



14 June 2021

[REDACTED]
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Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Use of psychometric testing

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 17 May 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the use of psychometric testing.

You requested the following information:

1. The details of any psychometric testing undertaken as part of staff recruitment, training, resourcing or outsourcing — including as undertaken by outside recruitment firms.

1a. Details including: the types of psychometric test undertaken; copies of the test(s) themselves; statistical distributions of results; information about the staff tested broken down by role, and including designation decisions made upon receipt of the tests; & organisational guidelines and communication pertaining to the analysis of results.

1b. Names of all and any companies used to provide psychometric testing, including subcontractors used by outsourced recruitment agencies.

2. All documents and communications pertaining to: decisions made to introduce or modify psychometric testing regimes; initiate use of results in a particular way or change the use of results.

2a. All documents and communications pertaining to financial costs of psychometric testing broken down by year, and including names of entities that psychometric testing related transactions occurred within this breakdown.

3. Any documentation or communication pertaining to any cost/benefit analysis taken to: introduce; modify; or make decisions taking into account the results of psychometric testing.

I would also welcome any comment or other relevant information that pertains to the spirit of this OIA.

On 18 May, we contacted you to clarify how many years' worth of information you required for question 2a, regarding financial costs of psychometric testing.

On 19 May, you clarified as follows:

I am happy to limit the scope of my request to the past two years for the substantial bulk of collection and collation. However, I was still hoping to gather some information about the long-term trends of psychometric testing, so I would like to request that a short contextualising statement/ summary pertaining to the spirit of 2) be included, with the last 10 years as the scope of reference.

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 DHBs in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,600 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing care to our own resident population, we are the Northern Region provider of forensic mental health services and child rehabilitation services, plus the metro Auckland provider of child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

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

1. **The details of any psychometric testing undertaken as part of staff recruitment, training, resourcing or outsourcing - including as undertaken by outside recruitment firms.**
 - 1a. **Details including: the types of psychometric test undertaken; copies of the test(s) themselves; statistical distributions of results; information about the staff tested broken down by role, and including designation decisions made upon receipt of the tests; and organisational guidelines and communication pertaining to the analysis of results.**

Details and types of psychometric tests undertaken and copies of the test(s):

We use OPRA (Occupational Psychology Research Associates) psychometric testing and assessment tools. While we can use a range of evaluative tests for written, numerical and other skills competence, we tend to use tests that assess personality, leadership and preferred working environments, including working styles related to aspects such as workplace demand, dedicated measures of emotional intelligence, learning and response styles.

Two Waitematā DHB recruitment staff are accredited to carry out the administration and feedback of psychometric testing. Report results are held in secure electronic folders and results and outcomes are provided verbally and in electronic copy to the interview panel and a standard report can be provided to the candidate upon request.

OPRA's testing and assessment tools are available online at: <https://www.opragroup.com/genesys-assessment-sample-reports-and-manuals/>

Statistical distribution of results and communication pertaining to the analysis of results:

We are unable to provide statistical analysis or communications pertaining to the analysis of results as Waitematā DHB does not hold any data on statistical distribution of results. In relation to communication of results, the DHB does not have any information because hiring managers are given the results of psychometric tests face-to-face so that they can be fully explained.

We are, therefore, declining these aspects of your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information you seek is not held.

Information about the staff tested broken down by role:

Waitematā DHB uses psychometric testing for assessing potential suitability for senior management roles. All of our tests over the past two years have been for candidates in management and leadership roles, for example, general managers and operations managers.

Designation decisions made upon receipt of tests:

Designation decisions are not made purely on the basis of a psychometric test. Hiring managers are reminded that the results of an individual's psychometric test are only one part of the recruitment process which includes an interview, reference-checking and the assessment of relevant skills, experience and qualifications.

When combined with interviews and other hiring information, the use of psychometric testing enhances the overall assessment and decision-making processes of the hiring manager and interview panel as it provides an objective measuring tool, limits potential bias and helps predict on-the-job performance and future potential.

We use the OPRA materials to analyse results, with all tests accessed by individual log-in and passwords.

Information provided can be used to inform specific questions in the interview or the reference-check process. One of the additional advantages of the reports is that they can provide guidance on future coaching, training and personal developmental needs based on the individual's responses and learning styles.

Organisation guidelines:

Please see the following extract from our Human Resources Recruitment Policy regarding the use of psychometric testing:

Recruitment

Currently these assessments are completed remotely for senior management roles.

Benefits:

- Tailor interview questions to probe experience and development areas
- Create personal development plans and coaching
- Gain an insight into candidates personality, as well as team and cultural fit

With an accredited consultant in the Recruitment team we are able to provide feedback on a candidates suitability and how they could fit.

The assessments cover personality profile attributes such as interpersonal style, thinking style and coping style, they can also be used to assess:

- Aptitude
- Influencing and leadership styles
- Ability tests to assess suitability

To find out more information and how testing can complement your selection process, please speak to your Recruitment Consultant.

1b. Names of all and any companies used to provide psychometric testing, including subcontractors used by outsourced recruitment agencies.

As mentioned, we currently use and engage with OPRA Psychology Group for any psychometric testing that is requested: <https://www.opragroup.com/#about>

2. All documents and communications pertaining to: decisions made to introduce or modify psychometric testing regimes; initiate use of results in a particular way or change the use of results.

OPRA psychometric testing has been in-use at Waitematā DHB for more than a decade. There are no documents or communications relating to the information you are seeking as we have not modified any psychometric testing prior to its use or changed any results from the test findings.

We are, therefore, declining this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information you seek is not held.

2a. All documents and communications pertaining to financial costs of psychometric testing broken down by year and including names of entities that psychometric testing-related transactions occurred within this breakdown.

As above, there are no documents or communications relating to the information you are seeking as the testing is completed online and an automatic electronic charge is then generated for each test.

We can, however, provide the number and cost of OPRA tests used (over the past two years, as per your clarification):

Number of psychometric tests completed by Waitematā DHB and costs per year for two years

Calendar year	Number of psychometric tests	Cost per test (including report)
2019	3	\$112.50
2020	6	\$112.50

3. Any documentation or communication pertaining to any cost/benefit analysis taken to: introduce; modify; or make decisions taking into account the results of psychometric testing.

Waitematā DHB has not undertaken any cost-benefit analysis on the use of psychometric testing. We are, therefore, declining this aspect of your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act 1982 as the information you seek is not held.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the decisions made in providing this response. Information about how to seek a review is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

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 People and Culture
Waitematā District Health Board