-cards at testing and vaccination centres implemented to entice people to get tested and vaccinated.***

The Ministry of Health transferred part 1 of your request to Waitematā DHB and part 2 of your request to Auckland DHB, as the agency responsible for the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC). NRHCC will provide a regional response on behalf of the metro Auckland DHBs - Auckland, Waitematā and Counties Manukau to part 2.

Before responding to your specific questions, it may be useful to provide some context about our services.

Waitematā is the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,600 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing care to our own resident population, we are the Northern Region provider of forensic mental health services and child rehabilitation services, plus the metro Auckland provider of child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

Costs to Waitematā DHB for health care provided to the COVID-19-positive patients, including the High Dependency Unit and Intensive Care Unit (HDU and ICU).

The metro Auckland DHBs' ICUs work together to support each other and manage capacity across the region.

It should be noted that COVID-19-positive patients requiring hospital-level care in the Waitematā DHB catchment are admitted for treatment to North Shore Hospital.

Costs of health care provided to COVID-19-positive patients is split in to two parts:

- patients treated in a hospital-level setting
- patients who are provided care at home.

To provide a clear understanding of the terminology used in the table below and of our record-keeping processes in relation to admissions, it should be noted that the word 'events' refers to the number of times a patient is admitted to a service during their hospital stay.

In addition, patients admitted multiple times are counted each time they are admitted. Therefore, one patient could potentially be recorded a number of times in this data. Caution is recommended when comparing data with that provided by other DHBs, unless consistent methodology has been used.

Health care cost for patients admitted to North Shore Hospital from 18 August 2021 to 31 December 2021		
	Events	Cost¹ \$000
Costed and estimated events²		
Inpatient incl HDU/ICU & ED	461	\$2890.9

¹Fully absorbed cost for each event (including variable and fixed costs and overheads), based on the Ministry of Health's nationwide service framework and costing standards (for individual events/purchase units) applicable to all DHBs.

²'Costed events' are for August to November. December figures included are estimated, based on events. An inpatient event includes the whole time from patient admission to discharge, as well as any time spent in HDU/ICU and any transfers of a patient from one service to another within hospital (e.g. from ICU to a COVID-19 ward or vice-versa). ED events cover patients who are discharged home within three hours of being seen by a health professional and not subsequently admitted.

The care at home service for patients in our district was established late last year and, therefore, costs below are for November and December 2021. It should be noted that Waitematā DHB usually has people in our 'Covid Care at Home' service for 48-72 hours before care transfers to the regional team (NRHCC). Therefore, the figures below are Waitematā-specific and do not include the ongoing regional costs:

Cost of providing care at home for Waitematā DHB COVID-19-positive patients	
Calendar months	Cost \$000
November/ December 2021	\$89.8

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publicly funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

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If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely



**Executive Director Finance, People and Planning
Waitematā District Health Board**