

## CORPORATE OFFICE

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9(2)(a)

### RE Official information request CDHB 10521

We are writing to acknowledge your email dated 8 January 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. Specifically:

- **Methadone dispensings by calendar year, for the years of 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016;**

Canterbury DHB does not hold the combined data for methadone dispensing. Usually the first dose of methadone is dispensed by the DHB, but thereafter community pharmacies typically do the dispensing under either a shared model (DHB and general practice) or general practice. Most of the dispensing is undertaken by community pharmacies who each record their own data. However, collated methadone dispensing data is publicly available on the Ministry of Health's website for years 2015 to 2019 and can be extracted by each DHB:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/pharmaceutical-data-web-tool>

We are therefore declining a response to this part of the request pursuant to sections 18(g) 18(d) of the Official Information Act, i.e. *"that the information requested is not held..."* and *"that the information requested is or will soon be publicly available."*

- **The longest consecutive period of time a person has been dispensed methadone through the DHB (if known by patient NHI) as of 2020**

As the community pharmacies, in addition to the DHB, also dispense methadone and contain their own records, Canterbury DHB cannot provide an accurate response on the longest consecutive period of time that a person has been dispensed methadone.

We can, however, add that the longest period of time that a person has been under care of the Christchurch Opioid Recovery Service (CORS) is 32 years. It is worth noting though the CORS programme can provide suboxone as well as methadone, and that some CORS clients are also under GP shared care. GPs can also provide prescriptions for methadone or suboxone.

I trust 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 blue ink, appearing to read 'R La Salle'.

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