

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

CORPORATE OFFICE

Level 1
32 Oxford Terrace
Christchurch Central
CHRISTCHURCH 8011

Telephone: 0064 3 364 4160
Fax: 0064 3 364 4165
carolyn.gullery@cdhb.health.nz

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RE Official information request CDHB 9920

We refer to your email dated 23 June 2018 and received on 13 August 2018 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB regarding Non-resident births in hospitals run by our District Health Board. Specifically:

1. **How many non-resident women gave birth in hospitals run by the DHB in the past five years?**
Please break down numbers by year and hospital.

Table one: The number of non-resident women who gave birth in hospitals run by the Canterbury DHB.

Non-resident births						
Facility	Financial Year					Grand Total
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	
Christchurch	380	367	462	564	507	2280
Ashburton	12	11	13	18	23	77
Rangiora	6	9	11	11	7	44
Lincoln	7	3	8	6	16	40
Burwood	16	6	13			35
Kaikoura			2	3		5
Darfield		1	1	1		3
Total	421	397	510	603	553	2484

Please note: Just because a woman is identified as a non-resident does not mean she does not qualify for free and subsidised healthcare, such as workers on appropriate temporary visas, women with eligible partners, and residents of countries with reciprocal agreements. The full details of eligibility are available on the websites below/overleaf:

<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/tools-and-information/general-information/pregnant-applicants>

<https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/publicly-funded-health-and-disability-services/pregnancy-services>

2. Were any non-residents billed by the DHB for the births? If so how many?

There were 89 non-resident women billed by the Canterbury DHB for births over the five year period.

3. Of those who were billed, how many paid the bill and what was the total each year?

Forty seven of the women identified in question 2 paid for their care.

Table one: Non-resident birthing invoices paid

Financial year	Amount paid over the five year period
2013/14	\$18,372.68
2014/15	\$53,145.01
2015/16	\$70,022.60
2016/17	\$57,703.41
2017/18	\$21,051.03

4. What was the cost of the most inexpensive and expensive non-resident births for the DHB in the past five years, and were those bills paid?

The most inexpensive non-resident birth in the past five years was \$4,150 (paid)

The most expensive non-resident birth in the past five years was \$17,938.52 (not paid)

5. Did the DHB sue any of the non-residents for non-payment? If so what was the total sued for each year? Were any cases won and the money paid back?

No, the Canterbury DHB has not sued any non-residents for non-payment.

6. What was the legal cost to the DHB of pursuing those birth costs?

None.

7. Has the DHB experienced "birth tourists" as other countries do, whereby non-residents give birth in a NZ hospital in an effort to claim residency/citizenship? (Please elaborate)

This is not something that the Canterbury DHB asks patients. We are therefore declining your question under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. "...the information requested is not held by the Canterbury DHB".

8. Has the DHB ever turned away any expectant mothers because they were non-residents?

There is a medical and ethical obligation to offer healthcare to those living in our community in New Zealand. The Canterbury District Health Board will deliver urgent healthcare to those persons not eligible for publicly funded healthcare, regardless of their willingness or ability to pay, with cost recovery after delivery.

9. Have any non-residents used fake passports or identification to achieve a free birth?

We are declining your question under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. “...*the information requested is not held by the Canterbury DHB*”. If a fake passport or identification was uncovered and the patient was found to be ‘not eligible for publicly funded healthcare’, they would be invoiced for their healthcare.

10. Does the DHB run any fraud-type campaigns/hotlines to try and stamp out non-residency birth non-payments/frauds?

No, the Canterbury DHB does not run any fraud-type campaigns/hotlines as outlined in your question.

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 'Carolyn Gullery', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carolyn Gullery
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support