



15 September 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request

On 18 August 2020 the Ministry of Health transferred your Official Information Act request regarding pain management services for people with Cerebral Palsy to district health boards.

1. *What pain management services are available to children with Cerebral Palsy?*
2. *What pain management services are available to adults with Cerebral Palsy?*
3. *How are these services accessed?*
4. *Are these services available to all New Zealanders or only in some parts of the country?"*

The following information relates to the services provided by Northland DHB. We do not hold information about services provided to people with Cerebral Palsy in other parts of new Zealand.

Children with Cerebral Palsy

There is no specific service/ process within ours for young people with cerebral palsy who experience pain. Due to their diagnosis they would be eligible to be seen by our allied team/ CDS (Child Development Service) team until the age of 16. In most cases pain for our tamariki and young people would be jointly managed by:

- Physiotherapy and/ or occupational therapy input – this includes assessment and supply of equipment to support positioning and pressure relief such as sleep systems, seating options, pressure relieving mattress and/ or cushions for seating; strategies to support positioning for pain and pressure relief ... generally consideration of 24-hour positioning. Scripting and provision of orthoses such as resting splints to reduce pressure or shearing forces. Liaison with wider team including medical team.
- Wheelchair and Seating Service for assessment/ review of complex wheelchairs
- Paediatricians - considering medications
- Orthopaedic clinic - assessment usually at Paediatric Orthopaedic clinic.

Other considerations/ factors:

- For children/young people over 5 who have Ongoing Resource Funding (ORS) their physiotherapy and occupational therapy supports are primarily managed by our

colleagues based in schools/education system. They do not sit on our caseloads (except for home-based equipment or following a surgery).

- Our engagement/ input with the teenage cerebral palsy population is variable. Given that research shows that this is another time for growth in which plasticity is possible – therapy at this stage would be nice to be able to offer however intervention on stretches or equipment is led by us and agencies/ outside people or whānau need to refer back to our service.

Adults with Cerebral Palsy

Northland DHB has a multidisciplinary pain management service available to all adult patients in the Northland DHB catchment area. Pain Management Clinics are based at Whangarei Hospital. If necessary patients may also be referred to the Auckland Regional Pain Service (TARPS), a tertiary level regional service.

Services are accessed via referral from a general practitioner, other external medical specialist or one of Northland DHB's other hospital clinicians and services.

Northland DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist public understanding of how we deliver our services. This includes proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been provided to you. Personal or identifying information will be redacted from any response published online. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be publicly available we will consider your views.

If you have any queries relating to Northland DHB's response to your information request please contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Chamberlain', written in a cursive style.

Dr Nick Chamberlain
Chief Executive