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25 November 2021

9(2)(a)

RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10736

I refer to your email received dated 18 October 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. Specifically:

- 1. After referral from a GP and acceptance for an appointment, what is the current wait time for a first specialist appointment for patients with gallbladder issues?**

Table one: Current wait time for FSA (First Specialist Assessment) for patients with gallbladder issues as at 10/11/2021

Patients on wait list for FSA	140
Average wait time	78.3 days
Patients waiting >120 days	31

Note: by July 2021 General Surgery had returned to compliance for FSAs, which means all patients waiting for an FSA were seen on average within 120 days. Some patients may have waited longer as we cleared the backlog following the initial Covid lockdowns.

- 2. After the first specialist appointment is completed and surgery approved for gallbladder removal, what is the current wait time for the surgery to be completed?**

The wait time varies markedly depending on whether the patient meets criteria to receive their surgery on the Outsourced contract i.e. aged <75 years, BMI less than 40, ASA 1 or 2 (a measure of anaesthetic risk). Patients who do not meet this criteria are booked at Christchurch hospital based on urgency and longest wait. Please refer to **Table two** (below)

Table two: Current wait time for surgery as at 10/11/2021

Patients on wait list for surgery	119
Average wait time	130 days
Patients waiting >120 days	47

Note: Deferred patients for surgery have been excluded.

- 3. What steps is the CHDB undertaking to ensure that patients are seen (first specialist appointment) within four months of referral?**

General Surgery have conducted additional FSA clinics in the past to return to compliance and we regularly review our waitlist to ensure patients are not waiting for an appointment with a specialist.

Please note there is also publicly available information on our HealthInfo website regarding Gallbladder and gallstones. <https://www.healthinfo.org.nz/>

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 'Tracey Maisey', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Tracey Maisey
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support