



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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14 January 2021

9(2)(a)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RE Official information request WCDHB 9514

We are writing to acknowledge your email dated 8 January 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB. Specifically:

- **Methadone dispensings by calendar year, for the years of 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016;**

West Coast DHB does not hold the combined data for methadone dispensing. The West Coast DHB only dispenses methadone for inpatients, such as if they are being initiated treatment while an inpatient (brief admission) or if an existing client is admitted (for any reason). Treatment is often initiated by the DHB following admission to one of the detox facilities. Most of the dispensing is undertaken by community pharmacies who each record their own data.

However, collated methadone dispensing data is publicly available on the Ministry of Health's website for years 2015 to 2019 and can be extracted by each DHB:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/pharmaceutical-data-web-tool>

We are therefore declining a response to this part of the request pursuant to sections 18(g) 18(d) of the Official Information Act, i.e. *"that the information requested is not held..."* and *"that the information requested is or will soon be publicly available."*

- **The longest consecutive period of time a person has been dispensed methadone through the DHB (if known by patient NHI) as of 2020**

We have 104 clients currently receiving Opioid Substitution Treatment (clients can be treated with either methadone or buprenorphine/naloxone). Of these, 32 clients (30%) have been in the service since the referrals on our current administrative system began, which was in April 2010 (11 years ago). We are unable to state how long each of these 32 clients have been receiving OST without a manual audit of each file.

We are therefore declining a response to this part of the request pursuant to sections 18(f) of the Official Information Act, i.e. *"that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research."*

I trust this satisfies your interest in this matter.

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 'R La Salle'.

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