WHANGANUI
DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
Te Poari Hauora o Whanganui

20 March 2019

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

Andre Chumko
The Dominion Post

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

Dear Andre

Official Information Act Request – Violent incidents in hospitals

On 20 February under Section 12 of the Official Information Act, you requested the following from Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB):

Data/numbers/figures of all incidents involving any DHB staffer being harassed, assaulted, hurt, injured, threatened, maimed or implicated in an altercation with any patient from any ward/area under the DHB's jurisdiction over the last three years to date (i.e. from February 20, 2016, to present day, February 20, 2019).

Could the DHB please, with the data, provide a breakdown of when each incident occurred (i.e. date), when it was recorded/reported and by who, a brief description of each incident including details of the assault/threat/injury/harassment, and what the outcome was of each incident i.e. whether a patient was sectioned/transferred/arrested or whether the staffer involved had treatment.

Whanganui District Health Board's response:

Data/numbers/figures of all incidents involving any DHB staffer being harassed, assaulted, hurt, injured, threatened, maimed or implicated in an altercation with any patient from any ward/area under the DHB's jurisdiction over the last three years to date (i.e. from February 20, 2016, to present day, February 20, 2019).

The following tables provide the annual number of incidents, type/nature of incident and service they occurred in for 2016, 2017 and 2018. The WDHB was unable within the timeframe to provide the detailed breakdown (i.e. from 20/2/16 to 20/2/19) as requested.

Year	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults									
2018	*Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*									
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Stanford House	Surgical	Medical	CCU	ATR	Maternity	Community Mental Health	Waimarino Health Care
Jan	4	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Feb	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
March	3	1	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-
April	3	-	1	-	2		-	1		
May	1	4	-	2	3	4	-	-	-	-
June	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
July	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
August	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
September	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
October	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
November	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
December	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Total	26	7	5	3	15	5	1	3	1	1
DHB total	67									

Year **2017**	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults *Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*							
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Stanford House	Surgical	Medical	CCU	ATR	Public Health
Jan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Feb	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
March	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
April	7	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
May	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
June	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
July	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
August	4	3	-	-	2	1	-	-
September	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
October	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
November	2	2	-	1	-	-	1	-
December	7	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Total	27	8	1	1	5	2	4	2
DHB total	50							

Year	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults								
2016	*Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*								
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Stanford House	Surgical	Medical	CCU	Radiology	ATR	CAHMS
Jan	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Feb	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
March	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
April	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
May	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
June	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
July	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
August	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-
September	3	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
October	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
November	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
December	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	14	11	1	1	3	3	2	1	1
DHB total	37								

Could the DHB please, with the data, provide a breakdown of when each incident occurred (i.e. date), when it was recorded/reported and by who, a brief description of each incident including details of the assault/threat/injury/harassment, and what the outcome was of each incident i.e. whether a patient was sectioned/transferred/arrested or whether the staffer involved had treatment.

Not all of the information requested is captured / available and the WDHB is unable to provide this information and level of detail without incurring a significant amount of work or costs to the requestor.

1. **When did each incident occur (date)**
   The WDHB was unable to provide this information and detail without incurring a significant amount of work or costs to the requestor.

2. **When was it recorded / reported and by who**
   The WDHB was unable to provide this information and detail without incurring a significant amount of work or costs to the requestor.

   Staff are encouraged to report incidents as soon as possible. In most instances the staff member involved would record / report the incident. All incidents are reported within 48 hours of a patient being placed in seclusion or restraint.

3. A brief description of each incident including details of the assault / threat / injury / harassment

The WDHB was unable to provide this information and detail without incurring a significant amount of work or costs to the requestor.

The following table provides the number of staff injuries, the service they occurred in, the type / nature of incident / injury and the perpetrator details for 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Year **2018**	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults *Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*						
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Stanford House	Surgical	Medical	CCU	Community Mental Health
Jan	4	-	-	-	1	-	-
Feb	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
March	1	1	-	-	2	-	-
April	3	-	-	-	-	-	
May	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
June	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
July	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
August	-	-	2	-	-	1	1
September	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
October	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
November	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
December	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Total	10	1	4	1	7	3	3
DHB total	29						

Perpetrator:	All client related	
Type / Nature of incident / injury:	Incident / injury detail – not exhaustive list:	
24 physical 4 verbal 1 sexual	▪ PTSD following significant assault ▪ Pushed to ground and punched and kicked in head and neck ▪ Pushed into wall ▪ Scratched ▪ Bitten ▪ Spat on ▪ Digging nails in deep leaving bruising and grazing to inner arm	▪ Pushed over ▪ Punched in head/face ▪ Kicked ▪ Fingers bent back ▪ Book thrown ▪ Indecent assault ▪ Hair pulled ▪ Abusive text message

Year	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults									
2017	*Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*									
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Stanford House	Surgical	Medical	Waimarino	ATR	Community	Off campus	Carpark
Jan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Feb	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
March	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
April	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
May	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
June	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
July	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
August	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
September	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
October	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
November	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
December	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Total	6	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	1	1
DHB total	22									

Perpetrator:	20 client related 2 visitor related	
Type / Nature of incident / injury:	Incident / injury detail – not exhaustive list:	
17 physical 4 verbal 1 sexual	▪ Punched in nose ▪ Attacked with crutches ▪ Shoved/Pushed ▪ Spat at ▪ Kicked ▪ Grabbed in groin (sexual) ▪ Skin tear	▪ Bitten ▪ Punched ▪ Bottle of milk thrown ▪ Slapped ▪ Hit to face ▪ Slammed against door frame ▪ Indecent assault

Year **2016**	Areas reporting assaults and attempted assaults *Please note that '– 'means none reported, not that there were no assaults.*										
Month	Te Awhina	ED	Community	Therapies	Medical	CCU	Radiology	ATR	CAHMS	Outpatients	Maternity
Jan	-	1	1	-	1	-	-			-	-
Feb	-	1	1	-	-	-	1			-	1
March	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			-	-
April	1	-	-	-	-	2	-			-	-
May	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		1	
June	-	1	-	-	-	-	-			-	-
July	1	-	-	-	-	-	-			-	-
August	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			-	-
September	1	-	-	-	1	-	-			-	-
October	1	1	-	-	-	-	-			-	-
November	3	-	-	-	-	1	-			-	-
December	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		1	-	-
Total	8	4	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1
DHB total	25										

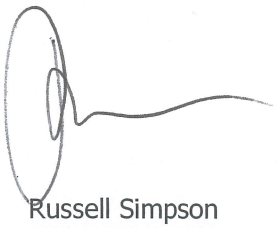
Perpetrator:	20 client related 5 visitor related	
Type / Nature of incident / injury:	Incident / injury detail – not exhaustive list:	
20 physical 5 verbal	▪ Punched in throat ▪ Punched in neck ▪ Hit with jacket ▪ Grabbed and scratched ▪ Finger bitten ▪ Needle stick injury after being kicked ▪ Punched in abdomen ▪ Kicked in chest ▪ Patient attempted to pull staff member over rail into concealed garden	▪ Grabbed and slashed by razor ▪ Punched in face ▪ Pushed ▪ Fingers bent back ▪ Bitten ▪ Urine thrown at staff ▪ Kicked in leg ▪ Broken nose from being head butted ▪ Lapels grabbed ▪ Scratched

4. The outcome of each incident i.e. whether a patient was sectioned / transferred / arrested or whether the staffer involved had treatment.
The WDHB was unable to provide this information and detail without incurring a significant amount of work or costs to the requestor.

The majority of aggression injuries at the WDHB require first aid only or no treatment. Some injuries require medical treatment and / or lost time. No notifiable events were reported to WorkSafe New Zealand between 2016 and 2018.

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

Yours sincerely



Russell Simpson
Chief Executive