

30 May 2022

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Re: Official Information Act request – Assaults on Staff - ADHB Ref: 20220301-1194

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 6 April 2022 requesting the following information:

Could I please request the following information under the Official Information Act:

- 1. The number of assaults on staff for years 2018,2019,2020,2021,2022 (to current date)**
 - Could I please have this broken down into minor, moderate, and serious assaults
- 2. For the assaults deemed moderate and serious, could I please have further details about what role the staff member holds (e.g. nurse, orderly etc), their gender, where they work, what injuries were sustained, and what action was taken as a result (e.g. charges laid, etc).**
- 3. Could I also please have a copy of any reports or documents relating to assaults and violence towards staff published in 2020 or 2021.**

Response

The safety and wellbeing of everyone on our premises is a priority for us and we are constantly working to ensure this.

Some of the services we provide involve caring for vulnerable patients with sometimes challenging behaviours. It is important to us that our staff remain safe and are supported, as they work to provide the best possible care to all our patients.

When instances of violence or aggression against our staff do occur, we provide support to them, their whānau and their colleagues.

In addition, we encourage reporting of incidents in our incident reporting system. This helps us to look into what happened, understand themes, share learnings and put in place measures to minimise the risk of similar incidents happening again.

The data we release to you shows an increase 2021 year on 2020 year. In 2019 we implemented an Occupational Violence (OV) Reader automated system in our Adult Emergency Department that made reporting significantly easier for staff and which led to increased reporting. The installation of the OV readers, increased reporting and increased patient admissions during the stress of COVID-19 account for the increase in numbers from 2019 onwards.

Please find below the responses to your individual questions.

1. The number of assaults on staff for years 2018,2019,2020,2021,2022 (to current date)
- **Could I please have this broken down into minor, moderate, and serious assaults**

We are refusing the part of your request that asks that this data be broken down into minor, moderate and serious assaults. We are citing s18(e) and (f) Official Information Act because the information requested does not exist (in the form requested) and it could not be made available in this form without substantial collation.

We can however make the data requested available to you using the existing categories of assault data recording. These are:

1. Patient to Staff: Physical Contact
2. Patient to Staff: Verbal
3. Patient to Staff: Verbal & Physical (both)
4. Patient to Staff: Physical threat (no contact)
5. Staff to Staff: Aggression
6. Visitor/whanau to staff: Verbal
7. Calming/Restraint Process
8. Patient to Staff: Sexual Assault
9. Visitor/whanau to staff: Physical Contact
10. Animal Attack
11. Staff to Patient: Verbal
12. Staff to Patient: Physical threat (no contact)
13. Staff to Patient: Physical Contact

Please see Attachment 1 OIA 1194 Staff Assaults 2018-2022.

2. For the assaults deemed moderate and serious, could I please have further details about what role the staff member holds (e.g. nurse, orderly etc), their gender, where they work, what injuries were sustained, and what action was taken as a result (e.g. charges laid, etc).

As noted above, we are refusing the part of your request that asks that this data be broken down into minor, moderate and serious assaults citing s18(e) and (f) Official Information Act because the information requested does not exist (in the form requested) and could not be made available in this form without substantial collation.

We have also decided to refuse the part of your request seeking the role, gender and workplace of the staff members concerned citing s18(f) Official Information Act because the information requested does not exist and could not be made available without substantial collation and, secondly, citing s 9(2) (a) Official Information Act, namely that withholding the information is necessary to protect the privacy of the staff concerned.

We can however supply a summary of the serious injuries sustained from the assaults recorded in Attachment 1a and 1b. Please see Attachment 2 OIA 1194 Workplace Violence Claims 2018-2022. Note that the balance of records in Attachment 1a and 1b either did not sustain an injury, sustained minor injuries that did not require first aid or treatment, or sustained injuries that were treated with no lost time.

3. Could I also please have a copy of any reports or documents relating to assaults and violence towards staff published in 2020 or 2021.

There are no specific reports or documents that were published in those years relating to this subject. This part of your request is refused under s 18(e) of the Official Information Act on the grounds that this information does not exist.

Information relevant to your request is regularly reported to meetings of the Auckland District Health Board and its committees. The minutes of these meetings are published to our website and can be found here <https://www.adhb.health.nz/about-us/governance-and-leadership/agendas-and-minutes/>.

I trust you will find this information useful.

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 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

Encl.

1. Attachment 1a OIA 1194 Staff Assaults 2018-2022.
2. Attachment 1b OIA 1194 Staff Assaults 2018-2022.
3. Attachment 2 OIA 1194 Workplace Violence Claims 2018-2022.