

Clinical : Mental Health
Proactive Release: 13 December 2018

16 November 2018

[REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act request, dated 08 November 2018. You requested the following information:

- **The total number of people who have died by suicide in your district since May, including sex, age group and ethnicity.**
- **Please also provide any information about concerns or trends you may have identified in connection with these deaths.**

We are not able to provide the information you are seeking regarding details related to suicide deaths in the Counties Manukau district. Counties Manukau Health doesn't collect information on causes of all deaths in the wider community. Only the Coroner's Office can definitively determine a cause of death, or make a provisional finding of suicide. As the Coroner has not ruled on deaths in the specified time frame, release of information in this time period would be contrary to the provisions of the Coroner's Act.

We are therefore refusing this request, under Section 18(c)(i) of the Official Information Act, being that making this information available would contravene Section 71 of the Coroner's Act. We also believe the generally low numbers determined by Coroner in any DHB per annum mean that providing other details could also create a privacy issue, as affected parties are then potentially identifiable.

We note that Mental Health Services at CM Health has a strong track-record in suicide prevention activity. Our *'Suicide Prevention and Postvention Plan'* has been active this year, with a highly engaged Interagency Advisory group, a Māori roopu, and a Postvention network.

Additionally, CM Health provides support for Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), an internationally recognised community education programme. We will be significantly increasing the number of workshops in 2018/19, as well as developing a more sustainable delivery strategy to the diverse groups (from communities to corporates) who are now asking for MHFA workshops.

I trust this satisfactorily explains our position on your request. If you are not satisfied with this response you are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau DHB website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. Apa', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive