

7 April 2021

Lucy Walker

Via email: lucywalker@tv3.co.nz

Dear Lucy

Official Information Act Request – OIA 13398 Nitrous Oxide Use

On 16 March 2021, under section 12 of the Official Information Act, you requested the following information from Whanganui District Health Board (WDHB):

"I am investigating a story about the rise in the use of nitrous oxide, also known as NOS, whippets, nangs and laughing gas.

Can you please provide the following information available under the Official Information Act:

- The number of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.
- The number of people per month over the last 12 months who have been admitted to hospital as a result of the use of nitrous oxide.
- The age of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.
- The gender of the people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.
- The ethnicity of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days, which is the 14th of April 2021."

Whanganui District Health Boards response:

1. The number of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.

According to clinical coding, there is not a code specific to nitrous oxide; they relate to "other" psychoactive substances or therapeutic gases, which is a broad range of substances.

We searched through any mention of nitrous oxide within the diagnostic fields and found no evidence of events which mention nitrous oxide.

In summary, all automated and manual searches have found no events which are nitrous oxide related.



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

2. The number of people per month over the last 12 months who have been admitted to hospital as a result of the use of nitrous oxide.

As per question 1.

3. The age of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.

n/a

4. The gender of the people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.

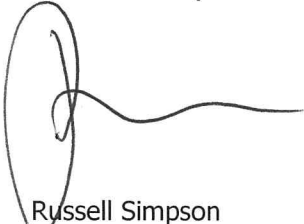
n/a

5. The ethnicity of people per month over the last 12 months who have been seen in your emergency department in relation to the use of nitrous oxide.

n/a

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Russell Simpson
Chief Executive