

CORPORATE OFFICE

Level 1
32 Oxford Terrace
Christchurch Central
CHRISTCHURCH 8011

Telephone: 0064 3 364 4134
Fax: 0064 3 364 4165

Kathleen.Smitheram@cdhb.health.nz

29 June 2021

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RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10631

I refer to your email dated 11 June 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. Specifically:

RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10519, thank you for your response of 16 February 2021.

- **You advised that there were 1,658 terminations performed in 2020 at your board's facilities. I have recently been advised that the Ministry of Health informed the President of Voice for Life that the number of abortions performed at your facilities in 2020 totalled 1,613 there is a difference of 45 in the totals.**
- **I would be grateful if you could advise me promptly, which is the correct total?**

There are a number of reasons numbers may differ.

1. It is possible that Ministry of Health figures are based on individual patients during the 2020 year rather than a count of procedures. Approximately 40 patients had two procedures in the same calendar year.
2. Occasionally a patient is seen in an outpatient setting for a medical termination and then due to complications is brought in to an inpatient setting for a surgical termination. Essentially the patient has one termination but two different procedures. The patient may also be seen in an outpatient setting, decide not to go through with the process, and then come back in a few weeks having changed their mind. In very rare cases if two terminations for one woman are within a short time period i.e. 12 weeks it is impossible to know whether this is one distinct termination or an outcome of two pregnancies. It is very difficult for us to determine what has happened in each individual case so there is an element of duplication/data error that may occur. This occurs in less than 1% of the cases. Further interrogation of the data for 2020 would approximate these numbers at 12.
3. It is also possible that data received from the Ministry of Health are for patients domiciled in the Canterbury DHB/West Coast DHB area only. If we exclude patients from other areas, then the volumes are similar to those provided by the MoH.

The Canterbury District Health Board, along with all other providers in the country, are required to submit each case to the Abortion Supervisory Committee. Accessing these numbers from the Abortion Supervisory Committee to provide further clarity would be recommended.

I trust that this satisfies your interest in this matter.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Canterbury DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Maisey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tracey Maisey
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support