

25 July 2022

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

Your Official Information Act request - Number of frontline medical staff with COVID-19

Thank you for your request of 17 June 2022 which has been transferred to us from the Ministry of Health. Your request is asking for the following, which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I am lodging an OIA request for the number of front line medical staff including nurses, doctors and all hospital staff that the Ministry has in circulation who are currently working and knowingly have Covid-19 by the Ministry. I would like this data for the months of Jan, Feb, March, April, May 2022.

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 health districts 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 more than 8,900 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:

The number of critical health care workers who have returned to work at North Shore or Waitakere hospitals while COVID-19-positive has been extremely low.

It should be noted that staff only return to work when they are asymptomatic and feeling well. Their decision to return to work is entirely voluntary and in agreement with their manager.

In addition, any COVID-19-positive staff who have returned to work do so in COVID-19-designated areas only.

Arrangements are made to keep them separate from other staff, such as providing separate lunch rooms and work stations.

For the time period that you have requested, fifteen (15) front line staff returned to work in dedicated COVID-19 areas while COVID-19 positive, broken down as follows:

- nine (9) registered nurses
- six (6) doctors.

It should be noted that Waitematā follows national protocols set down by the Ministry of Health, including those governing staff returning to work with or after a COVID-19 infection. Any staff who were COVID-19-positive but asymptomatic would only be able to return to work in compliance with the requirements set out by the Ministry of Health.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā 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.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Fiona McCarthy
Director People and Culture
Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand Waitematā