



Southern District Health Board
Dunedin Hospital
201 Great King Street
Private Bag 1921
DUNEDIN, 9054

Chief Executive Officer
Phone 03-476 9448 Fax 03-476 9450

16 June 2015

Ms Rosemary Lynch

Email: fyi-request-2767-76d78be9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Re: Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request for information

Thank you for your request for information received by transfer from the Ministry of Health on 28 May 2015. The information you requested was specifically for:

1. *How much money is spent annually on the purchase of hollow-bore needles for use in SDHB and who is the supplier?*

\$230k is spent annually across nine suppliers. That is, multiple suppliers, multiple product types and total item purchases. No breakdown regarding individual supplier or how much spent with each can be provided. Information on who is the supplier is withheld pursuant to section 9 (2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act (1982). This being necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

2. *What are the numbers and types of (hollow-bore) needles purchased annually for use in SDHB?*

50 different products, 508,000 total quantity purchased in last 12 months.

3. *How many public healthcare workers at SDHB who have experienced a needle stick injury while in the workplace, test positive for Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and/or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) annually?*

1. We don't routinely test public healthcare employees when they commence for their HIV / HCV / HBV status, so we don't have a base line in the event they have a needle stick injury and subsequently test positive.
2. Testing positive post-exposure can occur several years after the event and it is highly unlikely we would know unless the person has remained our employee. It is also not always possible to link a positive result to a specific event.
3. We are able to state there have been no staff known to have sero-converted (ie, developed detectable antibodies in the blood that are as a direct result of being exposed to one of the three viruses queried, namely HIV, HCV, HBV) following a blood and body fluid exposure either through sharps injury, needle stick injury, human bite, or splash

from any body fluid.

4. *Does the SDHB have any plans and/or policies in place to reduce instances of needle stick injuries in the public healthcare system?*

We do have a policy covering “reduction / prevention of needle stick injuries”.

Information relating to the prevention of needle stick injuries is incorporated in the policy under the broader heading of: Prevention of Blood and Body Fluid Exposures (BBFE) as exposures come from a variety of sources such as human bites, contaminated human scratches, splashes from all types of body fluid, sharps injuries (i.e. non-needles such as surgical instruments) and different needle types.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of our decision to withhold information by the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's Office can be contacted on 0800 802 602 or on-line at <http://www.ombudsmen.govt.nz/>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carole Heatly', written in a cursive style.

Carole Heatly
Chief Executive Officer