



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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11 December 2018

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RE Official information request WCDHB 9233

We refer to your email dated 1 November 2018 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast 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	2130	2015	3,197	1755
2015/16	2050	2016	3,122	1730
2016/17	1980	2017	3,115	1700
2017/18	1940	2018*	3,124	n/a **

Notes:

*For primary school age children population data is not recorded by West Coast 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 information 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	2140	3318
2016	1786	3258
2017	1924	3149
2018	2096	2963 (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 West Coast DHB Oral Health database. We have pulled information which highlight the number of individuals with a treatment code recorded by year, for preschool and school children combined

Table three (a) pre-school / primary

Calendar Year	Number
2015	3954
2016	4730
2017	4813
2018*	NA

***Note.** Confirmed data for the 2018 Calendar Year will not be available until March 2019

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.

Calendar Year	Number
2015	1350
2016	1344
2017	1311
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 cell phone 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 with community dental services. However children are first seen by CDS between 1 - 2 years of age.
- 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?

Families on the West Coast shift around and change phone numbers which often makes it hard to get hold of some families to attend appointments.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Gullery', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Carolyn Gullery
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support