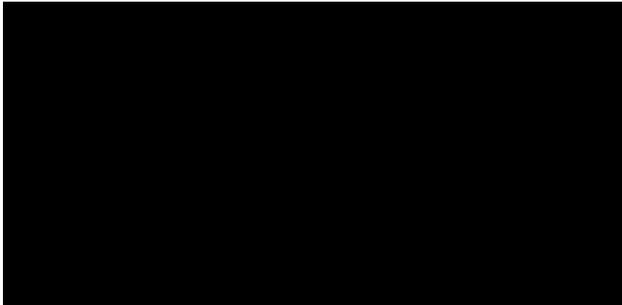


10 February 2021



**Re: Official Information Act request – Methadone Dispensing 2016-2020**

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 8 January 2021 requesting the following information:

- 1. Methadone dispensings by calendar year, for the years of 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016;**
- 2. The longest consecutive period of time a person has been dispensed methadone through the DHB (if known by patient NHI) as of 2020**

The methadone dispensing by calendar year in the community setting can be obtained from the Ministry of Health website at:

<https://smex12-5-en-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.health.govt.nz%2fpublication%2fpharmaceutical%2ddata%2dweb%2dtool&umid=4da78e88-b920-4ca8-9b9e-5dc784a77dac&auth=9b524f228cf218be85c76e75f89997ec2caa72a4-490d339a845ab8056cc096fca4abbbf41dce4045>

This website holds the data from 2015 – 2019 and can be extracted by DHB and information can be searched for by medication e.g. methadone.

Methadone is a class B3 controlled drug and is used in a number of therapeutic indications which include moderate to severe pain and as an adjunct in treatment of opioid dependence. For in-patients prescribed methadone this is recorded on the patient's drug chart and in the ward controlled drug register. To identify the longest consecutive period of time a patient has been dispensed methadone as an in-patient would require a manual review of records and patient notes as ADHB does not have an electronic prescribing system.

In terms of outpatients the majority of prescribing, if initiated by ADHB clinicians, would be continued in the community. To provide information on outpatient prescriptions initiated by ADHB

clinicians would require a manual review of notes which would take a considerable length of time as ADHB does not have an electronic prescribing system.

The second request is this therefore declined under s18(f) OIA – the request cannot be made available without substantial collation and research

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://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 Auckland DHB website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE

**Chief Executive of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)**