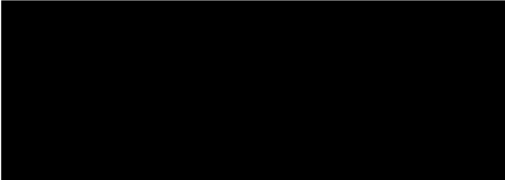




9 June 2022



Dear 

**Re: OIA request – Theatre nurse vacancies**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received via transfer from the Ministry of Health on 27 May seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about theatre nurse vacancies.

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, Waitākere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing more than 8,900 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. Can you please tell me how many theatre nurses you are currently short? I am referring to vacancies, rather than COVID-19 absences.**

As well as North Shore and Waitākere hospitals, theatres include:

- post-anaesthesia care units (PACUs)
- the Elective Surgery Centre (ESC) on the North Shore Hospital campus.

Current theatre nurse vacancies are as follows:

**Waitematā DHB theatres nursing vacancies**

FTE (Full Time Equivalents)	North Shore Hospital	ESC	Waitākere Hospital	Total FTE vacancies
Theatre nurse vacancies	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0

**Waitematā DHB Post-Anaesthesia Care Units (PACUs)**

<b>FTE (Full Time Equivalentents)</b>	<b>North Shore Hospital</b>	<b>ESC</b>	<b>Waitākere Hospital</b>	<b>Total FTE vacancies</b>
Theatre nurse vacancies	0.0	0.0	2.33	2.33

- 2. What impact is this having on planned care? E.g. are theatres sometimes not able to be used because there are not enough nurses?**
- 3. If there is an impact, can you please estimate what percentage of operations are not able to go ahead, or how many hours theatre time can not be used, or any other tangible measure the impact is having?**
- 4. What are you doing to resolve the problem?**

We are providing a combined response to questions 2, 3 and 4.

Waitematā DHB is in a strong position, with a total of 3.33 FTE theatre nurse vacancies currently and, therefore, there is little-to-no impact on planned care. Our theatre management team has been actively recruiting as part of our ongoing recruitment work and this proactive recruitment continues.

Waitematā DHB recognises there is a general national nursing shortage across DHBs and the Government, the Ministry of Health and DHBs in partnership with unions are taking a wide range of measures to address this situation. This includes nursing recruitment campaigns, funding to support nurses who are not currently practising to return to the nursing workforce, funding to support the employment of graduate nurses and nursing training initiatives.

With regards to the percentage of operations that do not go ahead due to staff nursing shortages, there are many factors that impact delivery of planned DHB services – for example: an available team of surgeons, anaesthetists, anaesthetic technicians, nurses and healthcare assistants is required. Other factors that have a direct impact on planned care are: resourced bed capacity to care for patients before and after their surgery, unplanned staff absences due to illness and, at times, availability of specialist services.

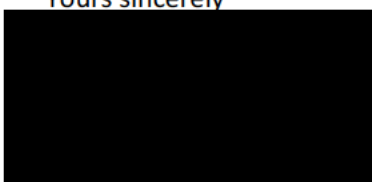
A national planned care taskforce has been set-up to provide advice to the new health authorities - Health NZ and the Māori Health Authority – on how to provide equitable, timely and sustainable planned care health services.

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



**Executive Director Hospital Services  
Waitematā District Health Board**