

4 October 2021

Dear 

Re: Official Information Act

I am responding on behalf of Taranaki District Health Board (DHB) to your OIA request of 3 September 2021, which was transferred to Taranaki DHB by the Ministry of Health on 9 September 2021. You have requested the following information:

1. *What is the Medical Day-Stay (non-oncology) infusion capacity where capacity is defined as the maximum number of infusions that can occur at any given time?*

This varies dependent on the number of surgical, endoscopy, interventional radiology and medical day intervention patients present, who also share the same space. In general, Taranaki DHB aims to have no more than 5 infusions running at any given time.

2. *Average number of infusions per week?*

28

3. *Opening days & hours?*

Monday to Friday from 0700 – 2000hrs

4. *Which products are most commonly infused (top ten)?*

In no particular order: Infliximab, Tocilizumab, Rituximab, Natalizumab, Ocrelizumab, Ferinject, red blood cells, Aclasta, Pamidronate, Saline.

5. *Does the DHB run satellite infusion services outside of its main hospitals? If so, in what locations?*

Some infusions (i.e. Ferinject) can be given to low risk patients at their GP clinics.

6. *How often (percentage of total patients) is travel assistance (eg buses, shuttles, taxis, or monetary assistance) to attend infusions provided to patients? What are the monthly costs?*

Taranaki DHB funds patients who qualify for travel assistance as per the National travel criteria. Within Taranaki this criteria is not met. Taranaki DHB provides a bus service between hospitals.

7. *How often do patients not attend infusion appointments as scheduled?*

Over the last 24 months, it has been an average of 11 patients per month.

8. *Are scheduled IV infusions ever provided outside of the Medical Day Stay Unit (eg General Medical Ward)? If so, on average, how many times a month would this occur?*

This is very uncommon and would only occur if the patient is already an inpatient on a ward when the infusion is due.

9. *What is the average cost of an infusion on the Medical Day Stay Unit vs the General Medical Ward?*

The average cost of an infusion on the medical day stay unit is \$2,568.00. We do not have up to date information for the general medical ward as we have not provided one on the ward for some time.

10. *Does method of administration (eg IV vs sub-cutaneous) pose a barrier to treatment due to capacity constraints?*

No; most sub cut injections are given in the community, not the day ward.

11. *Is there a need for new medicines that are community or home-based as an alternative to infusions?*

Yes, as patients usually prefer not to come into the hospital if they have alternative options.

12. *Are infusion bookings ever delayed due to capacity constraints?*

Not more than a few days due to capacity restraints. Many of our infusions are regular patients who book their next appointment each time they come, so there is no delay for them.

If so:

a. *How many days (on average) from the date an infusion is required to the date it is booked for?*

7

b. *What is the longest period (in days) that an infusion has been delayed for in the past year?*

33 days; 1 patient due to COVID on 08/04/2020.

c. *Over the past 12 months, how many patients have had an infusion delayed due to capacity constraints?*

None; we are not aware of any significant delays due to capacity constraints.

d. *How are bookings prioritised?*

The referring consultant indicates the priority (urgent, semi urgent or routine).

13. *What is the forecasted increase in infusion numbers over the next two years?*

Taranaki DHB has not completed modelling for this service, currently there is no capacity constraints.

14. *Is the DHB planning to expand infusion capacity? If so:*

- a. By how much?*
- b. What is the timeframe for completion?*
- c. Will capacity meet demand?*

Taranaki DHB does not have a significant wait time and can accommodate our population. We will continue to provide services that meets our population needs.

I trust the above information answers your OIA request.

Kind regards



Gillian Campbell
Chief Operating Officer