



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

**Hospital Services**

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26 June 2019



Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Official Information Act request – Wait times for prostate cancer consultation, biopsy and treatment options**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received on 11 June 2019, seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB).

In response to your request, we are able to provide the data for the period for January to June 2019. However, we are unable to provide comparable data for the same period in 2017. We have used the Faster Cancer Treatment flag to identify patients. However, changes made in 2017 mean we do not have comparable data sets for the time period you have requested.

There are also a number of limitations in the data and patients follow a number of pathways including surveillance, so we have noted the limitations where appropriate.

*1) The current waiting time for an appointment following a referral from a GP for a prostate cancer initial consultation*

A total of 357 patients had a First Specialist Assessment (FSA) between 1 Jan 2019 and 17 June 2019 for e-referrals with high suspicion of/confirmed prostate cancer. The median waiting time from referral to FSA was 63 days.

When the senior medical officer (SMO) triages the GP's referral, there are a number of different clinical pathways depending on the patient's age, PSA test (prostate specific antigen), past history and co-morbidities.

For example: for some patients, the SMO may request that the GP do a follow-up PSA test in two months prior to making a decision regarding an FSA, some patients may go straight to having a prostate biopsy and some patients may require an MRI prior to FSA.

*2) The current waiting time for a follow-up appointment for a prostate biopsy*

A total of 169 TRUS biopsies were recorded between 1 Jan 2019 and 17 June 2019 for e-referrals with high suspicion of/confirmed prostate cancer. The median waiting time from date of FSA for a biopsy was 24 days.

*3) The current waiting time for a post-biopsy appointment to discuss results and treatment options*

A total of 145 patients with e-referrals with high suspicion of/confirmed prostate cancer had a post-biopsy follow-up between 1 Jan 2019 and 17 June 2019. The median waiting time from date of biopsy was 15 days.

*4) The current waiting time for a radical prostatectomy following the post-biopsy appointment*

A total of 19 patients with e-referrals with high suspicion of/confirmed prostate cancer had radical prostatectomy between 1 Jan 2019 and 17 June 2019. The median waiting time between post-biopsy follow-up and radical prostatectomy for these patients was 94 days (between the follow-up of latest biopsy, pre-surgery, to surgery).

Radical prostatectomy is not the only procedure that relates to this group. Not all patients with prostate cancer have the procedure. Numbers are low and potentially make patients identifiable to those familiar with prostate cancer patients, such as the organisation requesting this data.

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



**Cath Cronin**  
**Director of Hospital Services**  
**Waitematā District Health Board**