

## 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](mailto:carolyn.gullery@cdhb.health.nz)

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**RE Official information request CDHB 9967**

We refer to your email dated 1 November 2018 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB. We note your request was subsequently clarified on 8 November 2018 to include all children up to 18 years of age.

- 1. The number of children eligible for the free dental service in DHB's coverage area for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Please list each year separately including until end October 2018.**

**Table one: Population Pre-schoolers / Primary School and Adolescents.**

Financial Year		Calendar Year		
1 April – 31 March	Pre-schoolers		Primary School *	13 - 18 year olds
2014/15	31,620	2015	51,508	30,300
2015/16	31,950	2016	52,943	29,930
2016/17	32,420	2017	53,821	30,205
2017/18	33300	2018	55,243	n/a **

**Notes:**

\*For primary school age children population data is not recorded by Canterbury DHB, only enrolments. We have extracted Primary population data from the 'Education Counts' website.

\*\*Data for 13-18 year olds is calculated on a calendar year so is currently not available for 2018.

- 2. The number of children registered for the service - if it differs.**

**Table two: Enrolled: Pre-school / Primary**

Calendar year	Pre-schoolers	Primary School
2015	21,880	48,789
2016	19,596	49,736
2017	20,042	51,132
2018	25340	50,909 (to date)

Please note: there is no record of enrolment for 13-18 year olds only record of treatment. Please refer to response in Question 3.

**3. The number of children seen by a dental clinic (including mobile ones) during the above period.**

**a. Pre-school / Primary**

Information around service utilisation is stored in the CDHB Oral Health database Titanium. We have pulled information which highlight the number of individuals with a treatment codes recorded by year, for preschool and school children combined

**Table three (a) pre-school / primary**

DHB Code	Calendar Year	Number
Canterbury DHB	2015	63670
Canterbury DHB	2016	63656
Canterbury DHB	2017	64389
Canterbury DHB	2018	56707

**b. Adolescents**

Information around Adolescents service utilisation can only be determined by looking at claims data for Combined Dental Agreement Holders by Calendar Year.

**Table four (b) adolescents 13-18 year olds.**

DHB Code	Calendar Year	Number
Canterbury DHB	2015	18,659
Canterbury DHB	2016	18333
Canterbury DHB	2017	19,012
Canterbury DHB	2018	n/a

**4. The number of reminders sent out to patients/their caregivers each year.**

**a) Pre-school / primary care students**

All booked appointments receive a SMS reminder (where we have a cellphone number) but not all visits are booked appointments (visits in mobiles are not booked, so no reminder) therefore the number of reminders is not known.

If not immediately contactable, families/whanau also receive reminders when their children require an appointment. They may receive more than one reminder and these could be voicemail messages, SMS or letter.

**b) Adolescents**

Treatment for this group is provided by Combined Dental Agreement holders. Each Dental Practice maintains their own system for patient recall systems.

**5. Details of why there may have been a difference between the number patients eligible, those sent reminders and those who were seen.**

There are a number of reasons why the number enrolled may vary from the number of children seen. The main reasons for this though are

- Children are enrolled at birth (from 1 May 2017) with community dental services (CDS). However children are first seen by CDS at age two.
- Examination arrears – those not able to be seen on-time due to resource constraints (i.e. staff).
- The children we are not able to reach.

No information is held on numbers of reminders.

**6. Should all patients registered with the service be sent reminders?**

Yes, see above.

**7. Have there been any problems which may have led to caregivers not receiving reminders?**

Yes, changes to phone numbers and addresses, not able to answer phone.

**8. How often should children have check-ups?**

Generally every 12 months from two years of age, however, the service specification allows for a check-up every 18 months. Children identified as 'at risk of dental decay' can be seen more frequently.

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



**Carolyn Gullery**  
**Executive Director**  
**Planning, Funding & Decision Support**