

12 March 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Did not attend numbers for appointments

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 16 February 2021 seeking information about DNA rates from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB).

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 8,500 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 can provide the following information:

For the past five years, from 30 June 2016 to 30 June 2020:

- 1. What information does Waitematā DHB record regarding patients who do not arrive for their appointments across all health specialties? Please provide details by did not attend (DNA) volume and DNA rate by each health speciality.**

The DHB records a status of DNA within our patient management system against all patients that have a booked outpatient appointment and do not either cancel or reschedule this appointment up until the arrival time of this appointment. If a patient misses an appointment, it is a clinical decision whether the appointment requires rescheduling. The clinician is responsible for making the decision regarding the outcome for the patient being either “DNA re-book” or “DNA discharge back to the care of GP”. Where patients are discharged back to the care of their GP, the GP is notified by letter that their patient did not attend the appointment.

Patient volumes were lower than expected in 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19-related lockdowns and alert levels in the Auckland region.

Year	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020		
Specialty	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA
Anaesthesiology			0%	11	128	9%	4	86	5%	8	69	12%	0	43	0%
Cardiology	787	9,904	8%	591	8,768	7%	618	9,795	6%	486	9,620	5%	754	11,101	7%
Dermatology	213	1,933	11%	207	2,045	10%	184	1,931	10%	126	1,725	7%	174	1,845	9%

Year	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020		
Specialty	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA	DNA	Total Appt	% DNA
Diabetes	688	2,771	25%	580	2,983	19%	557	2,882	19%	487	2,678	18%	501	2,864	17%
Endocrinology	378	3,421	11%	280	2,956	9%	209	2,711	8%	178	2,740	6%	275	3,119	9%
Gastro-Enterology	827	6,965	12%	748	6,557	11%	569	6,173	9%	558	6,364	9%	466	6,378	7%
General Medicine	749	5,112	15%	703	4,966	14%	456	4,160	11%	481	4,060	12%	419	3,729	11%
General Surgery	1,728	18,137	10%	1,936	18,610	10%	1,968	19,216	10%	1,796	18,883	10%	1,350	16,872	8%
Gynaecology	437	4,246	10%	451	3,477	13%	476	3,503	14%	327	3,275	10%	407	4,127	10%
Haematology	316	7,575	4%	227	5,762	4%	235	5,929	4%	201	5,587	4%	157	5,519	3%
Infectious Diseases			0%	45	319	14%	112	923	12%	89	926	10%	111	1,077	10%
Neurovascular	42	558	8%	49	654	7%	48	734	7%	38	677	6%	48	642	7%
Orthopaedic	1,562	21,226	7%	1,563	20,401	8%	1,571	20,356	8%	1,505	20,515	7%	1,529	18,349	8%
Otorhinolaryngology	1,320	10,641	12%	1,268	11,126	11%	1,043	10,597	10%	653	8,980	7%	627	8,113	8%
Paediatric MED	446	3,966	11%	485	3,898	12%	427	3,881	11%	423	3,909	11%	457	4,517	10%
Renal Medicine	498	5,547	9%	732	5,875	12%	805	5,910	14%	610	5,355	11%	475	5,840	8%
Respiratory Medicine	452	4,649	10%	404	4,706	9%	297	4,681	6%	281	4,591	6%	261	5,027	5%
Rheumatology	494	5,522	9%	430	5,121	8%	419	5,223	8%	329	4,818	7%	405	5,715	7%
Urology	397	5,293	8%	426	5,439	8%	440	5,741	8%	496	6,803	7%	488	6,737	7%

2. Is the cost of DNAs calculated across each health specialty and, if so, is this reported to the Board? If so, please provide those details for the five years from 30 June 2016 to 30 June 2020.

Waitematā, like all DHBs, follows the Ministry of Health's national framework of common costing standards, which attaches no stand-alone costs to DNAs. The cost of providing services assumes that there will be a proportion of people who do not attend their appointments and these costs are built-in to the overall funding for providing services.

As we do not measure or report the costs of DNAs, we are refusing this aspect of your request under section 18(g)(i) as the information requested is not held by Waitematā DHB and we have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another agency.

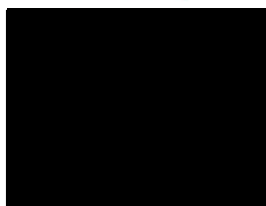
You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this decision by the Ombudsman. Information about how to seek a review is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

I trust that the information we have been able to provide 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**