

Clinical : Women's Health
Proactive Release: 31 October 2018

26 October 2018

[REDACTED]
Reporter
Stuff/ Christchurch Press

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act (1982) Request

I write in response to your Official Information Act requests, received in September, and acknowledged on 27 September 2018. You noted that the Ministry of Health had written to all DHBs advising of new requirements to be in place before any surgical mesh surgeries take place.

These requirements are:

- Assessing surgeons undertaking urogynaecological surgical mesh work against credentialing guidance developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.
- Ensuring rigorous informed consent processes that include understandings of the associated risk.

You requested the following information:

- **How many surgeons at your DHB currently meet the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care credentialing guidelines?**
- **If your DHB will continue to undertake urogynaecological surgeries involving surgical mesh?**
- **How many urogynaecological mesh procedures were undertaken at your DHB in the past year or the most recent full year data is available?**
 - **Can you break this information down by procedure type?**
- **How many surgeons are currently implanting trans-vaginal mesh for stress urinary incontinence procedures in your DHB?**
- **What is each of those surgeons' credentials?**
- **How many of those surgeons meet all of the requirements developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care?**

Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) has four surgeons currently credentialed for trans-vaginal mesh surgery for incontinence. Since we received the correspondence from the Associate Minister of Health, including the new Guidelines developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, we are working on review of the new requirements, to ensure we implement changes so that they are met by our service. These steps include contributing to the national working group, and working with the relevant professional colleges on providing additional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and peer review opportunities.

In appropriately selected and consented patients, this is essential surgery for stress incontinence. We only perform TVTs (Trans-vaginal Tape) procedures. Our surgeons all use the International

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Urogynaecology Association (IUGA) patient information leaflets to prompt discussions with women on the procedure and risks and benefits, both prior to surgery and at follow-up. The patient consent forms have standard documentation detailing the risks related to this procedure.

From Jan 2017 to Dec 2017, there were 59 surgery cases performed at CM Health. There were none performed in early 2018, while the products were 'off the market', to enable the concerns with surgical mesh products to be investigated and considered by the national working group.

I trust this information satisfactorily answers your query. 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 'M. Apa', is positioned above the typed name.

Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health