

12 March 2021

(name and contact details redacted)

Dear (name redacted)

YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT (1982) REQUEST HBDHB REF: OIA2021007

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 19 January 2021 where you requested information from Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB). Your questions and HBDHB's response is provided below:

The information sought in this request is to be used as part of a report by the New Zealand Herald into diabetic retinopathy screening services, including how Covid-19 disruption affected them and any backlogs. Please provide any comment the DHB wishes to make in this context/about the current situation and information provided.

Q1 For 2020, the number of screens for diabetic retinopathy purchased, the number of screens delivered, and the DNA rate.

Hawke's Bay DHB contract a community-based provider for an annual volume of up to 3,400 diabetic retinopathy screens. From 1 January to 31 December 2020, there were 3,102 referrals with 2,841 screens being provided for 2,762 diabetic people.

Six percent of people exited prior to screening due to the following:

- 0.6% non-diabetic
- 1.8% death
- 0.5% not suitable for screening
- 0.7% went private
- 0.9% other ocular pathology / media lens opacities
- 1.5% declined the service.

The DNA rate was 14 percent, with:

- 33% having missed more than one scheduled appointment
- 4.2% were uncontactable
- 9% have been referred back to their GP (exited the service).

Q2 The estimated number of people living with diabetes within the DHB

Hawke's Bay Virtual Diabetes Registry records 9113 people in the regions living with diabetes (all ages). Of those, 6989 are aged between 15 and 74.

Q3 How many diabetic retinopathy screening episodes were delivered during lockdown, and how long any disruption lasted (i.e. when did screening return to 'normal').

Provision of retinal screening was stopped by the provider due to COVID-19 lockdown from 23 March 2020. Screening resumed as normal on 14 May 2020. Extra clinics were put in place to catch up, the backlog subsequently cleared and service returned to normal.

Q4 On January 1 2021, how many new referrals were on the wait list for their first screening visit, the average time spent on this wait list, and the longest individual time spent waiting.

The DHB's electronic systems do not record this activity. Referrals are managed directly by the provider into appointment slots. Therefore under section 18 (e) of the Official Information Act relating to information that does not exist, the request for this information is declined.

Q5 On January 1 2021, how many existing patients were overdue for their follow up screening appointment, the average overdue time, and the longest individual time overdue.

Please refer to response provided to Q4, this information is not recorded as people are scheduled directly into follow-up appointment slots by the provider.

Subsequent question (10/2/2021): if measured or estimated, can I please ask for the percentage coverage for diabetic retinal screening (i.e. the proportion of people with diabetes who have had a retinal screen within the last two years, or other reporting period)

Based on 2020 year data 40 percent of the region's diabetes population aged between 17 and 74 were screened.

Note: the standard screening interval is two years. However this can vary depending on a person's grading result, therefore individuals may be on a shorter or extended screening period.

I trust this information meets your needs. If you would like any further information or clarification please phone me. If you are not satisfied with this response you may contact the Office of the Ombudsman, phone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Hawke's Bay DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely

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