



18 December 2018



Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – smartphone use

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 3 December seeking details of smartphones used by Waitemata District Health Board (DHB).

Waitemata DHB has the largest resident population of any DHB in New Zealand, currently standing at more than 630,000 people. We employ more than 7,000 staff and operate from more than 80 sites across the Waitemata district and beyond.

Responses to your questions are provided below:

- *Does the DHB have a policy in place regarding the use of smartphones/smartphone apps like WhatsApp, Snapchat, Messenger for the recording and sharing of clinical information?*

Yes.

- *If yes, what is the policy? If no, why not?*

Relevant Waitemata DHB policies are:

Internet and Email Use

Mobile device-managed devices

Clinical Record Retention and Disposal

Clinical Documentation

- *How frequently would you say this is happening among clinicians?*

This is not something we can monitor with any precision.

- *Is it just a sign of the times; a more efficient way of sharing information?*

Clinicians are acutely aware of their responsibilities to patient privacy. Consequently, we have very good compliance regarding policies that prohibit the use of apps for sharing photos. For example, Orthopaedic Services use a dedicated device, which is secured by the DHB, for taking clinical photos.

- *What efforts are made to ensure patient privacy if/when sharing information through personal/work smartphones?*

Waitemata DHB has developed and deployed a mobile application that supports the capture and safe storage of clinical images. Dedicated phones are provided to junior doctors which allow them to use Smart Page (digital paging) for messaging about patients. These phones and applications are all managed by a Government-approved mobile device management system which ensures device security and encryption.

- *Have any clinicians been reprimanded for the way they have used their smartphone/tablet to record or share patient information?*

There have been no issues of this nature.

I trust that this information meets your requirements. Waitemata DHB, like other agencies across the state sector, supports the open disclosure of information to assist the public's 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 feel that there are good reasons why your response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely



Stuart Bloomfield
Chief Information Officer
Waitemata District Health Board