



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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25 November 2021

9(2)(a)

RE Official information request WCDHB 9622

I refer to your email dated 20 October 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB regarding maternity services. Specifically:

1. Data on the raw number of caesarean sections conducted at the DHB broken down like this (table format provided):

The following table represents the number of caesarean sections conducted each calendar year, based on the discharge date of the patient from our West Coast DHB facilities:

Caesareans	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Planned	28	29	48	27	32	23	31	42	33	32	28	25
Emergency	34	43	45	53	45	51	44	42	42	55	44	48

*Nine months, 1 January - 30 September 2021

2. Data on the number of episiotomies conducted at the DHB since 2010, broken down by year

The following table represents the number of episiotomies conducted each calendar year, based on the discharge date of the patient from our West Coast DHB facilities:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Episiotomies	20	21	29	35	22	29	17	31	33	27	31	20

*Nine months, 1 January - 30 September 2021

3. Data on the number of epidurals conducted at the DHB since 2010, broken down by year

The following table represents the number of epidurals conducted each calendar year, based on the discharge date of the patient from our West Coast DHB facilities:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Epidurals Given	65	67	95	104	101	97	101	105	106	122	114	102

*Nine months, 1 January - 30 September 2021

4. Data on the number of births at DHB facilities, broken down by year, since 2010

The following table represents the number of births conducted each calendar year, based on the discharge date of the patient from our West Coast DHB facilities:

Births by Facility	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*
Grey	269	286	289	270	266	228	218	250	233	253	225	189
Buller	25	18	20	8	14	23	24	20	25	19	7	2
Reefton	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

*Nine months, 1 January – 30 September 2021

5. Data on the average number of FTE core midwifery positions (NOT community midwives) employed at the DHB per year, broken down by year since 2010

The following table represents paid FTE of core midwife positions at West Coast DHB. Data for the 2014 and 2015 periods is the paid FTE for the financial year up to 30 June. Data for the financial year periods thereafter is the average paid FTE in the year. The data excludes senior nurse educators and unit managers.

Financial Year Ending 30 June	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
FTE	9.69	13.25	11.99	11.08	11.06	10.76	11.08	11.8

We no longer hold FTE data on the core midwife FTE for periods prior to the financial year ending June 2014 back to 2010. We therefore decline to provide additional information in this regard under Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. “... that the information requested is not held” by the West Coast DHB.

6. Data on the average number of FTE community midwifery positions employed at the DHB per year, broken down by year since 2010

West Coast DHB previously employed Community Midwives up until 2014. Since that time, West Coast DHB only has core midwives. The community midwives are now self-employed as Lead Maternity Carers (LMCs) and hold access agreements to use West Coast DHB facilities for birthing in addition to home deliveries that they undertake. This noted, the following table shows the number of Community Midwives employed by West Coast DHB in 2014.

Note: West Coast DHB has provided a sustainability allowance for these midwives since the change in 2014 and this has assisted with retention for this workforce.

Financial Year Ending 30 June	2014	2015
FTE	5.92	0.09

We no longer hold FTE data on the community midwifery position FTE for periods prior to the financial year ending June 2014 back to 2010. We therefore decline to provide additional information in this regard pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. “... that the information requested is not held” by the West Coast DHB.

7. Data on spending/cost of maternity services per year, broken down by year since 2010 (NOT including building maintenance and upgrades, just staffing and the costs of actually running the services)

The overall cost of the West Coast DHB’s maternity services each year is outlined in the table below. These costs include costs for Obstetricians, Senior Nurses, Midwives and administration staff, as well as clinical and non-clinical supply costs. Cost of building upgrades and depreciation on equipment used by the service are excluded.

Financial Year Ending 30 June	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2021
FTE	\$ 3,001,599	\$ 3,131,286	\$ 3,111,940	\$ 2,401,026	\$ 2,435,332	\$ 2,644,052	\$ 2,694,668	\$ 2,898,952	\$ 3,023,611

We no longer hold cost data for periods prior to the financial year ending June 2014 back to 2010. We therefore decline to provide additional information in this regard pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

8. Data on the average number of FTE obstetrician positions/ average hours worked by obstetricians employed at the DHB per year, broken down by year since 2010

The following table represents paid FTE of Obstetrician positions at West Coast DHB. Data for the 2014 and 2015 periods is the paid FTE for the financial year up to 30 June. Data for the financial year periods thereafter is the average paid FTE in the year.

Financial Year Ending 30 June	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
FTE	2.57	2.51	2.83	2.9	2.99	2.83	3.11	2.94

We do not hold FTE data on Obstetrician and locum FTE for periods prior to the financial year ending June 2014 back to 2010. We therefore decline to provide additional information in this regard pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

We note that our maternity services now incorporate the rural generalist model of care that has been adopted by West Coast DHB, where trained Rural Generalist doctors are employed to help cover the obstetrician roster. We have also formed a transalpine relationship with Canterbury DHB for midwifery and obstetrician support; the lead O&G visits and supports the service, and Christchurch Women's hospital has a system of remote support if required. A number of Canterbury DHB O&Gs also now provide locums to support the West Coast roster, and we have additionally trialled a O&G registrar also visiting as part of their training and with time we will see how this progresses.

The transalpine relationship has been important in underpinning these recent changes and innovations. The West Coast maternity service has benefitted from the alliance with the larger DHB while maintaining the uniqueness of the remote rural DHB and staffing stability of local maternity teams.

9. Data on the number of code reds that have occurred at the DHB maternity unit/birthing unit/maternity service per year, broken down by year since 2010

West Coast DHB does not use the terminology 'Code red' and we do not have an electronic database recording times of 'escalation' that have occurred at the West Coast DHB maternity services per year since 2010. We therefore decline to provide a response to this question pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

10. Data on the number of code blacks that have occurred at the DHB maternity unit/birthing unit/maternity service per year, broken down by year since 2010

West Coast DHB does not use the terminology 'code black'. We therefore decline to provide information in this regard pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

11. Data on the average number of beds within the DHB maternity unit/birthing unit/maternity service per year, broken down by year since 2010

West Coast DHB used 5 maternity beds at Grey Hospital in Greymouth up until August 2020, when the new facility, Te Nikau Grey Hospital and Health Centre, was opened. At this time, the number of maternity beds in Greymouth was increased to 6 beds (plus 2 birthing rooms). At previous times there was a decrease in available bed spaces in the Grey Hospital facility between 2012 and 2013 following a comprehensive seismic risk assessment undertaken in 2012 in the wake of the Christchurch earthquakes, that found part of two ward spaces at the Hospital were significantly earthquake prone structures, so were shut down immediately for safety. Maternity beds and other ward configurations were moved about as a consequence. We do not hold any definitive record on the numbers of physical beds or bed spaces that were in use prior to 2012. We are therefore declining providing data for the

period 2010 - 2012 pursuant to section 18(g) of the Official Information Act; i.e.: *"... that the information requested is not held"* by West Coast DHB.

There are four maternity beds at Buller Health in Westport which has been the state throughout the period since 2010, although in recent times, the effective maternity bed space at Buller has been reduced to two beds with current renovations and rebuilding work that is going on at the facility.

12. Data on maternal deaths during or shortly before/after labour (within 7 days), broken down by year since 2010

There have been no maternal deaths in our hospital facilities shortly before / after labour (within 7 days) in the period 2010 to 2021. West Coast DHB does not hold information on maternal deaths in the community shortly before /after labour (within 7 days). We therefore decline to provide additional information in this regard pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

13. Data on deaths of babies during or shortly before/after birth (within 7 days), broken down by year since 2010

Five neonates died before/after birth (within 7 days of birth) while in hospital between 2010 and 30 September 2021. We are declining to break this down any further as release of this information could easily lead to the identification of individual cases and families concerned. Declined pursuant to Section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"...to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons."*

West Coast DHB does not hold information on neonates who may have died in the community shortly before /after birth (within 7 days). Declined pursuant to Section 18(g) of the Official Information Act i.e. *"... that the information requested is not held"* by the West Coast DHB.

I trust that 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



Tracey Maisey
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support