



West Coast District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

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24 December 2021

9(2)(a)

RE Official Information Act request WCDHB 9642

I refer to your email dated 23 November 2021 to the Ministry of Health which they subsequently partially transferred to us on 8 December 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from West Coast DHB. Specifically Questions 1, 2 and 3:

- 1. How many surgeries /procedures/assessments have been cancelled across the country in the past year.**
- 2. Is it possible to break that number down by month?**
- 3. How many surgeries/procedures/assessments were cancelled in 2019 and in 2021.**

Please refer to tables (overleaf) showing summary categories of the number of theatre booking cancellations made during the calendar years 2017, 2019, and the current 2021 year to 15 December 2021. As there are different ways to view the information that you have requested, we have provided summary data in three formats:

- Administrative Cancellations (Total);
- Count of individuals who have had booked surgery dates cancelled (subset of Administrative Cancellations);
- Day of surgery cancellations.

Administrative cancellations (Total): representing the overall total of cancellations of theatre bookings made and patients contacted with an offer of a date of planned surgery. Many of these were multiple cancellations and subsequent re-cancellations for the same individual patients, hence;

Count of Individuals with booked surgery dates cancelled: representing a unique count of the individual patients who had surgery booking cancelled, as a subset within the total number of administrative cancellations.

Day of surgery cancellations: representing cases that had to be cancelled on the day the patient was due to undergo surgery.

There is an extremely wide range of both service and patient individual circumstances that underpin reasons that surgery bookings are cancelled. These range from such causes as acute surgery cases coming into hospital and needing to take precedence over elective cases; changes to Specialist availability; capacity issues; patients being ill and unfit for surgery; patients deciding not to proceed with their surgery; patients who die; patients moving out of district and no longer wanting surgery on the West Coast; and including patients who simply did not turn up for surgery on the day they were booked; among a host of other individual reasons. To provide some context to the data in this regard in the tables below, we have included a count of surgery cancellations in 2017, 2019 and 2021 indicating at high level, the source of cancellation request.

Excluding cases where the patients had deceased or had decided not to proceed with surgery at their own request and discharged back to their General Practice for management, the majority of administratively cancelled cases were subsequently booked (and often re-booked time and again) to a different date in order for patients to ultimately have their surgical procedure undertaken.

These complexities noted, the respective sets of data on the number of surgery cancellations at West Coast DHB in summary (**Table 1**) and as cancelled by month in each of the calendar years 2017, 2019 and 2021 (**Tables 2 and 3**) are as follows:

Table 1: Summary of Cancellations – Administrative and Day of Surgery cancellations

Summary of Cancellations by Type Each Year	2017	2019	2021
Administrative Cancellations of Surgery Bookings (Total)	659	458	511
Subset - Count of Individuals with Booked Surgery Dates Cancelled	477	351	386
Day of Surgery Cancellations	82	76	88

Table 2: Administrative Cancellations (Total) by Month:

Cancelled by	Total Administrative Theatre Cancellations in 2021												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	6	8	2	1		34
Hospital	10	17	10	7	16	26	31	60	37	10	47	18	289
Other Agency	2	2				1					1	1	7
Patient	28	21	36	26	27	23	26	23	27	25	18	24	304
Patient/Family	2	4	4	6	1	2	1	1	1		2	1	25
TOTAL	44	46	52	41	46	54	63	90	73	37	69	44	659

Cancelled by	Total Administrative Theatre Cancellations in 2019												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician	7	4	3	1	2	3	1	10	1	4	7	10	53
Hospital	13	2	6	10	18	5	26	8	4	14	19	10	135
Other Agency		1	1			2			2			1	7
Patient	23	17	17	26	21	23	20	18	23	16	20	21	245
Patient/Family	4	1		2	2	4		2		2		1	18
TOTAL	47	25	27	39	43	37	47	38	30	36	46	43	458

Cancelled by	Total Administrative Theatre Cancellations in 2017												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician	7	7	3	5	10	5	2	6	8	7	8	1	69
Hospital	19	11	13	16	13	12	23	15	26	8	12	12	180
Other Agency		1		2	3	1			1				8
Patient	19	20	28	26	21	15	23	13	15	18	18	14	230
Patient/Family	2	1	3	4	4	1	2	1		1		5	24
TOTAL	47	40	47	53	51	34	50	35	50	34	38	32	511

Table 3: Day of Surgery Cancellations by Month:

Cancelled by	Total Day of Surgery Cancellations in 2021												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician		1		1									2
Hospital	1		2		6	5	5	3	3	3	5	4	37
Patient	4	3	4	5	2	2		2	8	3	7	4	44
Patient/Family				1	1	1			1		1		5
TOTAL	5	4	6	7	9	8	5	5	12	6	13	8	88

Cancelled by	Total Day of Surgery Cancellations in 2019												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician	2	2	1					2		2	2		11
Hospital	5			5	5	4	5	1		2	2		29
Patient	6	4	1	2	5	3	1	2	4	2		3	33
Patient/Family	1	1		1									3
TOTAL	14	7	2	8	10	7	6	5	4	6	4	3	76

Cancelled by	Total Day of Surgery Cancellations in 2017												TOTAL
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
Clinician	3			2	1	1	2	1		2			12
Hospital	4	2	3	2	7	3	1	1	3		3	5	34
Other Agency		1		2					1				
Patient	2	1	2	4	5	2	3	2		4	2	3	30
Patient/Family					2								2
TOTAL	9	4	5	10	15	6	6	4	4	6	5	8	82

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



Tracey Maisey
Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support