

13 July 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Breakdown of mental health seclusion rates from 2016 to present

Thank you for your Official Information Act request, which was partially transferred on 15 June to the former Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) from the Technical Advisory Services (TAS), seeking the following information:

- **a breakdown from each district health board (DHB) of their seclusion rates from 2016 to present.**

On 16 June, we contacted you to clarify that you were seeking this information to the end of March 2022. That same day, you confirmed you were and requested that it was broken down by year.

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 health districts in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas.

Waitematā DHB operates the largest specialist mental health and addiction service in the country. It encompasses both district-based and regional services, provided by more than 50 teams and units, spread over six major service portfolios, widely distributed across the DHB catchment area and, in the case of addiction and forensic services, across and beyond metropolitan Auckland.

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

The raw number of people secluded by Waitematā DHB from 2016 to end March 2022, broken down by year.

Seclusion is used and monitored under strict guidelines. See the following web link for more information: <https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/seclusion-guidelines-feb10.pdf>.

Seclusion is only used when all other practical options for alternative interventions have been exhausted.

Waitematā's inpatient settings where seclusion may be used are He Puna Waiora (North Shore Hospital campus) and Waitatarau (Waitakere Hospital campus) and regional forensic psychiatric services (Mason Clinic).

Rates of seclusion are impacted by a range of factors outside of these services and outside of the scope of mental health and addiction services influence, such as use of illicit substances and other socio-economic and/or environmental factors that might lead to mental distress and/or aggression.

Waitematā DHB is committed to the goal of reducing and eventually eliminating seclusion. The DHB has a number of initiatives underway that aim to achieve this:

- a pōwhiri or mihi whakatau process for all new patients admitted to one of our inpatient facilities who are Māori
- prescribing protocols and care pathways to support patients with nicotine withdrawal and stimulant intoxication
- improving the quality of information available to the receiving forensics acute admissions team from Forensics Prison
- improving access to information about Mason Clinic for prisoners prior to transfer into the clinic
- each unit develops its own specific initiatives, which include increased availability of musical instruments, increased access to unit-based events and activities, increased access to phone calls and provision of a sensory kit for those people transferred to a high-care area.

Please see table below for the number of unique patients secluded between January 2016 to March 2022. As with many health districts, Waitematā has seen an increase in the number of seclusions over recent years; analysing the causes of this would require significant research. However, the focus on reducing and then eliminating the practice has meant that seclusion has been avoided in a number of cases where it may have been previously used.

It should be noted that the rate of seclusion is very low, with our services supporting approximately 1,854 inpatients and around 41,386 people in the community per year, on average.

Number of Waitematā DHB unique patients in seclusion from 2016 to March 2022, broken down by year		
Calendar year	Adult Mental Health inpatient units	Forensic Psychiatry Service
2016	52	42
2017	34	48
2018	28	42
2019	31	56
2020	32	62
2021	35	67
To March 2022	16	20

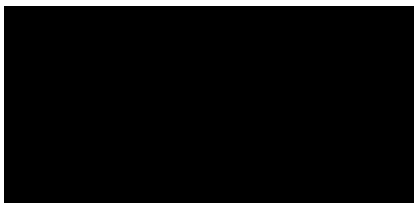
I trust that this information is helpful.

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.

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



**Director, Specialist Mental Health and Addictions Services
Te Whatu Ora Health NZ Waitematā**