



27 July 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request

You have asked for information regarding access to services for people with Multiple Sclerosis.

Staffing Numbers

1. *How many Neurologists do you have on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Northland DHB has 0.6 FTE providing neurology services (0.5FTE specialist physician and 0.1 FTE visiting neurologist).

2. *How many Neurologists are Multiple Sclerosis Specialists on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Zero

3. *How many Neurologists on your staff see patients with Multiple Sclerosis?*

Both the physicians referred to above see patients with multiple sclerosis.

4. *How many Neurology Nurses do you have on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Zero

5. *How many MS Nurse Specialists are on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Zero

Waiting Times

We request the information to relate to the period from 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021

6. *What is the current waiting time for a/an:*

a) *First specialist neurology outpatients' appointment?*

Urgent patients are seen as soon as possible and non-urgent patients normally wait 2-3 months.

b) *Follow up specialist neurology outpatient appointment?*

Patients are seen in follow-up outpatient appointments based on clinical circumstances and are seen at least annually.

c) *Outpatient MRI?*

All requests for MRIs are triaged by a radiologist. Waiting time for an MRI is dependent on the individual patient's clinical circumstances. Patients with multiple sclerosis may wait 6-8 weeks for an outpatient MRI but will wait for a shorter period if clinically indicated.

d) *Outpatient infusion clinic appointment?*

There is no waiting time to commence outpatient infusion treatment once this has been determined as appropriate management.

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 about Northland DHB's response to your information request please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Dr Nick Chamberlain
Chief Executive