



26 January 2022

Andrew McGregor

Via email: fyi-request-17687-d5c70027@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr McGregor

Re: OIA request – Multiple declined gastroenterology referrals

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 02 December 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about multiple declined gastroenterology referrals.

You requested the following information:

The percentage of patients that have been declined referrals from multiple internal and external requests for gastro-intestinal department - multiple being more than three separate GP/Doctor referrals.

Your request went to multiple DHBs. On 3 December, you clarified with Canterbury DHB that the information you were seeking was for the time period from 1 January 2010 to 1 November 2021.

We contacted you on 14 December 2021 to extend the timeframe on our response to your request until 28 January 2022. This was because our clinicians, managers and other staff were concentrating their efforts on measures to manage the current COVID-19 outbreak in the region. The time extension took in to account the national shutdown period for the OIA system which was from close of business, 24 December 2021, until 17 January 2022.

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

There were 12,493 patients referred from 1 January 2010 to 1 November 2021. Of those patients, 11 had more than three referrals declined, which is 0.088% of all gastroenterology referrals.

In some instances these referrals were declined because:

- the patient was transferred to other services such as radiology where computed tomographic colonography (CTC) is more appropriate and less invasive than a colonoscopy for certain conditions to rule out cancer
- the patient sought private treatment
- the case was below the access threshold and was referred back to their GP for care
- the patient was transferred to Auckland DHB for treatment and/or follow up
- the referral was inappropriate or incomplete
- the case did not require specialist review
- a clinic appointment was not needed – followed up with a letter from the consultant
- the referral was already in our system and being triaged (duplicate referral).

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publicly funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brad Healey', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Brad Healey
Acting Executive Director Hospital Services
Waitematā District Health Board