



3 July 2020



Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Documentation related to Oranga Tamariki

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 18 June seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) as follows:

With respect, I request the following information under the terms of the Official Information Act 1982.

- **A copy of any reports, memos, meeting notes or briefings sent or received officials since 1 August 2019, relating to a directive/s to block Oranga Tamariki ‘uplifts’ from the DHB’s properties.**

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.

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

There have been no directives to ‘block’ Oranga Tamariki uplifts from the DHB’s properties.

Waitematā DHB recognises the critical importance of child protection and works cooperatively with agencies such as Oranga Tamariki to ensure the safety of children.

In situations where babies are born in our hospital facilities and Oranga Tamariki has significant concerns, our approach is to bring the mother and whānau together with Oranga Tamariki to seek an agreed and mediated solution that is satisfactory to all parties.

The DHB is respectful of the law at all times. We do believe, however, that our hospitals are places of caring and compassion and that the potential separation of babies in the newborn maternity environment in the absence of an agreement by whānau has a potential impact, not just on those directly involved, but also on the wider hospital community - including staff and other users of our maternity services.

Whenever it is possible, and within the law, we therefore seek to try and avoid such activity within our newborn maternity environment.

We understand the underlying complexities behind decisions of this nature and believe a mediated approach to finding agreeable solutions is the best possible outcome that we should strive for, no matter how difficult this might be.

Waitematā DHB will always be available to assist with mediation as we have access to extensive networks in our community who are willing to assist.

Attachment 1 provides an email from the chief executive and board chair to board members outlining this view. Please note, personal email addresses have been redacted to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned.

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, appearing to be 'MS', written in a cursive style.

Mark Shepherd
Director Provider Healthcare Services
Waitematā District Health Board

From: Peta Molloy (WDHB)
Sent: Friday, 12 June 2020 11:11 a.m.
To: Allison Roe [REDACTED]; Chris Carter [REDACTED];
Edward Benson-Cooper [REDACTED]; John Bottomley (WDHB)
[REDACTED]; Board Chair (WDHB)
<BoardChair.WDHB@waitematadhb.govt.nz>; Judy McGregor - AUT
<judy.mcgregor@aut.ac.nz>; Kylie Clegg [REDACTED]; Max Abbott
<max.abbott@aut.ac.nz>; Renata Watene [REDACTED]; Sandra Coney
[REDACTED]; Warren Flaunty [REDACTED]
Cc: Dale Bramley (WDHB) <Dale.Bramley@waitematadhb.govt.nz>; Andrew Brant (WDHB)
<Andrew.Brant@waitematadhb.govt.nz>; Matthew Rogers (WDHB)
<Matthew.Rogers@waitematadhb.govt.nz>; Matthew Gray (WDHB)
<Matthew.Gray@waitematadhb.govt.nz>
Subject: Notification to the Board

Kia ora koutou Board members

There is potential today for some media attention regarding Oranga Tamariki processes involving the uplifting of infants who are considered to be vulnerable and potentially at risk.

Historically, there have been cases of this occurring in public hospitals shortly after birth.

We both plan to release a statement later today that makes our position clear and write to you now to seek your support.

Waitemata DHB firmly believes that our hospitals are places of caring and compassion and that the uplifting of babies in the absence of an agreement by whanau and government sources has a potentially damaging impact, not just on those directly involved, but also on the wider hospital community - including staff and other users of our maternity services.

We, therefore, do not believe that our hospitals are an appropriate setting for this kind of activity.

We understand the underlying complexities behind decisions of this nature and believe a mediated approach to finding agreeable solutions is the best possible outcome that we should strive for, no matter how difficult this might be.

Our DHB will always be available to assist with mediation as we have access to extensive networks in our community who would also be willing to assist.

Nga mihi

Dr Dale Bramley Professor Judy McGregor

Chief Executive Board Chair

Waitemata DHB