

8 September 2022

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act Request HN200003432

Thank you for your email of 29 August 2022, asking for the following which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *How many patients diagnosed with rheumatic fever have received hospital care in Northland in 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2018?*

When a patient is diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever for the first time they usually get hospital care.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) regularly reports on the number of first episode rheumatic fever hospitalisations across the country by regions and by fiscal and calendar years. The data can be found here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/rheumatic-fever/reducing-rheumatic-fever>. The dataset gives trends and rates across regions since 2006.

- *How many of those treated in hospital were diagnosed with long-term medical conditions (i.e. heart damage)?*

Rheumatic Fever is considered to be a long-term medical condition. As per the NZ Guidelines for Rheumatic Fever, Rheumatic Fever patients are prescribed secondary antibiotics prophylaxis for at least 10 years to prevent infection of the upper respiratory tract with group A streptococcus (GAS) and the development of recurrent rheumatic fever.

<https://assets.heartfoundation.org.nz/documents/shop/marketing/non-stock-resources/diagnosis-management-rheumatic-fever-guideline.pdf?1662068292>

As per the two audits of Northland Rheumatic Fever cases 80% to 85% of Rheumatic Fever cases had carditis (heart damage) when they were diagnosed for the first time. (NZMJ 12 July 2019, Vol 132 No 1498 and NZMJ 19 April 2013, Vol 126 No 1373)

- *How many of those treated in hospital died of rheumatic fever?*

None of the new Rheumatic Fever cases diagnosed during 2018 to 2022 have died of Rheumatic Fever.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on Health NZ's website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

If you have any questions regarding our response to your information request please contact our Communications Manager, in the first instance at communications@northlanddhd.org.nz .

Ngā mihi



Tracey Schiebli

Interim District Director

Te Tai Tokerau / Northern Region