



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

Corporate Office
High Street, Greymouth

Telephone 03 768 0499
Fax 03 768 2791

4 August 2020

9(2)(a)

RE Official information request WCDHB 9445

I refer to your email dated 8 July 2020 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 2020.

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, 2020, and how many FTE positions does that equate to?

During the year to 30 June 2020, there were 27 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 2.38 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 2020, there were 6 individuals who served as permanent GP doctors at Buller Health in the general practice and the hospital services (as defined above). This equated to an average of 4.72 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) permanent doctors over the 12-month period.

In addition, while not permanent, there were two Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Registrars who were employed by West Coast DHB undertaking vocational training at various locations within the West Coast DHB and who worked at Buller Health during the year, at an average of 0.55 FTE for the period.

3. How many permanent GPs did Buller Health employ at June 30, 2020, and how many FTE positions does that equate to?

As at 30 June 2020, there were four permanent GPs employed at Buller Health; at 2.97 FTE overall.

In addition, while not permanent, there was one RMO Registrar employed by West Coast DHB undertaking vocational training who was also concurrently engaged at the Buller Health service as at 30 June 2020, at 0.6 FTE.

4. 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 2020 was \$839,696. This is inclusive of service fees \$670,564, agency fees \$90,167 and other expenses \$78,965.

5. 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 1-day relief cover up to one doctor who worked for a period of five months in the year ended 30 June 2020.

6. 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 2020, excluding RMO Registrars, was \$1,512,441 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."

7. How many practice nurses did Buller Health employ in the year to June 30, 2020, 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 7 and 8 accordingly.

This noted, and excluding casuals for cover, there were 16 individual practice nurses employed for various periods of service at the Buller Medical general practice at Westport only, as counted if employed at any time during the year to 30 June 2020. This equated to an annualised 6.32 FTE employed during the year.

8. What was the cost of practice nurses for the year to June 30, 2020?

As defined in Question 7 above, the cost of the practice nurses employed at Buller Medical in Westport during the year to 30 June 2020 was \$572,593. This is inclusive of leave provisions and other associated employment costs.

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