

18 July 2022

9(2)(a)

Official Information Act request ChChD (Canterbury District) 10876

I refer to your email dated 17 May 2022 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Waitaha Canterbury. Specifically:

- 1. How many autism spectrum disorder (ASD) assessments have been undertaken in the last ten years through the CDHB? Broken down by year, sex, and age (under or above 18)?**

Note Paediatrics will see referrals from patients up to 14 years old and Mental health thereafter, however there will be some crossover between the two teams.

Autism assessments can be performed in multiple different teams across our services and can also be recorded under varying referral reasons, therefore identifying the volume of assessments is difficult to quantify and we are declining this under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act *i.e. "...the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research..."*, however the diagnostic outcome at the assessment is used to inform the next steps for the patient.

- 2. How many people have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) through the CDHB in the past ten years? Broken down by year of diagnosis, and sex and age (under or above 18) of the person diagnosed?**

A patient diagnosed with Autism or moving from another region in New Zealand with Autism will be referred to Autism Coordination, this has been used as a proxy for patients diagnosed with Autism in the table below.

Table one Mental Health & Paediatrics

Year	Female	Male	Total	Over 18	Under 18	Total
2016	51	153	204	29	175	204
2017	67	193	260	31	229	260
2018	81	254	335	34	301	335
2019	80	285	365	37	328	365
2020 ¹	133	389	525	56	469	525
2021 ¹	158	403	568	52	516	568

¹From 2020, there was an additional category of other that was used for reporting, for those whose gender identity was nonbinary and/or different from their sex at birth. This column is not included as numbers are small and possibly incomplete, however those young people are included in the total number of referrals.

²We are declining to provide the data for the other four years requested as we had difficulty aligning the data between services and it would take a substantial amount of time and resource to provide. Declined pursuant to section 18(f) of the Official Information Act *i.e. "...the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research..."*

3. Over the past ten years what has been the average wait time for an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis through the CDHB? Broken down by year?

As per Q1 we are declining this under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act i.e. *“...the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research...”*

4. Over the past ten years what has been the average number of people on the wait list with suspected, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the area? Can this be broken down by sex?

As per Q1 we are declining this under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act i.e. *“...the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research...”*

5. How many people are currently on the waitlist with suspected autism spectrum disorder (ASD)? Can this be broken down by sex?

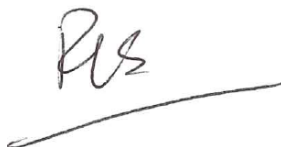
As per Q1 we are declining this under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act i.e. *“...the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research...”*

There is also a substantial amount of information regarding ASD which is publicly available on the HealthInfo website www.healthinfo.org.nz;

You may, under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act, seek a review of our decision to withhold information by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz; or Freephone 0800 802 602.

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

Ngā mihi / Yours sincerely,



Ralph La Salle
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Waitaha Canterbury / Te Tai o Poutini West Coast.