

Re: **Official Information Act request – ADHD Data - ADHB Ref: 20220119-1177**

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 19 January 2022 requesting the following information:

1. **How many ADHD assessments have been undertaken in the last ten years through the ADHB? Broken down by year, sex and age (under or above 18)?**
2. **How many people have been diagnosed with ADHD through the ADHB in the past ten years? Broken down by year of diagnosis, and sex and age (under or above 18) of the person diagnosed?**
3. **Over the past ten years what has been the average wait time for an ADHD diagnosis through the ADHB? Broken down by year?**
4. **Over the past ten years what has been the average amount of people on the waitlist with suspected ADHD, in the area? Can this be broken down by sex?**
5. **How many people are currently on the waitlist with suspected ADHD? Can this be broken down by sex?**
6. **What percentage of the waitlist for youth mental health is currently made up of patients with suspected ADHD?**

## Response

1. **How many ADHD assessments have been undertaken in the last ten years through the ADHB? Broken down by year, sex and age (under or above 18)?**  
ADHD assessments are undertaken through paediatric medical services (General Paediatrics and Developmental Paediatrics) at Starship Child Health and by Mental Health and Addictions services based at Auckland City Hospital.

In paediatric medical services, outpatient encounters and assessments undertaken as part of an outpatient encounter, are not coded by diagnosis, so we are unable to report on this.

For mental health services, we are unable to identify what types of assessments are completed, but we are able to report on the outcome of assessments and so this information is supplied at Q2.

We are refusing this part of your request because we do not code diagnoses at assessment. Attempting to assemble this data would require manual review of clinical files and retrospective identification of the patient's subsequent diagnosis.

Due to the sensitivity of this information, frontline clinical staff would need to review individual clinical files over the course of ten years and it would not be appropriate to use a contractor to review the records. This would take the frontline staff away from their clinical work and prejudice our ability to provide core clinical services.

We have considered whether charging or extending the timeframe for responding to this aspect of your request would assist us in managing this work and have concluded it would not. We have, therefore, determined to refuse this element of your request under s. 18(f) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

We are unable to provide a consolidated response across paediatric and child health services and so we are providing separate responses under each question.

- 2. How many people have been diagnosed with ADHD through the ADHB in the past ten years? Broken down by year of diagnosis, and sex and age (under or above 18) of the person diagnosed?**  
 For paediatric medical services, as per Q 1, we have determined we must refuse this element of your request under s. 18(f) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

For mental health services, the following table shows how many people have had a recorded diagnosis of ADHD over this period. Each individual is only counted once, and the year stated is the year in which they were first diagnosed. Age is that of the first diagnosis.

**Table 1. Numbers of patients in Auckland DHB's Mental Health and Addiction Service diagnosed with ADHD 2012-2021**

Calendar Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Under 18y</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>56</b>
Female	10	14	26	20	23	42	48	43	24	17
Male	73	63	99	88	93	114	148	95	72	39
<b>18y &amp; older</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>
Female	13	11	5	14	4	15	7	10	15	9
Male	21	15	12	24	24	12	13	13	12	10

- 3. Over the past ten years what has been the average wait time for an ADHD diagnosis through the ADHB? Broken down by year?**

In General Paediatric Services, average wait time from referral to first assessment has been around 4-8 weeks over the past 10 years. This has varied dependent on overall demand. In Developmental Paediatrics, wait times can be up to four months, but are typically less than this. Diagnosis may be made at first appointment, but require further assessment and information gathering and this adds to the total time to diagnosis.

For mental health services, the data below is based on the data for those individuals identified in Q2. Wait time to ADHD diagnosis is not possible to answer, as a diagnosis may be at different time points following referral. This part of your request is refused under s 18 (e) of the Official Information Act because the information is not held by Auckland DHB.

The data that follows is therefore a calculation of the time from referral to the first face-to-face contact.

**Table 2. Average days from referral date to first face-to-face contact in Auckland DHB's Mental Health and Addiction Service 2012-2021**

Calendar Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Under 18y</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>42.9</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>50.1</b>
Female	62.4	27.1	30.7	31.3	25.5	29.0	54.9	51.2	113.7	55.8
Male	61.2	33.0	26.7	31.2	35.0	31.9	42.0	38.9	74.2	47.5
<b>18y &amp; older</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>105.5</b>
Female	54.8	11.3	11.4	25.6	38.3	52.0	14.0	29.5	16.7	204.0
Male	18.8	18.8	27.2	26.8	25.4	135.9	25.3	18.7	15.0	18.0

4. Over the past ten years what has been the average amount of people on the waitlist with suspected ADHD, in the area? Can this be broken down by sex?  
As per Q1., for paediatric medical services, outpatient encounters and referrals are not coded by diagnosis, so we are unable to report on this.

For mental health services, we refer you to Q3 above data, which is a proxy for this question. We are not able to provide this specific information.

For the reasons set out in response to Question 1 we have determined we must refuse Q4 of your request under s. 18(f) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

5. How many people are currently on the waitlist with suspected ADHD? Can this be broken down by sex?  
As per Q1. for Paediatric Medical Services, outpatient encounters and referrals are not coded by diagnosis, so we are unable to report on this. For the reasons set out in response to Question 1 we have determined we must refuse this part of your request under s. 18(f) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

For child and adolescent mental health services, there are currently 25 people on the waitlist to be assessed with a referral for suspected ADHD.

6. What percentage of the waitlist for youth mental health is currently made up of patients with suspected ADHD?

There is no waiting list for general child and adolescent mental health services. Initial appointments are booked in when a referral is accepted. This part of your request is refused under s 18 (e) of the Official Information Act because the information is not held by Auckland DHB.

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 sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ailsa Claire".

Ailsa Claire, OBE  
**Chief Executive**