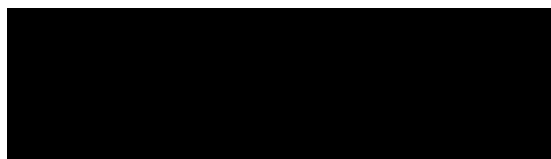


22 August 2022



Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act

I am responding on behalf of Te Whatu Ora Taranaki to your OIA request of 28 July 2022. You have requested the following information:

How many surgeons/specialists went on sabbatical during the period from January 1, 2020 to June, 30, 2022?

Fifteen (15) Senior Medical Officers (Consultants) either came back from sabbatical or started their sabbatical leave over this time period.

How many months is a sabbatical?

Any time up to a maximum of three months.

How is it determined when a surgeon takes sabbatical? Can they go/do whatever they like or are there requirements, such as study, conferences etc?

The provision of sabbatical leave to employees is governed by the New Zealand District Health Boards and Senior Medical and Dental Officers Multiple Collective Employment Agreement (MECA). Te Whatu Ora Taranaki supports this provision in recognition of the increasing complexity and demands of medical practice, and the need for clinicians to refresh their clinical knowledge and extend their experience. This entitlement is seen as an integral part of the organisation's recruitment and retention policy.

The MECA states the following with respect to Sabbatical Leave, Clause 36.5:

(a) After every six years of service, an employee may apply for sabbatical leave of three months, or other agreed period on full pay, whether as a continuous period or a series of separate periods, to spend time at other clinical units or centres, universities or research institutes for the purposes of strengthening or acquiring clinical knowledge or skills, or undertaking an approved course of study or research in matters relevant to their clinical practice.

(b) "Service" for the purpose of sabbatical leave entitlement means service as a senior medical or dental officer in New Zealand with one or more District Health Boards.

(c) Applications for participating in the programme in advance of the standard eligibility criteria (in other words, attaining six years of service) can be considered by a sub-committee of the Clinical Board (or equivalent body) which will include a nominee of the Senior Medical Staff Committee that is recognised in this role by the Association. The sub-committee will make a recommendation to the Chief Executive, the sub-committee will consider the relevance of the application to the employee's job description, service requirements, funding arrangements and the time at which such a programme can be taken.

(d) The approved sabbatical programme is to be taken within six years of it becoming available, and where practical the planned dates for the programme must be agreed with the employer at least one year in advance.

(e) The programme intended by the employee will be subject to approval, which will not be unreasonably withheld, by the relevant clinical director and service or group manager.”

I trust this information answers your OIA request.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Te Whatu Ora Taranaki (www.tdhb.org.nz) website no less than one week after the response has been provided to you. Any personal or identifying information will be redacted from any response published online. Te Whatu Ora Taranaki will endeavour to resolve any concerns you should raise but, subject to any legal grounds for withholding, ultimately reserves the right to publish any information.

Yours sincerely



Gillian Campbell

District Director

Taranaki