

11 August 2023

Aaron Goodwin

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Tēnā koe Aaron

Your request for Official Information, reference: HN200025706

Thank you for request of 14 July 2023 to Te Whatu Ora, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I am requesting an answer to the following questions I have regarding the alleged interference of Canterbury health staff in the social media posts of patients.

1. Does the new Te Whatu Ora still retain a social media communications team with direct access to content moderation teams from platforms such as Facebook, and, if so, does that team ever attempt to have social media posts made by health patients removed or amended by platforms such as Facebook?

2. How many patients of Christchurch Hospital have had their private social media posts removed or moderated at the request of staff from Christchurch Hospital/Canterbury DHB/Te Whatu Ora over the past 5 years?

Please note with regard to question 2 I am asking for numbers only and not personally identifiable information.

3. What is, or was, the process involved when staff from the former Canterbury DHB and, if applicable, current Canterbury branch of Te Whatu Ora, interact with social media platforms for the purpose of having the private social media posts of health patients moderated?

4. Are New Zealand health patients ever consulted about, or given an opportunity to participate in any process undertaken by health staff to have social media platforms moderate or remove the social media content of those patients?

On 19 July 2023, you clarified that you seek the above information in relation to Te Whatu Ora Waitaha Canterbury only. Please refer to our response below.

Waitaha Canterbury's social media platforms are managed by the communications team. While all social media sites have a process for reporting content, it would be very rare that we would do this and only in cases where someone had published incorrect information i.e., claiming that the Emergency Department was charging for visits or where the content is potentially harmful i.e., a consumer posting inaccurate information about our staff or making threatening comments. Our staff are only able to see publicly available posts and we cannot access private social media posts.

Waitaha Canterbury does not have direct access to content moderation teams from platforms such as Facebook and we do not believe that other areas of the Te Whatu Ora organisation do. The Communications Team does not record instances where we have reported social media posts and does not hold information where clinical staff may have discussed social media posts with patients.

Therefore, information to this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information you have requested is not held by Te Whatu Ora and we have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another entity subject to the Act.

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nz.OIA@health.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Te Whatu Ora may proactively release a copy of this response on our website.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Keith Wright
Senior Manager, OIAs
Waitaha Canterbury / Te Tai o Poutini West Coast