



**Waitematā**  
District Health Board  
**Best Care for Everyone**

**DHB Board Office**  
15 Shea Terrace  
Takapuna, Auckland 0622  
Private Bag 93-503, Takapuna  
North Shore City 0740  
Telephone: 09 486 8900  
Facsimile: 09 486 8924  
[www.waitematadhb.govt.nz](http://www.waitematadhb.govt.nz)

17 December 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: OIA request – Staff incidents**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received Monday 7 December 2020, seeking information about incidents of assaults on Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) staff.

Before responding to your specific questions, 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 8,500 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.

You requested the following information:

**Date/numbers/figures of all incidents involving any DHB staff member (including contractors or casual workers) being harassed or physically or verbally assaulted by a patient from any ward/area under the DHB's jurisdiction in the last three years to date (07/12/2017 - 07/12/2020).**

We contacted you on 7 December to advise that some of the information requested was already publicly available. The same day, you narrowed your request to information as follows:

**For the years 2019 and 2020 only.**

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

Our employees interact with a wide cross-section of the community in their day-to-day work and this often involves providing care to people when they are at their most-vulnerable.

Waitematā DHB encourages the reporting of any injury, near-miss or similar incident at work and promotes a policy of ensuring that the safety and security of staff and patients is approached in line with our organisational values, which are available on our website:

<http://www.waitematadhb.govt.nz/about-us/our-promise-values/>

Additionally, de-escalation and communication training programs are available to all staff, both clinical and non-clinical.

Around half of the reported incidents, below, have been received from our mental health and addictions services, with around a quarter from acute and emergency medicine division and the remainder across other services.

We recommend exercising caution in comparing raw event numbers across different district health boards, unless it is clear the breadth of service delivery and clinical caseload is of similar complexity.

**The numbers of incidents, by month, reported by Waitematā DHB staff of harassment or physical or verbal assault by a patient in the last three years:**

2019	Total incidents
January	80
February	64
March	90
April	74
May	56
June	38
July	55
August	64
September	61
October	75
November	53
December	54

2020	Total incidents
January	108
February	91
March	67
April	49
May	77
June	99
July	64
August	75
September	81
October	57
November	73

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



**Fiona McCarthy**  
**Director People and Culture**  
**Waitematā District Health Board**