



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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5 August 2019

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RE Official Information Act request WCDHB 9327

I refer to your email dated 22 July 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB.

- 1. The number of full and part time staff currently employed in the maternity ward at your District Health Board. Please separate these by job title ie. midwife, senior midwife, obstetrician, nurse etc.**

The number of full and part time staff currently employed in the maternity ward at the West Coast DHB is as follows:

• 1 Midwifery Manager	=	1.0 FTE
• 10 Core midwives (part time)	=	7.0 FTE
• 2 Obstetrician Gynaecologists	=	2.0 FTE
• 1 Midwifery Educator	=	0.8 FTE
• 3 Enrolled Nurses (part time)	=	2.2 FTE
• 1 Registered Nurse	=	1.0 FTE
• 1 Maternity Services Administrator	=	0.6 FTE
Total	=	14.6 FTE

- 2. The number of positions that exist or need to be filled - ie. If there are 20 midwife positions but 10 are currently filled, please state this, and also the length of time the position has been open for.**

There is currently two vacant Core Midwife positions (2 FTE), these positions have been vacant for approximately 6 months. Recruitment for midwives is active and ongoing. We always have 1 Core midwife on a shift and it is only when staff are sick that it becomes difficult to staff the ward.

Our staff in management positions also hold practicing certificates and have been able to cover shifts when required. We continue an active advertising and recruitment campaign.

- 3. Please also provide any reports or information - including internal memos etc. - into staffing problems within the maternity ward, and any issues with recruitment, in the past two years. This includes reports of any adverse events where staffing was identified as an issue.**

Staffing issues during December / January of this year necessitated management holding a meeting with the whole midwifery team and wider nursing management to determine how best to utilise the experience in the unit, thus lessening the pressure on staff. That meeting (held in March) was an opportunity for management to connect with staff to get their perspective on the impact midwives leaving the Coast has on such a small LMC and midwife workforce still working here. . This discussion presented an opportunity to brainstorm and discuss suggestions that could help alleviate some of the stress staff face when we are not fully staffed. One of the suggestions we have trialled during our staffing shortage is supporting the unit with an RN (1 FTE) who has obstetric training and works under the direction of a Core midwife.

Midwifery recruitment and retention is a national issue. A South Island Rural Midwifery Workshop with representation from all South Island DHBs was held late June to identify short, medium term and long term strategies to address midwife recruitment and retention. We continue to actively recruit midwives and we are active in the discussions across the South Island as well as looking at how we can provide care close to women in such a rural DHB.

- 4. I also request any complaints or matters of concern raised by maternity ward staff to management about problems or incidents arising from or related to a lack of staffing within the maternity ward.**

The Maternity ward union representative raised concern to management regarding the staffing shortage and management met with that staff member, both at and following the March meeting to listen to their concerns and potential solutions on how to resolve this issue. Dialogue is ongoing.

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 West Coast DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely



Carolyn Gullery
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support