

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

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RE Official information request CDHB 9931 and WCDHB 9201

We refer to your letter dated 28 August 2018 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB and West Coast DHB regarding the number of assaults and incidents of sexual harassment made against staff. Specifically:

1. The total number of recorded assaults made against staff during the time period of January 1, 2013 until August 25, 2018. and

We have interpreted your request as the total number of recorded assaults made by patients against staff.

Our staff are encouraged to report **all** incidents. An incident is any unplanned or unexpected event resulting in, or having the potential for harm, ill health, damage, loss or disruption to service delivery. Each event is reviewed so that patients and staff are supported, and secondarily for continuous quality improvement. Since implementation of the Safety 1st incident management system in 2015 and as at 25 August 2018, 68,320 incident forms have been submitted. Of these, 45,429 were clinical incident forms.

Please note: We are declining to provide information prior to the implementation of the Safety 1st incident management system in 2015 under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act i.e. to provide information going back to 1 January 2013 would require substantial collation or research.

We take all forms of assault or abuse very seriously. Staff need to be supported and depending on the initial review, this may initiate the following action:

- Arrange support for the staff member. This would be providing a chance to talk, offering EAP (Employee Assistance Programmes), offering extra supervision or a debrief
- Discuss the event with staff
- Discuss practices with staff

- Identify if an external agency (e.g. police) has been involved
- Advise the senior leadership team
- Reassign the staff member to another area of work

The report below is for all events affecting staff for the period from implementation of the incident management system in 2015.

Canterbury DHB Health Services

Abuse - Verbal	984
Abuse Verbal - Discrimination	43
Abused - Verbal	40
Assault - Physical	1923
Assault - Sexual	48
Assaulted - Physically	64
Assaulted - Sexually	2
Physical Threat	755
Threat - Verbal	437
Threatened - Physically	33
Threatened - Sexually	7
Threatened - Verbally	24
Grand Total	4,360

West Coast DHB Health Services

Abuse - Verbal	43
Abuse Verbal - Discrimination	3
Abused - Verbal	8
Assault - Physical	157
Assault - Sexual	1
Assaulted - Physically	36
Threat - Verbal	5
Threatened - Physically	16
Threatened - Verbally	2
Grand Total	271

2. The total number of recorded sexual harassment complaints made by staff during the time period of January 1, 2013 until August 25, 2018.

In the figures provided above information is given on the number of incidents relating to sexual assault for Canterbury DHB and West Coast DHB. However, it is important to note that a recorded incident is not the same as a complaint. With respect to complaints made by staff about sexual harassment this information is not held in a central data base for either DHB and therefore cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Accordingly we are declining to provide this information under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act.

The Canterbury DHB and West Coast DHBs are committed to being a good employer and providing a working environment which is free of unwelcome behaviour and abuse of power or position. Everyone has the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of harassment.

Any harassment complaint is taken seriously and handled with sensitivity and impartiality. Complainants are provided with support and information about the options available to assist them to make an informed decision about how to proceed.

If you disagree with our decision to withhold information you may, under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act, seek an investigation and review of our decision from the Ombudsman

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 and West Coast DHB websites after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Gullery', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Carolyn Gullery
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support