



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

Chief Executive Officer  
Phone 03-476 9456 Fax 03-476 9450

26 January 2018

Health Sector Workers' Network  
Email: [fyi-request-6958-11a39a55@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-6958-11a39a55@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Official Information Act Request**

I refer to your Official Information Act request received by Southern DHB on 13 December 2017 in which you specifically requested the following:

- 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 July 2016 to June 2017?*
- 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'.*
- 3. What percentage of total ED presentations for each month of the year July 2016 to June 2017 utilised the ED observation unit?*
- 4. What percentage of patients utilising the ED observation unit were discharged home from this location for each month of the year July 2016 to June 2017?*
- 5. What is your DHB's expected length of stay for the patients utilising the ED observation unit?*
- 6. What percentage of patients for each month of the year July 2016 to June 2017 exceed the length of stay given in Question 5?*

Our response to the above points follow:

*Question 1:*

|  | Jul-16 | Aug-16 | Sep-16 | Oct-16 | Nov-16 | Dec-16 | Jan-17 | Feb-17 | Mar-17 | Apr-17 | May-17 | Jun-17 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| DUNEDIN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT                 | 91%    | 86%    | 90%    | 95%    | 92%    | 92%    | 92%    | 90%    | 89%    | 89%    | 87%    | 87%    |
| LAKES DISTRICT HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT | 97%    | 98%    | 97%    | 95%    | 96%    | 96%    | 98%    | 96%    | 96%    | 96%    | 97%    | 95%    |
| SOUTHLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT      | 95%    | 91%    | 91%    | 95%    | 95%    | 95%    | 95%    | 95%    | 93%    | 93%    | 91%    | 92%    |
| Grand Total                                  | 93%    | 89%    | 91%    | 95%    | 93%    | 94%    | 94%    | 92%    | 91%    | 92%    | 89%    | 90%    |

*Question 2:*

Please see attached draft policy. This follows the Ministry of Health guidelines for patients admitted to this area. Note, this policy is draft as it is being reviewed.

Question 3:

|  | Jul-16 | Aug-16 | Sep-16 | Oct-16 | Nov-16 | Dec-16 | Jan-17 | Feb-17 | Mar-17 | Apr-17 | May-17 | Jun-17 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| DUNEDIN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT                 | 15%    | 15%    | 15%    | 16%    | 15%    | 15%    | 16%    | 15%    | 15%    | 15%    | 15%    | 16%    |
| LAKES DISTRICT HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     | 0%     |
| SOUTHLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT      | 8%     | 7%     | 7%     | 8%     | 8%     | 6%     | 7%     | 8%     | 6%     | 7%     | 7%     | 7%     |
| Grand Total                                  | 11%    | 10%    | 10%    | 11%    | 11%    | 9%     | 10%    | 11%    | 10%    | 10%    | 11%    | 11%    |

Please note that there is no Observation Unit at Lakes Hospital.

Question 4:

|  | Jul-16 | Aug-16 | Sep-16 | Oct-16 | Nov-16 | Dec-16 | Jan-17 | Feb-17 | Mar-17 | Apr-17 | May-17 | Jun-17 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| DUNEDIN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT                 | 86%    | 89%    | 86%    | 86%    | 87%    | 88%    | 90%    | 91%    | 87%    | 90%    | 89%    | 92%    |
| LAKES DISTRICT HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    | N/A    |
| SOUTHLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT      | 17%    | 17%    | 13%    | 16%    | 14%    | 15%    | 16%    | 13%    | 15%    | 14%    | 21%    | 23%    |
| Grand Total                                  | 66%    | 71%    | 66%    | 65%    | 64%    | 68%    | 71%    | 69%    | 69%    | 69%    | 70%    | 74%    |

Please note that this data is approximate only due to the way different EDs use EDIS.

Question 5:

Length of Stay (LOS) is expected to be 23 hours or less. This data is not routinely collected as the 23 hours is a guideline only.

Question 6:

We are unable to provide this information as this data is not collected.

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

Yours sincerely



Chris Fleming  
Chief Executive Officer

Enc: Emergency Department Observation unit operational policies and procedures (DRAFT)