

4 October 2021

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Dear [REDACTED]

YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT (1982) REQUEST HBDHB REF: OIA2021102

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 23 August 2021 where you requested information from Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB). Your questions and HBDHB's response is provided below:

Since March 2020 and by each month thereafter, the number of fully staffed/operational ICU beds available, ICU capacity, a breakdown of all ICU staff (such as numbers of ICU nurses) and any vacancies, and how many surgeries were rescheduled or postponed/cancelled.

Since March 2020, copies of any reports, documents or briefings that include information about ICU capacity, including (but not limited to) in relation to Covid-19, such as contingency plans to scale up capacity.

Since March 2020, copies of all correspondence with the Ministry of Health regarding critical care and ICU, in relation to Covid-19, such as confirmation of current capacity and plans to scale up capacity.

In response to question one, please refer to Table 1, below, showing the number of ICU beds occupied since March 2020.

The DHB has a total capacity of 11 beds in its ICU/HDU unit with fully staffed resource. Staffing of ICU/HDU bed numbers flex up and down based on demand – for example eight ICU beds and three HDU beds (11 beds total) or seven ICU beds, four HDU beds (11 total).

Please refer to Table 2 showing the breakdown of all ICU staff and any vacancies from March 2020 to August 2021.

The DHB is unable to digitally extrapolate the reason for surgeries postponed. This would require a manual search through individual postponements/patient records to determine. Therefore, this portion of your request is declined under Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act relating to substantial collation or research.

Table 1: ICU occupancy/utilisation

Month	Avg. Occupied Beds
Mar-20	5.896
Apr-20	7.5
May-20	6.219
Jun-20	8.423
Jul-20	9.199
Aug-20	9.725
Sep-20	9.419
Oct-20	8.764
Nov-20	8.42
Dec-20	7.661
Jan-21	9.499
Feb-21	9.704
Mar-21	9.052
Apr-21	8.449
May-21	9.321
Jun-21	9.182
Jul-21	9.864
Aug-21	8.284

Table 2: ICU staffing breakdown

Month	Senior Medical Officers (FTE/Vacancy)	Registrars (FTE/Vacancy)	Senior Nurses (FTE/Vacancy)	Registered Nurses (FTE/Vacancy)
Mar-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	48.2/1.8
Apr-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	48.4/1.6
May-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	48.4/1.6
Jun-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	48.4/1.6
Jul-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	49.1/0.9
Aug-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	48.3/1.7
Sep-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	49.2/0.8
Oct-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	49.2/0.8
Nov-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	49.2/0.8
Dec-20	6.5/1.0	10/0	6.4/0	49.2/0.8
Jan-21	6.5/1.0	10/0	8.2/0	49.2/0.8
Feb-21	7.25/0.25	10/0	8.2/0	49.2/0.8
Mar-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	49.2/0.8
Apr-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	49.2/0.8
May-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	49.2/0.8
Jun-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	49.2/10.4
Jul-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	49.7/9.9
Aug-21	7.25/0.75	12/0	8.2/0	51.7/7.9

In response to question two, as part of the DHB's contingency planning, a hospital reconfiguration plan is in place and able to be mobilised if/when needed. This has been a huge team effort across clinical, logistics, digital enablement and procurement teams.

The DHB hospital reconfiguration to manage active COVID-19 cases includes:

- A clinical screening and triage area for potential COVID-19 patients presenting to ED outside ED's main entrance to enable appropriate initial assessment of patients.
- A second intensive care ward set up in Ruakopito for COVID-19 patients requiring high dependency or intensive care.
- Changing the use of the B2 Ward to an adult inpatient Respiratory Assessment Unit for those with acute respiratory illnesses that may be due to COVID-19. This ward has been chosen because it has negative pressure isolation suites to allow minimisation of cross-infection.

Additionally, a staffing plan to resource the COVID hospital has been put in place.

Please refer to Hawkes Bay District Health Boards resurgence plan which details information about ICU capacity and contingency plans to scale up capacity.

This can be found on our website: <http://www.ourhealthhb.nz/community-services/current-public-health-warnings-and-alerts/coronavirus/covid-19-resources/>

With regards to documents, briefings etc – the DHB has penned three briefings/documents during the period March 2020 to current date relating to contingency planning. However, this portion of your request is declined under sections 9 (2) (b) (ii) and 9 (g) (i) of the Act due to the commercial sensitivity of information within the documents and the free and frank discussions held within them.

In response to question three, this would require many hours of searching electronic records and significant involvement by many individuals and our information systems team. Due to the current climate and Level 4 and 3 impacts of COVID-19, this portion of your request is declined under Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act relating to substantial collation or research.

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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