



7 March 2022

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find the answers to your questions regarding this OIA as below:

1. *Does your DHB have a palliative care service? If yes, what is its annual budget?*

Yes, our Palliative Care Service is primarily a Consult Service by referral, patients are not admitted under Palliative Care.

Annual budget - \$1,852,067

2. *How many palliative care specialists do you employ?*

Four Current SMO's (2.9 FTE) with a further one joining us in April 2022 (0.8 FTE) and a further 0.8 FTE vacancy which is being recruited to. We also have 2.8 FTE, Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) roles.

3. *How many DHB FTEs are dedicated to palliative care and what are their job titles (e.g. CNS, nurse practitioner, allied health)?*

1. SMO – 4.5 FTE, we currently only have 2.9 FTE in place (see point 2)
2. RMO – 4 FTE
3. CNS – 2.8 FTE
4. Allied Health - No dedicated allied health FTE

4. *Do all palliative patients have access to telephone 24/7 specialist palliative care advice and support?*

Yes. Patients under the care of Hospice can access 24/7 nursing advice. There is also 24/7 SMO specialist advice available to doctors across Waikato and Lakes DHB via AMION

5. *Do all palliative care patients have access to visits from district nurses and General Practitioners 24/7, wherever they are located - home, care home, rural and urban?*

District Nurses are contracted to be available 24/7 for all palliative care patients, however staffing levels do impact ability to provide this support consistently, particularly in the remote regions. District Nurses are often not available afterhours and GP support is not provided afterhours. In these instances patients present to the Emergency Department when support is required.

6. *Do all patients admitted to hospital and/or patients located in the community have access to multidisciplinary specialist palliative care teams?*

All patients have access to our specialist doctor and CNS team. There are available allied health staff who work in the inpatient areas to provide support as required. We do not have dedicated allied health staff within the Palliative Care team.

7. *How many FTEs do you have dedicated to implementation of end of life care pathways and advanced care planning?*

Nil, however the Palliative Care CNS team support this work as part of their role

8. *When are people referred to palliative care, by whom and how close to death?*

- The majority of referrals are coming from Internal referrals within the Waikato Hospital (average around 97% of all referrals)
- The average number of days from referral received to date of death within the last 5 calendar years is around 63 days. This is calculated from the date of first referral to Palliative Care Service to date of death.
- There has been a decrease in the average number of days from referral received to the date of death. Within the last 5 calendar years there has been a decrease from 96 days in 2017 to 28 days in 2021.

9. *How much annual funding do you provide for local hospice services?*

\$7.4 million

I hope you find this information useful, if you require anything further do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Chris Lowry  
Executive Director, Hospital & Community Services  
Waikato District Health Board