



9 December 2021

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request

Further to your email dated 22 September 2021 to the Ministry of Health which they partially transferred to us on 12 October 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act regarding statistics pertaining to mental health. Specifically Questions 10 and 19:

10. How long does a 'vulnerable' person remain in the system post discharge, so that access to support can be expedited quickly should the need arise?

As a secondary mental health service, we aim to ensure people are supported in their recovery by services matched to that person's needs. This is done in the least restrictive way possible to achieve appropriate support for each person in their individual situation. We try to provide services that are flexible and can provide rapid increases in the care provided, if this is required and carefully reduce support as the person recovers.

19. What risk / benefit model is utilised to assess a person's vulnerability who has been discharged from 'active' support when changing national events could potentially trigger a relapse in their mental ability?

Taking an approach of least restrictive care means we only admit people to an inpatient setting to care for them and support their recovery when they are very unwell. When people are well enough to safely leave inpatient care, we discharge them with appropriate supports to the community to continue their journey of recovery, this may include specialist community outpatient support, NGO support and/or general practice teams.

The process of 'discharging' a person from secondary mental health services is made in collaboration with the person, their whānau and community supports and their general practice team to ensure ongoing recovery is supported appropriately. If the person, their GP or support service determines a person requires further specialist mental health care, they may self-refer/refer them back to secondary services.

In times of "national events" specialist (secondary) services continue to provide support to people under care of community mental health services. Any change in care will be determined by assessing their needs which is unique for each client and each event.

Waikato DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publically funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released. Please conduct all future requests for information via the standard Official Information request process and the DHB will duly oblige.

I hope this answers your query. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Lowry', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christine Lowry
Executive Director – Hospital and Community Services
Waikato DHB