



1 October 2019



Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Emergency department admissions

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received by Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) on 23 September 2019 seeking information on the following:

1. *The number of persons who are admitted to emergency departments and leave the services without being discharged for the years 2016, 2017, 2018 and the split between those covered by ACC and those covered by others*
2. *How many required Police to be notified that a patient was missing?*

Before responding to your specific questions, it may be useful to provide some context about our services to assist in the interpretation of the information provided. Waitematā DHB serves a population of more than 630,000 across North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas - the largest resident population of any DHB in the country and one of the country’s fastest-growing. The emergency departments at North Shore Hospital and Waitakere Hospital see more than 130,000 presentations each year.

On arrival at an emergency department (ED), the patient may undergo a brief triage or screening to determine the nature and severity of the illness or injury. Those with more severe symptoms or injuries are treated before those with less serious conditions.

After the initial assessment and treatment, patients may be admitted to the hospital, transferred to another hospital or discharged. In terms of presentations to North Shore Hospital and Waitakere Hospital EDs, anyone there for more than three hours is automatically registered as “admitted”. In some cases, patients will choose to self-discharge. Those patients who ultimately receive ACC support are more likely to be triaged as requiring more immediate treatment.

In response to your request, please find the table below detailing the information required.

1. ***North Shore and Waitakere Hospitals’ emergency department attendances who left the department without completing self-discharge papers between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2018. Please note, there was only one ACC patient who self-discharged in this time period:***

North Shore Hospital

Purchaser	Discharge Reason	2016	2017	2018	Total
ACC	Self-discharge - not signed	1			1
DHB	Self-discharge - not signed	1,402	1,019	980	3,401

Waitakere Hospital

Purchaser	Discharge Reason	2016	2017	2018	Total
DHB	Self-discharge - not signed	2,015	2,194	1,589	5,798

2. How many required Police to be notified that a patient was missing?

We do not collect information relating to whether or not the Police were notified and we would only notify the Police if we were concerned about patient or staff safety.

I trust that this information meets your requirements. Waitematā 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



Dr Jonathan Christiansen
Chief Medical Officer
Waitematā District Health Board