

1 May 2020

Andre Chumko  
Stuff

**Via email:** andre.chumko@stuff.co.nz



100 Heads Road, Private Bag 3003  
Whanganui 4540, New Zealand

Dear Andre

**Official Information Act Request – OIA 12870 Deferred/cancelled appointments, scans, electives due to COVID-19**

On 3 April 2020, under section 12 of the Official Information Act, you requested the following information from Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB):

We are doing a story looking at elective surgeries and other services being cancelled/deferred by DHBs across the country due to preparation/treatment for Covid-19 patients. I wanted to ask the DHB please the below:

- Total number of deferred/cancelled appointments so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation
- Total number of deferred/cancelled electives so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation
- Total number of deferred/cancelled scans so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation
- Total free beds the DHB has reserved for Covid-19; as well as its current occupancy rate, and how this figure compares to a time before Covid-19
- Are there any wards/hospitals the DHB has which are dedicated to Covid-19 entirely, if so how many and where?
- How will/is the DHB mitigating the impact of a backlog of people who've had electives/appointments/scans etc deferred and/or cancelled due to Covid-19?
- What other plans does the DHB have in place to ensure it's not overwhelmed and care can continue as close to normal as possible for the majority of patients during this time?

**Whanganui District Health Boards response:**

**Total number of deferred/cancelled appointments so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation**

A total of 399 outpatient appointments with medical specialists have been deferred.

**Total number of deferred/cancelled electives so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation**

A total of 130 planned care surgeries have been deferred.

**Total number of deferred/cancelled scans so far due to Covid-19 treatment/preparation**

As of 16 April 2020, deferred/cancelled scans were as follows:  
CTs = 120; MRIs = 60; Ultrasounds = 130.

**Total free beds the DHB has reserved for Covid-19; as well as its current occupancy rate, and how this figure compares to a time before Covid-19**

Occupancy rate is 59%; previously ran close to capacity. Total free beds the DHB has reserved for COVID-19 is 10.

**Are there any wards/hospitals the DHB has which are dedicated to Covid-19 entirely, if so how many and where?**

The hospital has designated one ward to COVID-19 (35 beds of which 9 are isolation and two of those are negative pressure).

**How will/is the DHB mitigating the impact of a backlog of people who've had electives/appointments/scans etc deferred and/or cancelled due to Covid-19?**

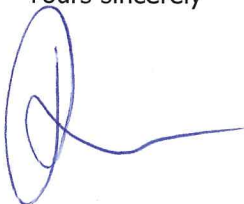
We are planning how we recommence planned care, and we will be adhering to the Ministry of Health's guidelines that patients are seen in order of clinical priority, and that patients will be managed while they are waiting for treatment to ensure that their condition does not deteriorate.

**What other plans does the DHB have in place to ensure it's not overwhelmed and care can continue as close to normal as possible for the majority of patients during this time?**

WDHB is carefully planning a return to business as usual, planning services to ensure we have capacity and capability to flex services up and down to meet demand and the impact of any COVID-19 patients in our community.

Should you have any further queries about the above information, please contact our OIA co-ordinator Anne Phoenix at [anne.phoenix@wdhb.org.nz](mailto:anne.phoenix@wdhb.org.nz)

Yours sincerely



Russell Simpson  
**Chief Executive**