

18 April 2019

Alecia Rousseau
Investigative Journalist

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Via email: aleciarousseau18@gmail.com

Dear Alecia

Official Information Act Request – Opioid use, abuse or overdose annually since 2015

On 27 March 2019 under Section 12 of the Official Information Act, you requested the following from Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB):

What is the number of hospital admissions for opioid and opiate use, abuse or overdose, annually, since 2015? Could you please provide me, if possible, with the age, sex and ethnicity for each of these patients?

Does the DHB provide any help for those addicted to opioids or opiates, such as recovery programmes? If so, can you please provide details of these programmes, as well as the current number of people enrolled in your region?

Does the DHB keep records of opiate and opioid prescription rates i.e. how many times these are being prescribed on an annual basis in your region?

If so, can you please provide me with the number of times opiates and opioids are prescribed on an annual basis, since 2015?

Could you please include which opiates and opioids are being prescribed?

Whanganui District Health Board's response:

1. What is the number of hospital admissions for opioid and opiate use, abuse or overdose, annually, since 2015? Could you please provide me, if possible, with the age, sex and ethnicity for each of these patients?

Please note

All admissions with a diagnosis of 'opioids abuse or overuse' could be where:

- a. The reason for admission/principal diagnosis is for 'opioids abuse or overuse'.
- b. The reason for admission/principal diagnosis is as a consequence of 'opioids abuse or overuse',
 - ie. 'opioids abuse or overuse' is secondary to the reason for admission.
- c. The reason for admission/principal diagnosis is **not** 'opioids abuse or overuse'
 - ie. 'opioids abuse or overuse' is part of patient history as a secondary diagnosis.

Admissions with a diagnosis of opioid abuse or overuse, by admitting service & reason for admission by year at Whanganui DHB.

Note; 'Other' = admission where patient had a secondary diagnosis of Opioid abuse or overuse.

Calendar Year	Ethnicity	Age Band	Gender	Med/Surg Opioid abuse or overuse	Other	Mental Health Opioid abuse or overuse	Other	Grand Total	
2015	Maori	15-24	F		1			1	
			M		1			1	
		15-24 Total			2			2	
		45-64	M		2			2	
		45-64 Total			2			2	
	Maori Total				4			4	
	Other	15-24	F				1		1
		15-24 Total					1		1
		25-44	F			1		1	2
			M			1			1
		25-44 Total				2		1	3
		45-64	F			1			1
			M		2	3			5
		45-64 Total			2	4			6
		65+	M			1			1
		65+ Total				1			1
	Other Total				2	7	1	1	11
2015 Total				2	11	1	1	15	
2016	Maori	25-44	F		1			1	
		25-44 Total			1			1	
		45-64	F		1			1	
		45-64 Total			1			1	
	Maori Total				2			2	
	Other	under 5	M			1			1
		under 5 Total				1			1
		15-24	F					1	1
		15-24 Total						1	1
		25-44	F			1			1
			M			4		1	5
		25-44 Total				5		1	6
		45-64	F			2			2
		M		2	4			6	
45-64 Total			2	6			8		
65+	F			3			3		
65+ Total				3			3		
Other Total				2	15		2	19	
2016 Total				2	17		2	21	
2017	Maori	15-24	F		1			1	
		15-24 Total			1			1	
		45-64	F		1			1	
			M		1			1	

		45-64 Total			2			2
	Maori Total				3			3
	Other	15-24	F				2	2
		15-24 Total					2	2
		25-44	F		1			1
			M		1			1
		25-44 Total			2			2
		45-64	F		1			1
			M		6			6
		45-64 Total			7			7
	Other Total				9		2	11
2017 Total					12		2	14
2018	Maori	25-44	F		1			1
		25-44 Total			1			1
	Maori Total				1			1
	Pacifika	25-44	M				1	1
		25-44 Total					1	1
	Pacifika Total						1	1
	Other	15-24	F				2	2
			M	1	2			3
		15-24 Total		1	2		2	5
		25-44	F		2			2
			M		2		1	3
		25-44 Total			4		1	5
		45-64	F	1				1
			M		10			10
		45-64 Total		1	10			11
		65+	M		2			2
		65+ Total			2			2
	Other Total			2	18		3	23
	Asian	45-64	F	1				1
		45-64 Total		1				1
	Asian Total			1				1
2018 Total					3	19	4	26
2019								
(3mths)	Other	25-44	F				1	1
		25-44 Total					1	1
	Other Total						1	1
2019 (3mths) Total							1	1
Grand Total					7	59	1	77

Elective admissions with a diagnosis of opioid abuse or overuse, by admitting service and reason for admission by year at Whanganui DHB.

Ethnicity	Age Band	Gender	2015	2015	2016	2016	2017	2017	2018	2018	Grand Total
			Med/Surg Other	Total	Med/Surg Other	Total	Med/Surg Other	Total	Med/Surg Other	Total	
Maori	45-64	F			1	1					1
		M	1	1							1
	Total		1	1	1	1					2
Maori Total			1	1	1	1					2
Other	25-44	F					1	1			1
		M					1	1			1
	Total					2	2			2	
	45-64	M			2	2			1	1	3
	Total				2	2			1	1	3
Other Total					2	2	2	2	1	1	5
Grand Total			1	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	7

2. Does the DHB provide any help for those addicted to opioids or opiates, such as recovery programmes? If so, can you please provide details of these programmes, as well as the current number of people enrolled in your region?

Programme Name	Details of Programme	How many people are currently enrolled
Opiate Substitution Programme	<p>The roles of specialist opioid substitution services include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ comprehensive assessment for substance use and related issues ▪ individualised treatment planning within an integrated and recovery- and wellbeing-focused model ▪ stabilisation on an adequate individualised dose of opioid substitution medication ▪ provision of specialist interventions to minimise the harms associated with continued opioid and other substance use ▪ recovery planning and provision of appropriate psychosocial support to assist clients and their families and whānau to build and maintain recovery capital ▪ facilitating the transfer of stabilised clients to the care of their primary care provider ▪ screening, advice and treatment, or referral for treatment, for clients with co-existing medical problems ▪ assessment and treatment or referral for treatment of clients with co-existing mental health problems ▪ consultation with and referral to health care and social service providers, including peer support and advocacy services ▪ assisting clients to withdraw from OST medication as appropriate. 	175

3. Does the DHB keep records of opiate and opioid prescription rates i.e. how many times these are being prescribed on an annual basis in your region? If so, can you please provide me with the number of times opiates and opioids are prescribed on an annual basis, since 2015? Could you please include which opiates and opioids are being prescribed?

Please note that the opiate and opioid prescription rates below are for hospital prescribed opiates and opioids rates only. Note also that prescribed rates do not necessarily match dispensed rates.

Number of prescriptions dispensed by opioid chemical, by calendar year for 2015 to 2018.

Note: Suitable data for 2019 YTD not available.

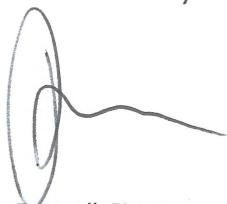
Number of Scripts	Calendar year			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Codeine phosphate	7,170	8,012	8,485	8,918
Dihydrocodeine tartrate	996	921	885	883
Paracetamol with codeine	5,132	5,287	5,767	5,029
Fentanyl	1,733	2,034	1,888	1,773
Methadone hydrochloride	2,343	2,520	2,553	2,391
Morphine hydrochloride	511	484	498	448
Morphine sulphate	3,000	3,602	3,919	4,045
Morphine tartrate	8			
Oxycodone hydrochloride	2,614	3,117	3,400	3,336
Pethidine hydrochloride	169	168	122	133
Tramadol hydrochloride	7,994	8,789	8,943	9,361
Grand Total	31,670	34,934	36,460	36,317

Please note

- This information is based on community pharmacy dispensing claim data submitted to the Ministry of Health
- Data of suitable quality for 2019 is not available yet
- Hospital based data is not available.

Should you have any further queries about the above information, please contact our acting OIA co-ordinator Maree Langford at Maree.Langford@wdhb.org.nz

Yours sincerely



Russell Simpson
Chief Executive