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20 September 2021

9(2)(a)



RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10686

I refer to your email dated 13 April 2021 and received on 16 August 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. Specifically:

1. How many currently registered flight nurses are employed by the DHB?

We employ 20 Registered Nurses (RN) as flight nurses participating in the flight roster in the Canterbury DHB. We have one flight ACNM 1.0 FTE (Associate Charge Nurse Manager)

2. What is the average remuneration of currently registered flight nurses employed by the DHB by qualification and seniority bands?

The average base salary for the flight RNs is between \$75,132.00 and \$77,386.00. We are declining to provide the salary of the ACNM pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act to protect their privacy.

3. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, how many flight hours have been charged to the DHB for interhospital transfers by fixed wing aircraft?

We do not hold this information for the last 3 financial years, 'Flight hours' data has not been recorded for this time frame and we are declining a response to this question pursuant to section 18(g) of the Official Information Act.

4. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, how many flight hours have been charged to the DHB for interhospital transfers by rotary wing aircraft?

According to our available records, rotary wing IHT flight hours charged to Canterbury DHB over the last three complete financial years are as follows:

-2018/2019 32.3

-2019/2020	53.3
-2020/2021	69.6

5. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, how much has the DHB spent with third parties for interhospital transfers by fixed wing aircraft?

According to our records Canterbury DHB has spent the below over the last three complete financial years with third parties:

-2018/2019	\$2,229,219.72
-2019/2020	\$2,335,876.46
-2020/2021	\$2,272,364.10

6. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, how much has the DHB spent with third parties for interhospital transfers by rotary wing aircraft?

According to our records Canterbury DHB has spent the below over the last three complete financial years with third parties:

-2018/2019	\$221,229.23
-2019/2020	\$370,205.59
-2020/2021	\$463,764.99

7. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, what is the total number of flights for each destination for interhospital transfers for fixed wing aircraft?

According to our records, Canterbury DHB has paid for the following number of inter-hospital fixed wing inter-hospital transfer flights for residents from our district over the last three financial years:

-2018/2019	171
-2019/2020	158
-2020/2021	177

A summary of the origin and destinations of these flights is listed in tables in **Appendix 1** (attached).

8. For each of the last 3 complete financial years, what is the total number of flights for each destination for interhospital transfers for rotary wing aircraft?

According to our records, Canterbury DHB has paid for the following number of inter-hospital rotary wing inter-hospital transfer flights for residents from our district over the last three financial years:

-2018/19	26
-2019/20	37
-2020/2021	33

A summary of the origin and destinations of these flights is listed in tables in **Appendix 1** (attached).

9. What metrics does the DHB use to measure service performance of service providers providing interhospital transfer services to the DHB for fixed wing aircraft?

There are no formal metrics in the Agreement. However, there are other contractual mechanisms to help ensure that the services are provided in accordance with the requirements of the contract and the expectations of the Canterbury DHB.

The contract provides that Canterbury DHB will continue to monitor the services and that the parties will meet regularly to review operation of the services and the Agreement. This includes an annual review to consider any possible efficiency gains. We have a good relationship with GCH Aviation and any issues arising are able to be resolved quickly between the parties.

10. What metrics does the DHB use to measure service performance of service providers providing interhospital transfer services to the DHB for rotary wing aircraft?

NASO service specs are posted here on the Ministry of Health website.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/key-health-sector-organisations-and-people/national-ambulance-sector-office-naso/emergency-ambulance-services-eas/eas-providers/emergency-ambulance-service-generic-service-agreements>

11. What business rules or agreements are in place with other DHBs for cost sharing for interhospital transfers for fixed wing aircraft?

The Canterbury DHB pays the costs of air ambulance transfers by fixed wing aircraft as invoiced to us by other DHBs in respect of those patients who are residents of our district. While not overly common, cost-sharing between DHBs at single event level may occur from time to time by mutual agreement on a case by case basis, dependent on the particular circumstances relating to the individual patient.

12. What business rules or agreements are in place with other DHBs for cost sharing for interhospital transfers for rotary wing aircraft?

The process is invoice based, where NASO has determined the hourly rate and invoices DHBs for interhospital transfers (IHTs) hours flown. This was first established through a variation to the Crown Funding Agreement.

DHBs are responsible for funding IHTs, however, there are two business rules for when IHTs are funded by either the Ministry or ACC.

- The Ministry will pay for an urgent IHT where a patient is transferred from one medical facility to another within three hours of arriving at the first facility. The exception to this rule is the northern region.
- ACC will pay for an urgent IHT when a patient is transferred from one publicly funded hospital to another within 24 hours of arriving at the first hospital, as long as that first hospital could not be reasonably expected to meet patient needs (e.g. if a service is usually available at that facility, but at that particular time due to staff absence was not).

For each calendar month, DHBs are sent a list of IHT missions where the patients have been domiciled to that DHB. These missions exclude all missions where the provider indicates the mission is an ACC 24-hour rule IHT.

The DHB reviews the missions sent and advises if they accept the cost of the IHT or whether the cost of the IHT should be elsewhere i.e. Ministry of Health for 3-hour rule missions or another DHB.

Missions that are advised that fall under the three-hour rule are checked with St John and those that are found to fall outside the rule are re-sent to DHBs. Additionally, missions that should be sent to another DHB are also sent.

DHBs are invoiced for all accepted missions for each quarter.

13. What advice has the DHB provided to the Simpson Review team relating to patient transfers by aircraft?

No advice was requested or given.

14. What growth forecasts has the DHB completed or commissioned relating to interhospital transfer demand?

None

15. Who is the DHB currently under contract with to provide interhospital transfer by aircraft, when does the contract expire and what right of renewals exist within the contract?

Canterbury DHB has a current contract with Garden City Helicopters now operating as GCH Aviation for aeromedical fixed wing air transportation services in accordance with the Air Transportation Services agreement between Canterbury DHB and GCH Aviation.

Commencement Date- 1st October 2016. Two-year initial contract term expiring 30 September 2018.

Renewal Terms- there is provision in our agreement for up to 5x two-year renewal terms (which if all used would take the contract out to 30th September 2028).

Current Term- Both CDHB and GCA have signed a contract renewal for the term 1st October 2020 to 30th September 2022 (the 2nd of 5 optional renewal terms from our original agreement).

Other inter-hospital air transfer providers invoice for services on a per flight basis.

As advised in our letter 27 August 2021, under section 14(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act (1982), we have partially transferred Question 15 of this request in regard to inter-hospital transfer by rotary aircraft as the Ministry of Health/National Ambulance Sector Office (NASO) holds the contracts for DHB rotary services.

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



Tracey Maisey
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support

10686 Appendix 1

Question 7: Inter-Hospital transfers by fixed wing aircraft paid for by Canterbury DHB, by point of origin & destination

2018-2019	Transfer From	Destination								Total		
		Christchurch	Nelson	Auckland	Dunedin	Greymouth	Wellington	Invercargill	Ashburton			
	Auckland	30								30		
	Blenheim	2	1	1						4		
	Chathams	11		2						13		
	Christchurch		2	43	9	1	11	1		67		
	Dunedin	15								15		
	Dunstan	1								1		
	Greymouth	3					1			4		
	Invercargill	7								7		
	Nelson	12								12		
	Tauranga	2							1	3		
	Timaru			2						2		
	Wellington	13								13		
2019-2020	Transfer From	Destination										Total
		Christchurch	Nelson	Auckland	Dunedin	Wellington	Invercargill	P/North	Queenstown	Tauranga	Blenheim	
	Auckland	35				2						37
	Blenheim	3		1								4
	Chathams	11										11
	Christchurch		2	37	6	2	3	2	2	2	1	57
	Dunedin	8		3		1						12
	Gisborne	1										1
	Greymouth	2			1							3
	Invercargill	7										7
	Nelson	12				1						13
	New Plymouth	1										1
	P/ North	3										3
	Rotorua	1										1
	Wellington	7										7
	Whangarei	1										1

(Continues over page for 2020/2021)

Question 7 continues:

2020-2021	Transfer From	Destination								Total	
		Christchurch	Nelson	Auckland	Dunedin	Wellington	Invercargill	P/North	Hamilton		Tauranga
	Auckland	25									25
	Blenhiem	7	2			1					10
	Chathams	10									10
	Christchurch			39	13	1	2	4	2	1	62
	Dunedin	17									17
	Dunstan	2									2
	Gisborne	2									2
	Greymouth	6									6
	Hamilton	2									2
	Hokitika	1									1
	Invercargill	3									3
	Napier	2									2
	Nelson	11									11
	New Plymouth					1					1
	Queenstown	1									1
	Rotorua	1									1
	Tauranga	2									2
	Timaru		1								1
	Waikato	2									2
	Wanganui	2									2
	Whangarei	12	2								14

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Question 8: Inter-Hospital transfers by Rotary Wing aircraft paid for by Canterbury DHB, by point of origin & destination

2018-2019	Transfer From	Destination				Total
		Christchurch	Timaru	Auckland	Dunedin	
	Ashburton	13				13
	Invercargill				1	1
	Kaikoura	5				5
	Kaikoura	2				2
	Blenheim	1				1
	Christchurch		1			1
	Lakes District				1	1
	Timaru	1				1
	Whangarei			1		1

2019-2020	Transfer From	Destination						Total
		Christchurch	Kaikoura	Wairau	Nelson	Invercargill	Dunedin	
	Ashburton	19						0
	Christchurch		1					1
	Kaikoura	5		1	2			8
	Lakes District					1	2	3
	Oamaru						1	1
	Invercargill						1	1
	Tauranga							1
	Timaru	2						2
	Wanaka						1	1

(Continues over page for 2020/2021)

Q8 continues:

	Transfer From	Destination					Total
		Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill	Waikato	Auckland	
2020-2021	Auckland	13					13
	Bay of Islands						1
	Dunstan Hosp		1				1
	Gore		1				1
	Greymouth	1					1
	Kaikoura	8					8
	Lakes District	1		1			2
	Nelson	1					1
	Oamaru	1					1
	Rotorua				1		1
	Invercargill			1			1
	Timaru	1					1
Whangarei					1	1	

Note: this data is from records of invoices paid by Canterbury DHB to 3rd parties including other DHBs for fixed wing transfers and to Ministry of Health for NASO Heli transfers.