



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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24 September 2019

9(2)(a)

RE Official Information Act request WCDHB 9338

I refer to your email dated 22 August 2019 requesting information from West Coast DHB under the Official Information Act on the number of locum and permanent doctors, and nurses, working at Buller Health for the year to 30 June 2019.

Buller Health includes both the general practice (Buller Medical) as well as the hospital service, and has doctors covering both areas. The doctors' employment with us is not split or differentiated between general practice and hospital systems. For the purpose of this request, we have included all doctors working as either locum or permanent employees engaged in the Buller Health system.

With this caveat noted, the answer to your specific questions are as follows:

- 1. How many locum doctors did Buller Health employ in the year to June 30, 2019, and how many FTE positions does that equate to?***

During the year to 30 June 2019, there were 25 individuals who served as locum doctors at Buller Health in the general practice and the hospital services (as defined above). Locum cover equated to an average of 1.76 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) doctors over the 12-month period.

- 2. How many permanent GPs did Buller Health employ in the same period and how many FTE positions does that equate to?***

During the year to 30 June 2019, there were 6 individuals who served as permanent doctors at Buller Health in the general practice and the hospital services (as defined above). This equated to an average of 4.99 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) doctors over the 12 month period.

- 3. What was the cost of locum doctors for salaries and other expenses?***

The total cost of locum doctors providing cover to Buller Health (as defined) in the year to 30 June 2019 was \$569,773. This is inclusive of service fees \$496,328, agency fees \$70,553 and other expenses \$2,892.

4. What was the minimum and maximum length of stay among locum doctors working at Buller Health during the year?

Length of service provided by these individuals ranged from a 2-day relief cover up to one who worked for a period of four months in the year ended 30 June 2019.

5. What was the cost of permanent doctors' for salaries and other expenses?

The total cost of permanent doctors working in the Buller Health (as defined above) in the year to 30 June 2019 was \$1,510,891 inclusive of salaries and other expense costs.

We are declining to provide a further breakdown of these costs under Section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"...to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons."*

6. How many practice nurses did Buller Health employ in the year to June 30, 2019, and what does that equate to in FTEs?

We only have practice nurses at the Buller Medical general practice service (excluding practice nurse FTE that work in satellite clinics of Buller Medical, such as Ngakawau and Karamea) and have interpreted Questions 6 and 7 accordingly.

This noted, there were 11 individual practice nurses employed at the Buller Medical general practice service at Westport only, as counted if employed at any time during the year to 30 June 2019. Periods of service by individual practice nurse range from two months for one nurse since commencement, and up to 12 months per person, in the year. This equated to an annualised 5.32 FTE employed during the year.

7. What was the cost of practice nurses for the year to June 30, 2019?

As defined in Question 6 above, the cost of the practice nurses employed at Buller Medical in Westport during the year to 30 June 2019 was \$384,146.

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