



Hospital Services

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17 March 2020



Dear

Re: OIA request – Elective surgery impact post White Island

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 25 February 2020 seeking information about elective surgery impact post White Island from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB).

1) Number of elective surgeries/procedures (a) rescheduled, (b) postponed and (c) cancelled which were directly related to the White Island incident between 9 December and 1 February. Total figures broken down by outcome (a, b, c) and department (cardiology, gynaecology, etc.)

It is important to note that Waitematā DHB patients who had their elective surgeries rescheduled were clinically assessed as being non-urgent and clinically appropriate to defer, in order to accommodate a regional approach to providing support during this time. As patient safety is always our prime concern, a business-as-usual approach was maintained in relation to all urgent elective surgeries.

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

Orthopaedics Elective Session	Rescheduled*
Hip & Knees	9
Foot and ankle	4
Removal of metal wear	2
Total	15
*All surgeries have now been completed.	

2) Is the DHB still feeling the impacts of the pressure on services as a result of the event?

Orthopaedics services continued to experience an impact in the delivery of elective surgeries until mid-February 2020. The impact of increasing acute volumes from the White Island event meant that, as shown above, 15 elective patients had their non-urgent elective surgeries rescheduled. As noted, these patients have now all had their surgery.

3) If so, where is this being experienced most acutely? I.e. were there particular departments most impacted by the event and its fallout?

As noted, this impact was evident in the orthopaedic department in the elective wait times, due to the rescheduling of non-urgent elective surgeries while managing increased acute volumes during the December 2019 and January 2020 period.

4) Have delays or amendments to elective surgeries impacted wait lists? How was this being mitigated?

The orthopaedic waiting times for non-urgent elective surgery increased during this period. However, the service ensures that clinical priority for patients waiting for surgery is managed closely with the utilization of additional operating theatres sessions.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Holdsworth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Debbie Holdsworth
Acting Director Hospital Services
Waitematā District Health Board