

CORPORATE OFFICE

Level 1
32 Oxford Terrace
Christchurch Central
CHRISTCHURCH 8011

Telephone: 0064 3 364 4160
Fax: 0064 3 364 4165
Ralph.Jasalle@cdhb.health.nz

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9(2)(a)

RE Official information request CDHB 10564

I refer to your email dated 17 March 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB regarding the rise in the use of nitrous oxide, also known as NOS, whippets, nangs and laughing gas. Specifically:

- 1. The number of people per month over the last two years who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.**

Nitrous oxide presentations are very rare in our Emergency Department as it is a short acting drug and the effects wear off very quickly. In the last 2 years we have had three patients recorded with attendance due, at least in part, to the use of nitrous oxide. Because of the very small numbers we are declining to break the information down any further pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"...to protect the privacy of natural persons, including those deceased"*.

- 2. The number of people per month over the last two years who have been admitted to hospital as a result of the use of nitrous oxide.**

Over the last two years there were four inpatient admissions relating to nitrous oxide. One was intentional self-poisoning with nitrous oxide and other drugs, the other three were adverse effects in therapeutic nitrous oxide use. Because of the very small numbers we are declining to break the information down any further pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"...to protect the privacy of natural persons, including those deceased"*.

- 3. The age of people per month over the last two years who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.**
- 4. The gender of the people per month over the last two years who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.**
- 5. The ethnicity of people per month over the last two years who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.**

Because of the very small numbers we are declining to break the information down into age, gender and ethnicity per month over the last two years pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"...to protect the privacy of natural persons, including those deceased"*.

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 Canterbury DHB and the West Coast DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely



Ralph La Salle
Acting Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support