



31 August 2020



Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request

You have asked for information about elective surgery.

1. *Does the Board have a policy to prioritise Maori and/or Pasifika patients on elective surgery waiting lists?*

We currently have the following equity statement endorsed by the Board of Northland DHB

NORTHLAND DHB EQUITY POSITION STATEMENT

Northland DHB is committed to ensuring equity of access, experience and outcomes for those populations who need our support the most. This is particularly so for Māori in Northland to recognise their status as Tāngata Whenua.

Our position on this matter aligns with our commitment to eliminate inequities and should be read in conjunction with our overall approach to achieving optimal health and wellbeing for all Northlanders.

Our aim of achieving optimal health for all Northlanders as stated above, cannot be realised without designing our system to respond with targeted multi-faceted approaches when meeting the needs of our more rural and deprived populations. These populations have high Maori representation therefore any system design must include culturally appropriate intervention if it is to be effective.

We understand that poverty, education cultural differences and rural living can lead to disadvantage when accessing timely surgery and for this reason we have implemented a system that identifies those most at risk. Once identified this group of patients is elevated and reviewed in order to address the imbalance and ensure they are not handicapped by circumstance.

We are currently running a trial within Breast and Respiratory services regarding prioritisation for First Specialist Appointments.

2. *If so, how long has this policy been in force and when is it scheduled to end?*

The equity statement was endorsed by the Board on 13 July 2020. It has no end-date. The trials referred to above commenced in April 2020.

3. *If so, what is the rationale for this policy?*

Please refer to the Equity Statement. A copy of the paper presented to the Board at its 13 July 2020 meeting is attached.

4. *If so, is the policy based on the pressures of deferred surgery due to COVID-19?*

No

5. *If there is no such policy, why has the Board not followed the lead of the Capital and Coast District Health Board?*

Not applicable

6. *What is the current number of deferred elective surgeries due to the pressures of COVID-19?*

665 elective patients were deferred due to Covid-19.

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



Dr Nick Chamberlain
Chief Executive