



Hospital Services

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Health Sector Workers' Network
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Dear Health Sector Workers' Network

Re: OIA request – emergency department data

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 11 October 2017 seeking data on presentations to Waitemata District Health Board (DHB) emergency departments.

Waitemata DHB serves the largest population of any DHB in New Zealand, currently standing at just over 615,000 people, and we manage more than 122,000 emergency department presentations each year.

Caution is advised in comparing data with other DHBs serving smaller populations with different healthcare needs.

Observation units are an appropriate care environment for the monitoring of those patients for whom the DHB feels additional checks are required before an informed decision to discharge can be made. Where a patient has not made the expected recovery, they can be referred for admission.

The fact that a high percentage of observation unit patients are discharged home demonstrates that the unit is being used correctly and targeted at those patients who will benefit most from further monitoring.

Responses to your questions are set out below.

1. *What are the percentages of patients presenting to the Emergency Departments that were admitted, discharged or transferred within six hours of presentation for each month of the year June 2016 to June 2017?*

Please see the enclosed table, noting that Waitemata DHB has been fully compliant with the six-hour target, including during the busy winter months.

2. *Please provide any DHB policy concerning guidelines and use of the ED observation unit? By "ED observation unit", we are referring to the usage defined by the Ministry Of Health in the paper Streaming and the use of Emergency Department Observation Units and Inpatient Assessment Units.*

ED does not have a separate policy for use of the Observation area. The department uses the Ministry of Health 'Streaming and the use of Emergency Department Observation Unit and Inpatient Assessment units' guidelines as these are clear and explicit.

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3. *What percentage of total ED presentations for each month of the year June 2016 to June 2017 utilised the ED Observation unit?*

Please see the enclosed table, noting that the ED observation unit was well below 15 per cent of patients across the 2016/17 year.

4. *What percentage of patients utilising the ED observation unit were discharged home from this location for each month of the year June 2016 to June 2017?*

Please see the enclosed table, between 77-83% of patients admitted to Observation Unit will be discharged home. We anticipate that most patients will go home. However, some patients will subsequently be admitted to the Assessment and Diagnostic Unit (ADU) or a ward area.

5. *What is your DHB's expected length of stay for the patients utilising the ED observation unit?*

Waitemata DHB's expected length of stay for patients in our observation units is less than 18 hours.

6. *What percentage of patients for each month of the year June 2016 to June 2017 exceeding the length of stay given in question 5?*

Please see the enclosed table, noting that those patients who exceeded 18 hours in the observation unit were well under five per cent of the total across the year.

I trust this information will satisfy your request.

Yours sincerely



Cath Cronin
Director Hospital Services
Waitemata District Health Board

Waitemata DHB
Emergency Department
Data

Year	Month No	Month	Answer Q1						Answer Q3			Answer Q4		Answer Q6
			Percent 6 Hrs Compliance	OBS Patients	OBS Discharge Home	OBS Patients with LOS exceeding 18 Hrs	Total Discharges	Percentage of patients utilising the ED observation unit	Percentage of patients utilising the ED observation unit were discharged home	Percentage of patients for OBS Pts with LOS exceeding 18 Hrs				
2016	6	Jun	95.5%	1,211	931	48	9,848	12.3%	76.9%	4.0%				
2016	7	Jul	96.6%	1,232	938	41	10,196	12.1%	76.1%	3.3%				
2016	8	Aug	97.4%	1,281	1,009	46	10,143	12.6%	78.8%	3.6%				
2016	9	Sep	97.0%	1,260	1,003	45	9,913	12.7%	79.6%	3.6%				
2016	10	Oct	96.5%	1,374	1,121	50	10,212	13.5%	81.6%	3.6%				
2016	11	Nov	95.4%	1,248	993	41	9,933	12.6%	79.6%	3.3%				
2016	12	Dec	97.6%	1,243	1,011	39	10,214	12.2%	81.3%	3.1%				
2017	1	Jan	98.4%	1,217	1,013	29	9,932	12.3%	83.2%	2.4%				
2017	2	Feb	96.3%	1,216	971	48	9,551	12.7%	79.9%	3.9%				
2017	3	Mar	96.3%	1,382	1,108	55	10,553	13.1%	80.2%	4.0%				
2017	4	Apr	97.8%	1,399	1,113	39	10,122	13.8%	79.6%	2.8%				
2017	5	May	96.3%	1,443	1,155	49	10,532	13.7%	80.0%	3.4%				
2017	6	Jun	95.9%	1,370	1,067	57	10,469	13.1%	77.9%	4.2%				