

3 May 2021



Dear 

**Re: OIA request – Waiting list for a joint replacement**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 9 April 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about patients referred to a waiting list for a joint replacement.

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 8,600 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 are able to provide the following information:

***1. In the past 12 months, what proportion of your DHB patients that were referred to a waiting list by a surgeon, for a joint replacement, were accepted onto the list and got surgery?***

From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, there were 1,861 patients referred to a waiting list by a Waitematā DHB surgeon for a joint replacement. All were accepted onto the list, with 1,100 having already received their surgery.

Some reasons for the difference in the number of patients referred and the numbers who have had surgery include:

- patients opting to not proceed with their surgery either due to COVID-19 or other reasons
- increases in acute presentations and workload impacting on the delivery of planned care
- patients moving out of the catchment area
- patients whose medical condition meant it was not safe for them to undergo surgery.

***2. In 2017, what proportion of your DHB patients that were referred to a waiting list by a surgeon, for a joint replacement, were accepted onto the list and got surgery?***

From 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, there were 2,004 patients referred to a waiting list by a Waitematā DHB surgeon for a joint replacement. All were accepted onto the list, with 1,603 having received their surgery within this time period.

Reasons for the difference in the number of patients referred and the numbers who had surgery have been provided in response to question 1 (excluding for reasons related to COVID-19).

**3. Is the DHB able to comment on whether there are enough GPs in the region?**

The General Practice workforce issues in the Waitematā DHB area are similar to those recently covered in the RNZCGP workforce survey, which can be found here:

<https://rnzcgp.org.nz/gpdocs/New-website/Publications/GP-Workforce/RNZCGP-2020-Workforce-Survey-Results-1-summary.pdf>

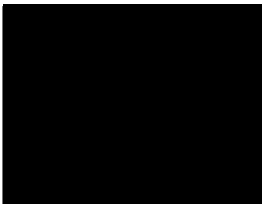
While the DHB does not determine the number of GPs in our catchment, more would be welcomed - particularly Māori and Pacific GPs of which there are low numbers in our district for our population, as is the case nationally.

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



**Executive Director Hospital Services  
Waitematā District Health Board**