

2 August 2024

Jennifer

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Tēnā koe Jennifer

**Your request for official information, reference: HNZ00054340**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request on 26 June 2024 to Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora. On 25 July, we notified you of the need to extend our timeframe to respond.

**Response**

The data in the following tables is 'as at' 11 July 2024. Please note that that the data is provisional, not validated through a formal validation process, and could be subject to change.

*Average wait times for all priority levels for Women's Health appointments categorized by each year (January 2021 - June 2024)*

The table below shows the average wait times (in days) from referral to first appointment for gynaecology referrals:

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
<b>2021</b>	9	35	109
<b>2022</b>	7	36	128
<b>2023</b>	10	41	153
<b>2024</b>	9	40	107

*Average wait times for gynaecological surgeries, categorized by urgency level categorized by each year (January 2021 - June 2024)*

The table below shows the average wait times (in days) for gynaecological surgical procedures:

	Average days wait
<b>2021</b>	43
<b>2022</b>	51
<b>2023</b>	103
<b>2024</b>	83

*Amount of Laparoscopy surgeries performed for Gynaecology patients categorized by each year (January 2021 - June 2024)*

The table below shows the number of laparoscopy surgeries performed for gynaecology patients as a proportion of all surgeries for gynaecology patients.

	Laparoscopy surgeries	All surgeries	% laparoscopy
<b>2021</b>	59	174	34%
<b>2022</b>	43	142	30%
<b>2023</b>	64	190	34%
<b>2024</b>	36	98	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>33%</b>

*Guidelines or protocols in place for referrals to fertility clinics for patients experiencing infertility.*

Health NZ Tairāwhiti does not have any such guidelines in place. Referrals are guided by patient needs.

*Additionally, information on what factors would make a patient exempt from a referral to a fertility clinic, including the number of miscarriages required for referral.*

As mentioned above, Health NZ Tairāwhiti does not have any such guidelines in place. There is no specific exemption in place. Referrals are guided by patient needs.

*Local Infertility Treatment: Guidelines for determining when infertility patients can be seen by local specialists rather than being referred to a fertility clinic.*

Health NZ Tairāwhiti does not have any such guidelines in place as patient care is individualised.

*Specialist Availability: The number of fertility specialists currently practicing at Te Whatu Ora Tairāwhiti.*

Health NZ Tairāwhiti does not have specific fertility specialists. Trained obstetrician and gynaecologists provide care and treatment as part of their scope of practice.

*Confirmation of whether there are any Endometriosis specialists currently practicing at Te Whatu Ora Tairāwhiti.*

There is no subspecialty of endometriosis specialist. As above, trained obstetrician gynaecologists can provide this care as part of their scope of practice.

*Endometriosis Specialist Referrals: Data on the number of referrals made from Te Whatu Ora Tairāwhiti to Endometriosis specialists outside the region categorized by each year (January 2021 - June 2024)*

Referrals to external endometriosis specialists are not specifically tracked, and to answer would require manually reviewing each patient file individually. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

*Discharge Criteria: Information on the circumstances under which a woman experiencing infertility and ongoing Endometriosis symptoms would be discharged from the hospital system without referral to a fertility clinic, endometriosis specialist, or laparoscopy surgery.*

Health NZ Tairāwhiti is not aware of any times this has happened. No one would be discharged from the obstetric/gynaecology service, with all of these diagnoses, without further follow-up.

*Clarification on why some women might be offered only birth control options despite it not being suitable of family planning needs and not seeing Improvement in symptoms while on birth control and multiple denials of a laparoscopy when doctor has made multiple referrals for suspected Endometriosis over the course of years.*

Please note that the Act does not require an agency to form an opinion or create new information to answer a request.

## **How to get in touch**

If you have any questions, you can contact us at [h.nzOIA@tewhaturora.govt.nz](mailto:h.nzOIA@tewhaturora.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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Nāku iti noa, nā



### John Swiatczak

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