



Waitematā

District Health Board

Best Care for Everyone

Provider Healthcare Services

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26 May 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Endocrinology services

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received as a partial transfer from the Ministry of Health on 1 May 2020 seeking information about referral pathways policy/guidelines for Endocrinology services from Waitematā District Health Board.

Before responding to your specific question, it may be useful to provide some context about our services.

Waitematā DHB serves a population of more than 630,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas, the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 7,500 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing services to our own population, we are also the metropolitan Auckland provider of forensic psychiatry, child disability services, child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

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

I request a copy of referral pathways policy/guidelines for Endocrinology services.

Waitematā District Health Board's endocrine service utilises an e-referral system with primary care and other specialists for all endocrine diseases in adults who are domiciled within our area. Endocrine referral guidelines are available on the Auckland Regional Health Pathway which is used by GPs and is also available to the public at <https://aucklandregion.healthpathways.org.nz>. The website search function can be used to access the information required or check "Medical" then "Endocrinology".

We also offer a primary care advice line. We do not provide fertility treatment.

Endocrinologists triage the referrals into four categories:

- P1 – urgent cases that are potentially life-threatening to be seen within 14 days. Example: severe thyrotoxicosis in pregnancy or with heart disease
- P2 – semi-urgent cases that require a prompt diagnosis and management plan to be seen within 42-56 days. Example: Graves' Disease
- P3 – milder endo-conditions to be seen within 120 days. Example: osteoporosis
- P4 – virtual advice with management care plan returned to GP.

We see referrals within these timeframes with no capacity issues.

The Endocrinology Department has protocols for the investigation and diagnosis of the majority of common endocrine conditions. These protocols are evidence-based and supported by international learned societies e.g. Endocrine Society USA. This includes a full range of imaging modalities available either locally or regionally. A comprehensive range of laboratory tests are available. We also provide a good range of test protocols for specific conditions. Examples would be Synacthen testing for adrenal failure or saline suppression testing for hyperaldosteronism. We have an experienced team of endocrinologists who work together as a multi-disciplinary team to discuss difficult cases.

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 black ink, appearing to be 'MS', written over a horizontal line.

Mark Shepherd
Director Provider Healthcare Services
Waitematā District Health Board