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29 June 2020

9(2)(a)

RE Official information request CDHB 10330 and WCDHB 9435

I refer to your email dated 8 June 2020 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB and West Coast DHB. Specifically:

- **Please provide me with a table with the number of people working in COVID-19 contact tracing for each day from 1 December 2019 to 31 May 2020.**

Community and Public Health are a division of the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) but serve as the Public Health Unit (PHU) for the Canterbury DHB (CDHB) and the West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB). We are therefore responding for both DHBs.

We are declining your request pursuant to section 18(f) of the Official Information Act i.e. “...that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research”.

We did not have cases of COVID-19 in our regions in December 2019, January or February 2020 so the answer for this time period would be “no staff working in COVID-19 contact tracing”. While we did have COVID-19 teams in readiness and these were deployed after the first cases in our region in mid-March; to provide the information you have requested would require us to manually look back at weekly rosters for our case investigation and contact management teams to pull out the numbers of staff rostered.

However, even if we did that, we would not be able to identify the numbers of staff carrying out contact tracing, as that particular function was integrated within both our case investigation and contact management teams.

The only staff solely employed to do contact tracing were those employed in the Ministry of Health’s National Close Contact Service.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R La Salle', is positioned above the printed name.

Ralph La Salle
Acting Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support