

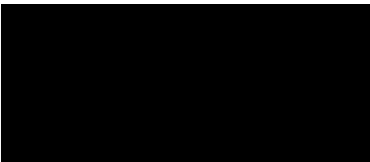


Waitematā
District Health Board
Best Care for Everyone

DHB Board Office

15 Shea Terrace
Takapuna, Auckland 0622
Private Bag 93-503, Takapuna
North Shore City 0740
Telephone: 09 486 8900
Facsimile: 09 486 8924
www.waitemataadhb.govt.nz

4 June 2020



Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Reported harassments and assaults 2017 to 2019

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 27 February 2020 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the number of reported harassments and assaults for the period 2017 to 2019.

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

Waitematā DHB serves a population of more than 630,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas, the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 7,500 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing services to our own population, we are also the metropolitan Auckland provider of forensic psychiatry, child disability services, child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

Waitematā DHB is committed to providing a working environment free of behaviours associated with bullying and harassment.

While the rate of allegations of harassment is extremely low given the size of our workforce, Waitematā DHB takes any such complaints seriously. The expectation is that all parties will treat the allegation sensitively and confidentially. We have robust policies and investigative processes in place, which include a range of options and support resources.

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

- 1. The number of sexual harassment reports made by person(s) employed (staff) by the DHB in the calendar years of 2019, 2018 and 2017, broken down by whether they involved either patients or other staff.**

The DHB records the following sexual harassment reports made by staff from 2017 to 2019. The harassment reports involve staff. There are no reports involving patients.

2017	2018	2019
1	1	4

2. The number of sexual harassment reports made by patients to the DHB in the calendar years of 2019, 2018 and 2017, broken down by involving either other patients or staff.

The DHB has not had any sexual harassment reports made by patients from 2017 to 2019.

3. The number of complaints made to the DHB by staff members for each of the following:

- Physical assault/abuse
- Verbal assault/abuse
- Psychological assault/abuse
- Racial assault/abuse

made to the DHB in the calendar years of 2019, 2018 and 2017, broken down by whether they were perpetrated by either patients or staff.

The DHB has recorded the following number of complaints made by staff from 2017 to 2019:

Complaints made by staff members	2017	2018* Mar to Dec	2019
Physical assault/abuse perpetrated by staff	*	10	2
Physical assault/abuse perpetrated by patients	473	703	754
Verbal assault/abuse perpetrated by staff	*	34	20
Verbal assault/abuse perpetrated by patients	395	434	592
Psychological assault/abuse	**		
Racial assault/abuse	Nil	Nil	Nil

* Figures appear to have grown over the 2018/ 2019 period; however, this is due to improved reporting systems. Information on who perpetrated, and who was affected by, physical or verbal assault has been systematically collected since March 2018. Prior to this date, assault information contained on risk incident forms may or may not contain information on the perpetrator/s or person/s affected and each form would need to be manually reviewed.

** The DHB only records incidents received as physical, verbal or racial assault or abuse.

4. The number of complaints made to the DHB by patients for each of the following:

- Physical assault/abuse
- Verbal assault/abuse
- Psychological assault/abuse
- Racial assault/abuse

made to the DHB in the calendar years of 2019, 2018 and 2017, broken down by whether they were perpetrated by either patients or staff.

The DHB records show the following number of complaints made by patients from 2017 to 2019. The alleged perpetrators are noted separately as staff or patients in the complaint.

Please note that some complainants may complain more than once or across multiple categories. All complaints are investigated and responded to. In other cases, actions ranged from providing additional support for staff to improvements to safety measures, review of policies or warnings for staff.

The apparent rise in figures in 2019 includes cases which were not substantiated and two complaints from the same patient. A number of complaints were found, on investigation, to have no foundation.

Patient complaints against staff	2017	2018	2019
Physical assault/abuse	3	4	7
Verbal assault/abuse	1	4	4
Psychological assault/abuse	-	1	2
Racial assault/abuse	-	1	2

Patient complaints against patients	2017	2018	2019
Physical assault/abuse	-	-	1
Verbal assault/abuse	1	1	-
Psychological assault/abuse	-	-	-
Racial assault/abuse	-	-	-

Patient complaints of patients assaulting staff	2017	2018	2019
Physical assault/abuse	-	-	1
Verbal assault/abuse	-	1	-
Psychological assault/abuse	-	-	-
Racial assault/abuse	-	-	-

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'F' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Fiona McCarthy
Director Human Resources
Waitematā District Health Board