

9 August 2022

9(2)(a)



RE Official information request WCD 9723

I refer to your email dated 26 July 2022 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Te Tai o Poutini West Coast regarding whether many hospitals in New Zealand are aware of issues relating to mixed gender bed accommodation and have their own position or policy on this. Specifically:

- 1. My email is to ask if Te Tai o Poutini West Coast has any policies, standard operating procedures or hospital standards on this matter.**

Te Tai o Poutini West Coast does not have a policy on 'use of mixed gender clinical space for patient care'. We envisage going forward that there will be a National policy for Te Whatu Ora / Health New Zealand and in the meantime, we would follow the principles of the Waitaha Canterbury policy (see attached as **Appendix 1**).

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 Te Tai o Poutini West Coast website after your receipt of this response.

Ngā mihi / Yours sincerely,



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[TeWhatuOra.govt.nz](https://www.TeWhatuOra.govt.nz)

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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Use of mixed gender clinical space for patient care

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify the guidelines for placement of patients in mixed gender rooms.

Policy statement

Every patient has the right to have services provided in a manner that is culturally safe for the individual. Single gender room space is to be a priority alongside clinical risk in patient allocation.

CDHB supports the philosophy of single gendered rooms; however, there are situations where the supply of bed capacity for gender specific placement is exceeded by demand for specialty services.

There are also areas of the hospitals where the need for safety exceeds the need for single gender placement (see exclusions)

When clinical need indicates that a mixed gender room in the specialty area is the only space available the nursing staff will discuss this with the patient/their family. If the patient is not comfortable with this option they will be informed of available relocation options and any clinical implications of those choices. The only situation in which the patient choice may not be actioned are listed below and any such decision must be time limited and reviewed hourly until the patient can be located in an area that better meets their cultural needs.

The CDHB will also design future clinical ward space to include ability to meet privacy needs based on gender.

Scope

Staff at CDHB Hospitals

Excluded – but still subject to the provision of patient privacy to the highest practical level

- Christchurch Women's Gynaecology and Obstetrics wards (clearly already women only)
- All rooms at Specialist Mental Health
- Areas where the need for constant observation of all patients is a safety concern. At Christchurch Hospital these include the :
 - Emergency Department
 - Intensive Care Unit
 - Coronary Care Unit

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- Surgical Assessment and Review Area
- Surgical Progressive Care Unit
- Acute Medical Admissions Unit
- Orthopaedic Trauma Unit
- Bone Marrow Transplant Unit multi-bed
- Neurological Progressive Care Unit
- Paediatric High Dependency Unit
- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Post-Anaesthetic Care Unit
- Day Care Units

Associated documents

- SMHS Gender Policy
- Patient Information Pamphlet
- Consent Policy

Additional Measures for Cohorting Mixed Gender Patients requiring a Hospital Aid Special

Patients who have acute delirium or have dementia and are at risk of harming themselves/others will, at times, require a Hospital Aid Special to encourage reorientation and ability to observe the patient's behaviour reporting to the Registered Nurse responsible for the patients.

- If, due to limited resources, it may be judged in the best interests to cohort mixed gender patients who are at risk of harming themselves or others.
- If at any time:
 - There is difficulty maintaining a patient's physical privacy, e.g. constantly removing their bedclothes, then an alternative arrangement must be sought as soon as is practicable.
 - If, at any time, a patient appears to be more unsettled or distressed by the fact that there are patients of the opposite gender in the room, then an alternative arrangement needs to be made as soon as is practicable.

Measurement or evaluation

Privacy Audits are conducted on a regular basis.

References

Code of Health and Disability services Consumer Rights

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Health and Disability Sector Standards 1.1.3.1

Burrell, B. (2003 Mixed-Sex Rooms – Invading Patient's Privacy? Kaitiaki Nursing New Zealand, 9(4), 26-28

McParland, J., Scott, P.A., Arndt, M. et al (2000). Autonomy and Clinical Practice 2: Patient Privacy and Nursing Practice. British Journal of Nursing, 9(9), 566-569.

Policy Owner	Manager Corporate Quality & Patient Safety
Policy Authoriser	Executive Director of Nursing
Date of Authorisation	16 June 2015

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