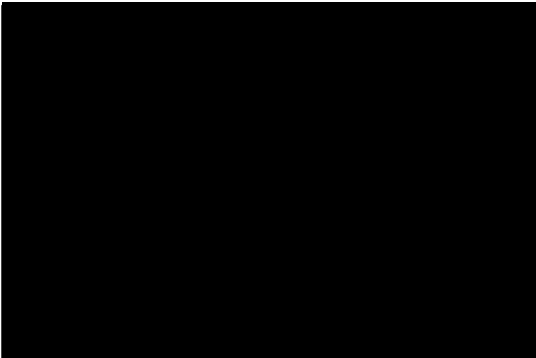


11 December 2019



Re: Official Information Act request - Bone Marrow Transplants

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 19 November 2019 requesting the following information.

As context, there is no paediatric waiting list for bone marrow transplant. Once a patient is identified as requiring a bone marrow transplant they enter the pathway of treatment beginning with tissue typing and then if necessary a donor search is undertaken.

You requested information for the upper North Island. Starship is a national bone marrow transplant service (the only paediatric service in New Zealand) so for paediatric patients we have provided national data.

Responses to your specific questions are below.

- 1. How many Māori with leukaemia are on the upper North Island list being worked up for a bone marrow transplant ""? (trying to find matches for bone marrow transplants currently)?**
- 2. How many Pasifika with leukaemia are on the upper North Island list, being worked up for a bone marrow transplant ""?**

There are seven Māori and Pasifika patients, including Cook Island Māori, in the Adult Stem cell transplant program. Due to privacy concerns we are unable to break down these numbers any further.

There are zero paediatric patients.

3. What is the total number of people with leukaemia are on the upper North Island waiting list ""?

39 – Adult Stem cell transplant program.

Zero paediatric patients as none yet medically fit for bone marrow transplant (BMT).

4. What is the average length of time for someone with leukaemia to be on the upper North Island waiting list?

1-3 months – Adult Stem cell transplant program.

Donor work up for paediatric patients can take months but with leukaemia is usually initiated months before it may be required so that there is no waiting once in remission and BMT is indicated. Sometimes there may be a few weeks' wait for a bed.

5. How many people with with leukaemia from each DHB are on the North Island list being worked up for a bone marrow transplant ""?

Adult Stem cell transplant program

DHB of Domicile	Number in list worked up for a BMT
ADHB	≤4
BOP	≤4
CMDHB	6
Hawkes Bay	≤4
Lakes	≤4
Northland	≤4
Waikato	8
Waitemata	10

Please note that we have not provided exact numbers for all of the DHBs to protect the privacy of those individuals being worked up for a BMT.

Adult patients who are diagnosed with blood cancers such as leukaemia may require an allogeneic stem cell transplant as part of their treatment. If a transplant is being considered then potential sibling donors from the patient's family are tested for first. If a matched sibling donor is not identified, a request for an unrelated donor search is sent to the New Zealand Bone Marrow Donor registry. If no unrelated donors are available then haploidentical donors (half family matches such as sibling, children or parents) can be considered to be a donor.

This process of identifying and selecting a suitable donor starts very early on in the patient's treatment pathway and the stem cell transplant is timed to fit in with treatment in hospital after finding the appropriate donor. Patients are not on a waiting list for transplant, rather they are planned for transplant which happens when they are clinically ready and a suitable donor is identified. For the very small group of patients where no suitable family or unrelated donor is not available then non transplant treatments may be considered.

Paediatric patients

Zero paediatric patients. None of the small number of leukaemia patients (3) likely to need BMT in the near future are medically ready for BMT yet (not yet in remission or free of infection).

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at

www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Auckland DHB website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive

