

09 September 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Assaults on health workers within the last three years

Thank you for your Official Information Act request which was transferred to Waitematā DHB from the Ministry of Health on 21 July 2020 seeking information about the number of reported complaints by health workers regarding assaults in the workplace.

We provided you with a partial response on 4 September, noting that the information you had requested involved more than 800 records over three years.

While we declined the request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 due to substantial collation or research, we advised that we were considering what level of detail we might reasonably be able to provide.

Our systems allow us to collate information relating to date, location, allegation details and job title. However, providing this level of detail risks identifying the parties involved.

Some details relating to individual employees' roles as well as specific dates and locations have been withheld to protect the privacy of individuals. We have considered whether the public interest in the information being made available outweighs the need to protect privacy of the employees and patients and have concluded it does not. We are, therefore, withholding this information under section (9)(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982.

We can, however, provide information as follows:

- a breakdown of three-month date ranges over the three-year period
- which service area the complaint relates to
- the nature of the event.

Our responses to your questions are provided below.

1. **The number of complaints from mental health workers alleging they were assaulted in the workplace within the last three years.**

For each complainant please provide the following information:

- **Age, sex, job title of the complainant**
- **Allegation details and date**
- **All investigations outcomes (including but not restricted to all investigation reports)**

- **If not investigated why not**
- **Was there any criminal prosecution and details of the outcome**
- **If there was no criminal prosecution why not**

Please see **Attachment 1** for a breakdown of the following:

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018	1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019	1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020
132	233	272

- 2. The number of complaints made by health workers who have alleged they were assaulted while working at the emergency departments over the last three years.**

For each complainant please provide the following information:

- **Age, sex, job title of the complainant**
- **Allegation details and date**
- **All investigations outcomes (including but not restricted to all investigation reports)**
- **If not investigated why not**
- **Was there any criminal prosecution and details of the outcome**
- **If there was no criminal prosecution why not**

Please see **Attachment 2** for a breakdown of the following:

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018	1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019	1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020
39	69	58

- 3. The number of complaints from health workers who have made allegations they were assaulted while working in maternity services over the last three years.**

For each complainant please provide the following information:

- **Age, sex, job title of the complainant**
- **Allegation details and date**
- **All investigations outcomes (including but not restricted to all investigation reports)**
- **If not investigated why not**
- **Was there any criminal prosecution and details of the outcome**
- **If there was no criminal prosecution why not**

As noted in our previous response, details about the number of complaints from health workers in our maternity services who have made allegations that they were assaulted while working were withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982, due to the very small numbers of incidents which would potentially make those involved identifiable.

The figures were aggregated as follows:

1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018	1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019	1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020
1-5	1-5	0

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the decisions taken in providing this response. Information about how to seek a review is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

I trust that the information we have been able to provide 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 'Fiona McCarthy', with a stylized, cursive script.

Fiona McCarthy
Director Human Resources
Waitematā District Health Board