



9 October 2020



Dear 

**Re: OIA request – ED admissions and First Specialist Assessments**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 8 September seeking information about Emergency Department admissions and First Specialist Assessments (FSAs) from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB).

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 8,500 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.

You requested the following information:

***For the period September 1 2019 to August 31 2020, a weekly breakdown of the following information:***

***# ED presentations***

***# Overall hospital capacity***

***# The overall number of referrals received for first specialist assessments for planned care, and the number of FSA that took place***

We contacted you on 15 September to clarify how we could provide information for “overall hospital capacity”. The same day, you agreed to the following interpretation:

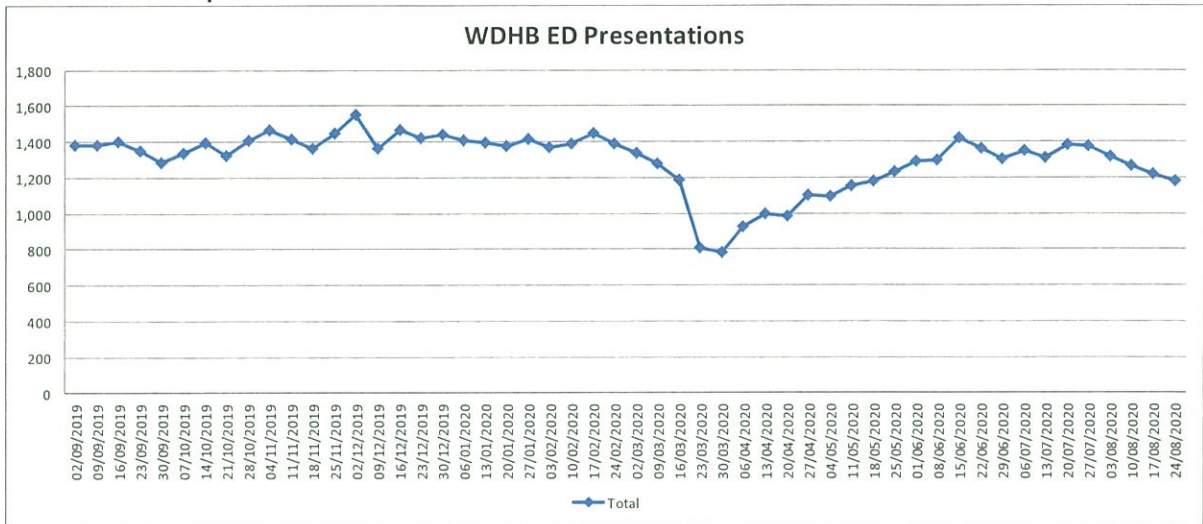
***Average weekly occupancy (Monday to Friday) of both North Shore and Waitakere hospitals, provided as a percentage figure.***

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

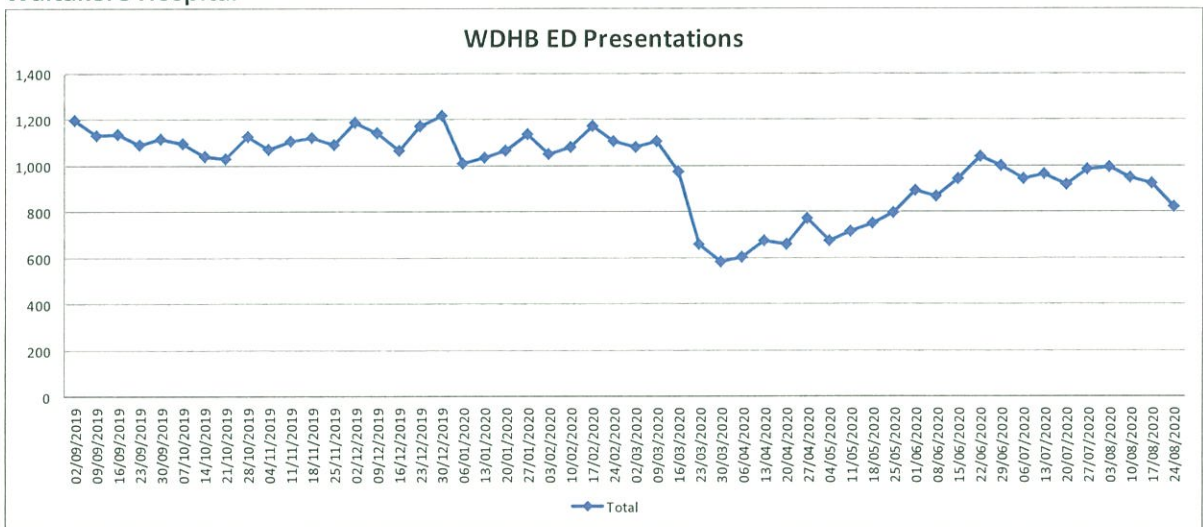
**Emergency Department Presentations**

Please find below graphs showing presentations for the period 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 for North Shore and Waitakere hospitals.

**North Shore Hospital**

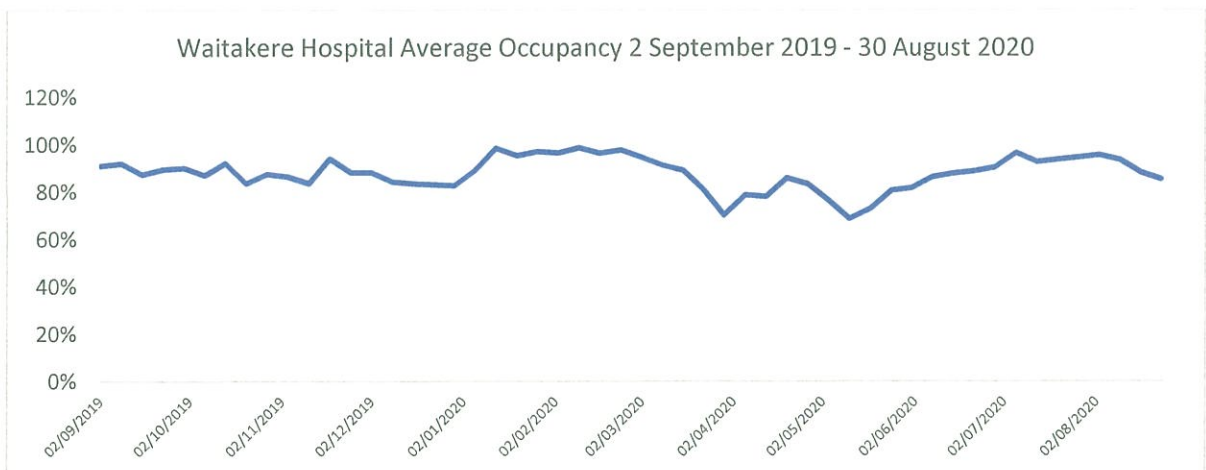


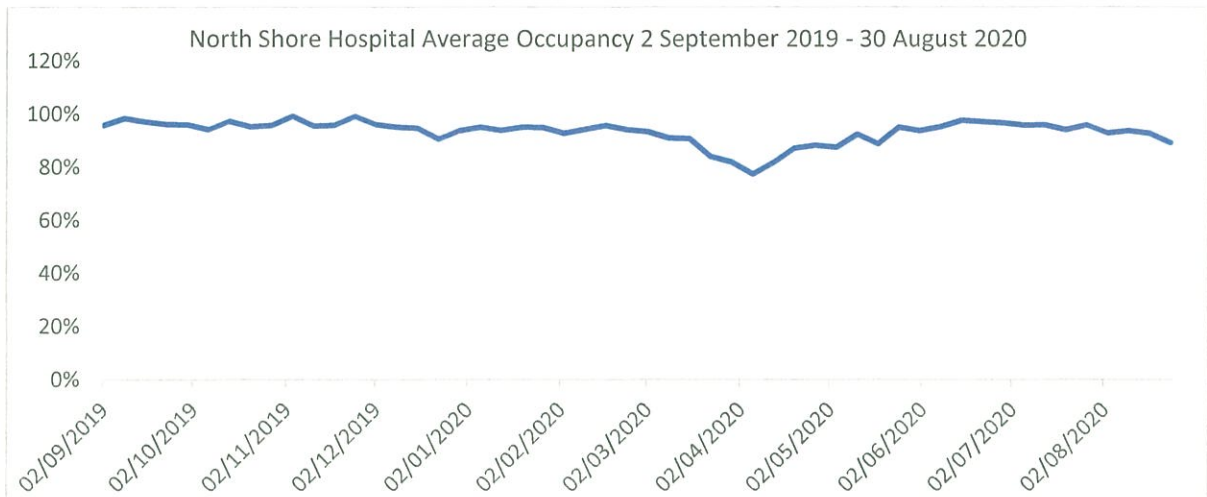
**Waitakere Hospital**



**Overall Hospital Capacity**

Please find below graphs showing average weekly occupancy (Monday to Friday) of both North Shore and Waitakere hospitals, provided as a percentage figure from the week commencing 2 September 2019 to week ending 30 August 2020:





**First Specialist Assessment referrals**

Our FSA data is collected monthly. The volumes below are the combined totals for both surgical and medical services responsible for delivering our planned care volumes for the period 1 September 2019 through to 31 August 2020.

The FSA demand and delivery include appointments that meet the Ministry of Health’s definition of a FSA. This includes face-to-face, telehealth consultations and virtual assessments. It does not include activity delivered by our community service teams or mental health services.

Not all referrals proceed to an appointment for a variety of reasons. Waitematā DHB’s approximate combined decline rate and accepted referrals where a FSA does not occur is 34 percent. Common reasons for an FSA not to occur include:

- the patient is treated via an alternative pathway, for example seen by an allied health clinician or nurse
- the patient declines an appointment or cannot be contacted
- the patient was referred to multiple services for the same problem and only needs to be seen by one specialty.

FSA volumes per month from 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 for Planned Care Surgical & Medical Specialties												
	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20
Referral demand	4356	4651	4519	4132	4358	4221	3405	1651	3504	4789	5289	4326
FSAs completed	3374	3716	3689	3643	3277	3733	3531	2214	3173	3470	3691	3385

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

**Mark Shepherd**  
**Director Provider Healthcare Services**  
**Waitematā District Health Board**