

28th July 2021

s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

Official Information Act Request for – Gender Dysphoria

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 17th June 2021, you requested the following information:

1. How many people were referred to the DHB for gender reassignment hormone therapy in each calendar year since 2006 until the present time?
2. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years (youngest/oldest/median age)?
3. How many were transitioning male to female and how many female to male in each of those years?
4. How many children were referred for puberty blocking drugs in each calendar year since 2006?
5. How many people had psychological treatment for gender dysphoria in each calendar year since 2006?
6. How many people had double mastectomies (top surgery) as treatment for gender dysphoria in each calendar year since 2006?
7. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years?

Counties Manukau Health Response:

For context Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 8,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 601,490 people). We see over 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year, and over 2,000 visitors come through Middlemore Hospital daily.

The Kidz First Centre for Youth Health (CfYH) welcomes gender diverse and transgender young people to our service. We provide support for young people and whaanau/families aged 12-24years around gender exploration and transition related healthcare across the whole Auckland Region. Specialist services for adults are provided by the Auckland Sexual Health Service (ASHS), which is part of Auckland District Health Board (ADHB). People can also access gender affirming hormone treatment through primary care, and psychological support through community providers.

Publicly available information on both of these services can be accessed via the HealthPoint website at the following links:

- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/paediatrics/kidz-first-centre-for-youth-health/>
- <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/public/sexual-health/auckland-sexual-health-service/>

In this response, we have withheld the information where the numbers are five or less under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982, as withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. We have considered whether the public interest outweighs the need to protect the privacy of individuals and have determined that it does not.

1. How many people were referred to the DHB for gender reassignment hormone therapy in each calendar year since 2006 until the present time?

People are referred to DHB services for gender healthcare, which does not always include hormone therapy. In order to provide the information requested would require manual review of each individual clinical file.

The table below captures the number of new referrals to both the youth service at CfYH and to ASHS. Data prior to July 2014 is not available as we did not code this information and reporting the number of referrals prior to this would require substantial manual review of individual clinical records of patients. Coding for outpatients at CfYH started in 2018, so data from 2014-2018 is re-reported from the previous manual count. From 2018, the number of people *referred* for any gender-affirming care has been extracted from DHB databases across metro-Auckland DHBs (CfYH and ASHS). We note these numbers may underestimate of the true number of people receiving hormone therapy, as some referrals are received by other specialty services. These other referrals are not coded electronically as specifically related to gender-affirming care.

Over time, efforts to collect this information more accurately are being made with coding set up, so numbers accessing CfYH and ASHS are becoming more accurate.

	2014/15 (FY)	2015/16 (FY)	2016/17 (FY)	2017/18 (FY)	2018	2019	2020
CM Health	18	56	36	79	77	133	213

2. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years (youngest/oldest/median age)?

The data that is available for ages of those accessing the services (CfYH and ASHS) are detailed in the table below. It includes those who have been seen by the services for gender affirming health care. Referrals received for patients younger than 12 years are coded as Under 12. A further breakdown of these age bands would require extensive manual review of outpatient medical files.

We have withheld the exact ages of individuals under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982, as withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. However, we have provided the information you have requested in age bands.

Years		2015/16 (FY)	2016/17 (FY)	2017/18 (FY)	2018	2019	2020
Counties Manukau	Min age	<12	<12	<12	<12	<12	<12
	Max age	50-54	60-64	60-64	75-79	75-79	75-79
Domicile	Median age				30	28	21

*for those under 12, in mean age calculation age 11years is used.

3. How many were transitioning male to female and how many female to male in each of those years?

As noted, this service is run on an outpatient basis, and this clinical treatment information is not coded electronically. The available information is for people accessing care at CfYH and based on the current caseloads at the end of each calendar year, providing a snapshot of all active cases at the CFFH. The information has been compiled on a limited basis, as previously described, for the youth service only.

	Gender	End of Dec 2018	End of Dec 2019	End of Dec 2020
Counties Manukau DHB domicile – CFYH service only	Male	32	37	56
	Female	54	48	55
	Non-binary	≤5	8	≤5
	Gender Exploring			7

Further collation of this data is not possible without extensive manual review of outpatient medical files.

4. How many children were referred for puberty blocking drugs in each calendar year since 2006?

Please refer to the answer to question 1 above for explanation. Data on all individual treatment plans for those cases under the care of CfYH (including identifying a subset prescribed puberty ‘blockers’) is not coded and would require extensive manual review of outpatient medical files. We do not believe that it is feasible for us to provide this manual collation of data, without adversely impacting clinical service provision. We are therefore declining this element of your request, under Section 18(f) of the Act – requiring substantial collation or research.

5. How many people had psychological treatment for gender dysphoria in each calendar year since 2006?

This data is not collected and therefore is not available. People will access psychological support for gender dysphoria from a range of providers in specialist services and in primary and NGO services.

Providing information in response to this question for people accessing ASHS or CfYH would require a clinician to manually review individual medical files for all active cases. We do not believe that it is feasible for us to provide this manual collation of data, without adversely impacting clinical service provision. We are therefore declining this element of your request, under Section 18(f) of the Act – requiring substantial collation or research.

6. How many people had double mastectomies (top surgery) as treatment for gender dysphoria in each calendar year since 2006?

The following data reports all discharges from CM Health who had had a double mastectomy, where the ICD10 code for indication was gender dysphoria.

Note: The surgery performed by the Regional Plastic Surgical Services at Counties Manukau is a regional service, so includes people from all of Auckland

Note: Prior to 2014(2018), coding for the indication of gender dysphoria as not widely used.

Year	Number of Double Mastectomies with Gender Dysphoria coding
2006	-
2007	≤5

2008	-
2009	-
2010	≤5
2011	≤5
2012	≤5
2013	≤5
2014	≤5
2015	≤5
2016	≤5
2017	≤5
2018	11
2019	22
2020	20

7. What was the breakdown of ages in each of those years?

The following data covers the period from 2006-2020. As above, note that the surgery performed by the Regional Plastic Surgical Services at Counties Manukau is a regional service, so includes people from all of Auckland.

Summary of age groups for double mastectomy where the indication was gender dysphoria 2006-2020.

Age groups	Total
<20	14
20-29	48
30-39	10
40-49	10
50-59	≤5

I trust this information answers your request. You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau Health website. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely



Fepulea'i Margie Apa
Chief Executive Officer
Counties Manukau Health