

# Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

## CORPORATE OFFICE

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10 March 2020

9(2)(a)

### RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10270

I refer to your email dated 7 February 2020 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. Specifically, regarding patients detained under the Mental Health Act (MHA).

1. **How many patients detained under the Mental Health Act have left a DHB-operated open or secure facility/ward in the past seven years, 2013 to present, when they were not supposed to or were supposed to return through;**
  - a) escorted leave;
  - b) unescorted leave;
  - c) escape;
  - d) transfer;
  - e) weekend or day leave;
  - f) any other way.

**Please break down by year and type of facility.**

The data referred to in **Table one** (overleaf) is extracted from our data management system and is shown by secure and non-secure facility. We have provided 2015 to the end of 2019 data. We are unable to provide this information prior to 2015 as this information was not captured in our previous incident management system.

We have provided this information by number of events and number of people involved. For example, in 2015 - 136 people absconded or did not return from leave (the total number of these events was 334, meaning some people may have absconded or not returned more than once).

Did not return from leave events may include overnight, day or short-term leave. We are unable to provide this in any further detail as it is not collected.

Table one:

Year	Unit Type	Absconded events	Did not return from leave events	Total events for year	People per unit type	Total people per year
2015	Open	240	93	334	135	136
	Secure	1	0		1	
2016	Open	213	80	298	123	128
	Secure	2	3		5	
2017	Open	219	57	280	123	126
	Secure	1	3		3	
2018	Open	138	36	177	92	94
	Secure	1	2		2	
2019	Open	99	26	125	74	74
	Secure	0	0		0	

**2. Please state how many of those patients who left while under DHB mental health care died by suicide or suspected suicide. Please break down by year, ethnicity and gender.**

There were two people in the past five calendar years (2015-2019) who left while under DHB mental health care who died by suicide or suspected suicide. Because of the small numbers we are declining to break this information down by year, ethnicity and gender to protect the identity of these people. We are therefore declining a response to this question pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act.

**3. Please state how many of those patients disappeared and were never found again.**

We are declining a response to this question pursuant to section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. we do not collect/hold this data.

**4. Please state how many of those patients suffered an adverse event/trauma through the unapproved departure; i.e. raped, robbed, assaulted, accidental death or homicide etc.**

We do not routinely collect this data, however were able to identify one incident in 2016 of an alleged sexual assault.

**5. Please state for the same time frame the number of patients who died INSIDE the DHB-run mental health facility and type of death, e.g. suicide, suspected suicide, accidental death, illness etc.**

We have reviewed data from our data management system. We have applied the definition of adverse events as per the Health Quality and Safety Commission – *“an event with negative or unfavourable reactions or results that are unintended, unexpected or unplanned (also referred to as ‘incident’ or ‘reportable event’).”*

In practice this is most often understood as an event which results in harm or has the potential to result in harm to a consumer.

Our data (2015-2019) does not show any events where a patient under the MHA died inside a Canterbury DHB run facility.

We do not collect data on accidental death, illness etc as these are not classed as adverse events as per the definition above.

I trust that this satisfies your interest in this matter.

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](http://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 Canterbury DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely

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

Carolyn Gullery  
**Executive Director**  
**Planning, Funding & Decision Support**