



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

Corporate Office
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14 November 2019

9(2)(a)

RE Official Information Act request WCDHB 9354

I refer to your email dated 3 October 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB, (this being a follow-up request to our response to your original request WCDHB 9329). This request pertains to vaccination and immunisation rates among staff.

What I'd like to know – and tried to ask in my OIA -- is the *rate or* proportion of health staff who'd be immune currently, for example against pertussis.

In your charts, I can see that over the 7 years to 2019 Canterbury DHB gave out 1592 pertussis vaccinations to staff.

In West Coast, I can see from your chart that in last 5 years 177 staff were given pertussis vaccines, which is offered 5 yearly.

What this doesn't tell me is what *the* proportion of staff *is* who are up to date – I'd assume that every ten years, all staff would need to have a booster to gain full staff immunity to pertussis, meaning that you'd expect about half of staff to have boosters every five years, when they're offered.

I'm trying to work out how close to full immunity hospital staff might be – not many DHBs seem to know, and the few that do have rates that *vary* hugely between regions.

Could you tell me how many health workers were at the DHB on average over the years you've been tracking vaccinations, or better yet the actual current rates of immunity among your staff?

We don't record vaccination status against our employee record, so we are unable to provide the proportion of employees vaccinated. We are therefore declining your request under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act. New employees may have already had their vaccinations prior to commencement of employment, and others receive their vaccinations from their GP.

We vaccinate staff against Pertussis who work in at-risk areas such as young and vulnerable infants, and offer the vaccine to pregnant women greater than 16 weeks gestation. We also don't test immunity to Pertussis post vaccination. This vaccine has an 81-85% efficacy (Immunisation Handbook 2017).

You may, under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act, seek a review of our decision to withhold information by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz; or Freephone 0800 802 602.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Macfarlane', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melissa Macfarlane
Acting Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support