

25 February 2022

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Re: Official Information Act request – Palliative Care, Auckland DHB

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 3 February 2022 requesting the following information:

1. Does your DHB have a palliative care service? If yes, what is its annual budget?
2. How many palliative care specialists do you employ?
3. How many DHB FTEs are dedicated to palliative care and what are their job titles (eg CNS, nurse practitioner, allied health)?
4. Do all palliative patients have access to telephone 24/7 specialist palliative care advice and support?
5. Do all palliative care patients have access to visits from district nurses and General Practitioners 24/7, wherever they are located - home, care home, rural and urban?
6. Do all palliative patients (no matter where located) have access to assessment and care from multidisciplinary specialist palliative care teams?
7. Do all patients admitted to hospital have access to multidisciplinary specialist palliative care teams?
8. How many FTEs do you have dedicated to implementation of end of life care pathways and advanced care planning?
9. When are people referred to palliative care, by whom and how close to death?
10. How much annual funding do you provide for local hospice services?

Response

1. Does your DHB have a palliative care service? If yes, what is its annual budget?

Auckland DHB has a paediatric palliative care service and an adult palliative care service with combined budget of \$3,000,000.

2. How many palliative care specialists do you employ?

- Five Senior Medical Officers

3. How many DHB FTEs are dedicated to palliative care and what are their job titles (eg CNS, nurse practitioner, allied health)?

Starship Child Health

- 0.9 FTE Fellows of the Chapter of Palliative Medicine
- 0.1 FTE Child and adolescent psychiatrist
- 0.8 FTE Clinical Nurse Specialist
- 1.0 FTE Nurse Practitioner
- 0.8 FTE Social Worker
- 0.3 FTE Child Psychotherapist

Adult Hospital Palliative Care

- 2.9 Senior Medical Officers
- 0.7 FTE Medical Officer
- 8 FTE Clinical Nurse Specialists

Adult Community Service Community Nursing

- 0.8 Clinical Nurse Specialist

4. Do all palliative patients have access to telephone 24/7 specialist palliative care advice and support?

No

5. Do all palliative care patients have access to visits from district nurses and General Practitioners 24/7, wherever they are located - home, care home, rural and urban?

Yes, patients have access to the usual community supports that are available from Auckland DHB including community nursing and primary care.

6. Do all palliative patients (no matter where located) have access to assessment and care from multidisciplinary specialist palliative care teams?

Yes

7. Do all patients admitted to hospital have access to multidisciplinary specialist palliative care teams?

Yes

8. How many FTEs do you have dedicated to implementation of end of life care pathways and advanced care planning?

We do not have dedicated End of life care pathways and advanced care planning FTE. These services are delivered as part of the clinical practice of all of the Palliative Care Service clinicians and are therefore included in the FTE described in the answer to question 3.

In addition, a range of other practitioners both in the community and the hospital are involved in end of life pathways and advanced care planning. This is not regarded as solely a palliative care responsibility.

9. When are people referred to palliative care, by whom and how close to death?

Starship Child Health

Starship Palliative Care Service accepts referrals from any source, this includes whānau. The referral will always be discussed with the primary paediatric service caring for the child. The timing of referral varies widely according to the service referring and the individual clinicians within those services. Some refer early at the point that a life-limiting condition is diagnosed, some refer within the last 24-48 hours of life.

Adult Hospital Palliative Care

People are referred to Palliative Care at many stages in their illness trajectory. They can be referred for symptoms management at any stage and at the end of their life for end of life care. They can be referred by all disciplines but mainly ward nurses and their treating Consultant.

Adult Community Service Community Nursing

People are referred to Palliative Care services provided by the Community Nursing Service at many stages in their illness trajectory. Referrals come from both Primary and Secondary Care.

10. How much annual funding do you provide for local hospice services?

Auckland District Health Board funded its local NGO Services Providers with \$6,889,640.51 of funding for Palliative Care and related services in the 2020/21 financial year.

We also contributed \$651,954.96 to a metro-Auckland palliative care innovation service that supports training and development for general practices in our community, and gives these practices access to specialist palliative care clinicians. This service is hosted by a hospice provider outside of our catchment area.

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.govt.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



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive