

5 October 2020

Louisa Steyl

Via email: louise.steyl@stuff.co.nz



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

Dear Louisa

Official Information Act Request – Colonoscopy Services

On 7 September 2020, under section 12 of the Official Information Act, you requested the following information from Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB):

- How many patients were on the waiting list for colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?
- What was the average wait time for urgent or category A colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?
- What was the average wait time for non-urgent or category B colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?
- What was the average wait time for surveillance or routine colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?
- What was the ratio between colonoscopies performed for non-urgent patients, versus patients referred through the National Bowel Screening Programme at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020? (If the screening programme has been rolled out in your DHB area).
- How many of your patients have recovered from colorectal cancer, versus those that died from the disease between August 2019 and August 2020?
- How many colonoscopies lead to a confirmed diagnosis of colorectal cancer each month from August 2018 to August 2020?
- How many categories does your DHB divide your waiting list into? What are the criteria for each category?
- How many people are presently on the colonoscopy waiting list for each of these categories?
- How long is the average waiting time for each category?

Whanganui District Health Boards response:

- **How many patients were on the waiting list for colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?**

Calendar Year	Month Name	Diagnostic	Surveillance	Bowel Screening	Grand Total
2018	August	156	420		576
	September	149	436		585
	October	160	463		623
	November	145	500		645
	December	138	517		655
2019	January	113	549		662
	February	83	559		642
	March	67	587		654
	April	70	632		702

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	May	81	677		758
	June	70	694		764
	July	69	737		806
	August	64	767		831
	September	57	786		843
	October	66	817		883
	November	56	858	1	915
	December	55	903		958
2020	January	50	931		981
	February	53	968		1021
	March	52	1002	4	1058
	April	58	1010	5	1073
	May	69	1026	4	1099
	June	73	1057		1130
	July	87	1090	3	1180

- **What was the average wait time for urgent or category A colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?**

Average Waiting time - Days				
Calendar Year	Month Name	Urgent Diagnostic	Surveillance	Urgent Total
2018	August	13		13
	September	25		25
	October	11		11
	November	14		14
	December	12		12
2019	January	12		12
	February	12		12
	March	12		12
	April	12		12
	May	12		12
	June	11	12	11
	July	11		11
	August	14		14
	September	9		9
	October	13		13
	November	10		10
	December	11		11
2020	January	11		11
	February	10		10
	March	12		12
	April	7		7
	May	9		9
	June	11		11
	July	16		16
Grand Total		12	12	12

- What was the average wait time for non-urgent or category B colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?

Average Waiting time - Days					
Calendar Year	Month Name	Semi-urgent Diagnostic	Surveillance	Bowel Screening	Semi-urgent Total
2018	August	58			58
	September	66			66
	October	70			70
	November	63			63
	December	74			74
2019	January	70	176		72
	February	80			80
	March	54			54
	April	64			64
	May	55			55
	June	55	131		57
	July	58			58
	August	60	257		63
	September	73	52		72
	October	60	164		62
	November	54		22	53
	December	49		29	45
2020	January	51		20	45
	February	54	102	36	49
	March	53	162	72	60
	April	55		48	55
	May	70		48	64
	June	60		31	51
	July	62		14	54
Grand Total		61	149	36	60

- What was the average wait time for surveillance or routine colonoscopies at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020?

Average Waiting time - Days				
Calendar Year	Month Name	Routine Diagnostic	Surveillance	Routine Total
2018	August	172	341	191
	September	102	361	206
	October	76	212	137
	November	91	323	196
	December	71	199	146
2019	January	99	360	206
	February	47	295	267

	March	159	259	221
	April	53	93	66
	May	46	87	63
	June	62	395	157
	July	89	343	241
	August	111	342	218
	September	75	374	135
	October	38	398	173
	November	36	334	185
	December	43	284	150
2020	January	48	315	276
	February	58	302	93
	March	68	188	104
	April	57	17	47
	May	50	334	192
	June	83	193	162
	July	73	298	208
Grand Total		82	280	175

- **What was the ratio between colonoscopies performed for non-urgent patients, versus patients referred through the National Bowel Screening Programme at the end of each month from August 2018 to August 2020? (If the screening programme has been rolled out in your DHB area).**

Calendar Year	Month Name	Bowel Screening	Diagnostic	Grand Total	% Bowel Screening of all non-urgent scopes
2019	November	3	66	69	4.3%
	December	15	62	77	19.5%
2020	January	9	44	53	17.0%
	February	24	63	87	27.6%
	March	11	45	56	19.6%
	April	1	25	26	3.8%
	May	13	42	55	23.6%
	June	16	36	52	30.8%
	July	10	52	62	16.1%

- **How many of your patients have recovered from colorectal cancer, versus those that died from the disease between August 2019 and August 2020?**

Whanganui District Health Board do not have access to this information however the Ministry of Health maybe able to provide this information for you.

- **How many colonoscopies lead to a confirmed diagnosis of colorectal cancer each month from August 2018 to August 2020?**

Whanganui District Health Board do not have access to this information however the Ministry of Health maybe able to provide this information for you.

- **How many categories does your DHB divide your waiting list into? What are the criteria for each category?**

1. **Urgent** (criteria as per attached “Referral Criteria for Direct Access Outpatient Colonoscopy or Computed Tomography Colonography” document, MOH, 2019)
 - a. Known or suspected CRC (on imaging, or palpable, or visible on rectal examination), for pre-operative procedure to rule out synchronous pathology
 - b. Unexplained rectal bleeding (benign anal causes treated or excluded) with iron deficiency anaemia (haemoglobin below the local reference range)
 - c. Altered bowel habit (looser and/or more frequent) > six weeks duration plus unexplained rectal bleeding (benign anal causes treated or excluded) aged ≥50 years
2. **Non-urgent** (criteria as per attached “Referral Criteria for Direct Access Outpatient Colonoscopy or Computed Tomography Colonography” document, MOH, 2019)
 - a. Altered bowel habit (looser and/or more frequent) > six weeks’ duration, aged ≥50 years
 - b. Altered bowel habit (looser and/or more frequent) > six weeks’ duration plus unexplained rectal bleeding (benign anal causes treated or excluded), aged 40–50 years
 - c. Unexplained rectal bleeding (benign anal causes treated or excluded) aged ≥50 years
 - d. Unexplained iron deficiency anaemia (haemoglobin below local reference range) (see Comments for Services section items 1 and 2)
 - e. New Zealand Guidelines Group (NZGG) Category 2 family history plus one or more of altered bowel habit (looser and/or more frequent) > six weeks’ duration plus unexplained rectal bleeding (benign and anal causes treated or excluded), aged ≥40 years
 - f. NZGG Category 3 family history plus one or more of altered bowel habit (looser and/or more frequent) > six weeks’ duration plus unexplained rectal bleeding (benign and anal causes treated or excluded), aged ≥25 years
 - g. Suspected/assessment inflammatory bowel disease (consider FSA)
 - h. Imaging reveals polyp >5 mm
3. **Surveillance** (criteria as per “Guidance on Surveillance for people at increased risk of colorectal cancer” document, New Zealand Guidelines Group, 2011)
 - a. Refer to document identified above

The 3 colonoscopy wait time target indicators are as follows:

- 1) 90% of people accepted for urgent diagnostic colonoscopy receive their procedure (or are still waiting within the required timeframe) in 14 calendar days or less.
- 2) 70% of people accepted for non-urgent diagnostic colonoscopy receive their procedure (or are still waiting within the required timeframe) in 42 calendar days or less.
- 3) 70% of people accepted for surveillance colonoscopy receive their procedure (or are still waiting within the required timeframe) in 84 calendar days or less of the planned date.

- **How many people are presently on the colonoscopy waiting list for each of these categories?**

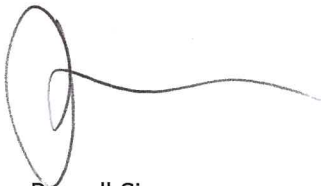
Calendar Year	Month Name	Bowel Screening	Diagnostic	Surveillance	Grand Total
2020	August	10	178	49	237

- **How long is the average waiting time for each category?**

Average of Days Wait	Priority Category			
	Urgent	Semi-urgent	Routine	Grand Total
Total	12	60	175	65

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

Yours sincerely



Russell Simpson
Chief Executive