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RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10761

I refer to your email dated 23 November 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB regarding cervical screening. Specifically:

- 1. What is the backlog of women who still need to be screened since the first lockdown, and in particular the backlog of Māori and Pasifika women the CDHB has been funded to screen from the MOH? How much money was provided for that?**

The National Screening Unit definition of 'backlog' is the difference in screening volumes in December 2020 compared to screening volumes in December 2019 (Free and Accessible Screening Services reporting template). **Table 1** shows the screened volumes for Canterbury at December 2019 and December 2020 with the most recent available data for 2021 (September), showing the screening had caught up following the pause in screening during the lockdown and there is no backlog.

Table 1

	Maori	Pacific	Asian	Other	Total
Dec-19	7,585	2,341	12,586	86,925	109,437
Dec-20	7,790	2,402	13,520	86,843	110,555
Sept-21	8031	2419	14,068	87,815	112,333

CDHB was able to do this within its budget without further funding from the Ministry of Health.

2. How have the Covid lockdowns/Level 3 impacted screening at CDHB? I see from a recent OIA response (CDHB 10711) numbers dropped pretty drastically in April 2020 and again in March/April 2021. What did that coincide with? How much difference did Level 2 make?

These were lockdown periods: screening was paused during the 2020 lockdown hence the drop in the number of smears immediately after the lockdown; similarly with the 2021 lockdown.

3. What is/will the DHB be doing to try and get more coverage in cervical screening and get to those women it hasn't been able to reach, and mitigate the impacts of Covid?

Specific actions to date include:

- Prioritising Maori and Pacific women who are due for a smear
- Improved processes for data matching from the national cervical screening register and general practice enrolment data to support and assist primary care practices to manage recall of women
- ScreenSouth is working with the Support to Screening Services provider, He Waka Tapu, and other key community providers, to identify and contact hard-to-reach women and/or visit or provide assistance such as transport

4. From a DHB perspective, how much impact would HPV self-testing make, and how soon would it like to see this brought in?

Canterbury DHB is working towards the introduction of HPV testing which the Government has announced will commence in July 2023. There is a range of readiness activities that need to be in place to support the introduction of HPV testing including database and laboratory changes. In the lead in to this work, Canterbury DHB has participated in the National Screening Unit's National Cervical Screening Programme's current state analysis survey at the end of 2021 - this survey will help inform requirements for a database solution for HPV testing. Canterbury DHB will continue to participate in further readiness activities as requested.

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



Ralph La Salle
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