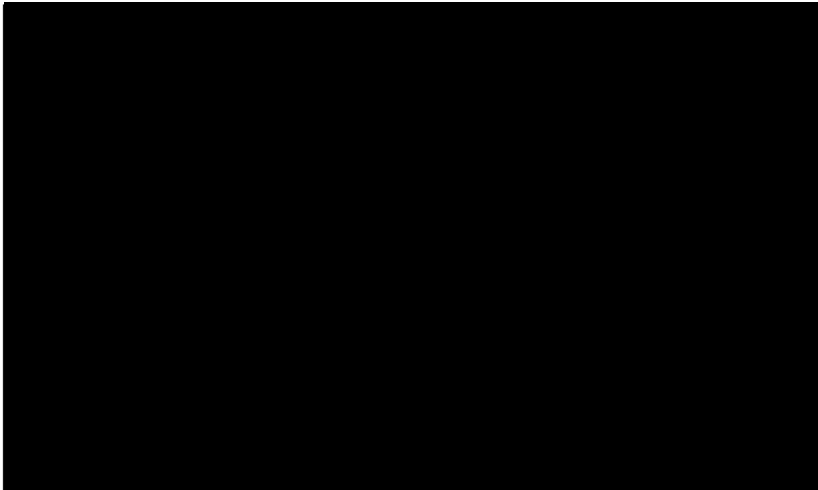


10 February 2021



Re: Official Information Act request – DHB Staff Assaulted by Patients – ADHB Ref: 738

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 7 December 2020 requesting the following information:

I write to request the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Date/numbers/figures of all incidents involving any DHB staff member (including contractors or casual workers) being harassed or, physically or verbally assaulted by a patient from any ward/area under the DHB's jurisdiction in the last three years to date (07/12/2017 – 07/12/2020).

The information you have requested is provided in the attached spreadsheet.

In order to provide you with further context in terms of the information you have requested please note that we have sourced this information by applying Auckland DHB's official definitions as follows:

Auckland DHB official definition

"Being harassed"

Harassment – any type of unreasonable, unwelcome comment or behaviour which offends humiliates or intimidates the person it is directed at. It may be repeated or be a one-off incident which is significant enough to have a detrimental effect on the person's health and safety, employment, job performance or satisfaction. Harassment may also occur in person or through email and social media both inside and outside of the workplace or work time.

“Physically assaulted”	Physical assault - the intentional use of force by one person against another, without lawful justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort.
“Verbally assaulted”	Non-physical assault - The use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment.
“Location (any ward/area under Auckland DHB’s jurisdiction)”	Any ward, clinic, unit, department, community facility, rehabilitation centre, theatre or laboratory where Auckland DHB deliver services. We have grouped these into the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward • Unit • AED (Adult Emergency Department) • Support Services

The figures provided are based on incident reports in our system that match the definitions above.

We take the safety and wellbeing of patients, staff and visitors on our premises very seriously and do not tolerate assault or harassment in any form.

To help manage risk around safety on our sites we have a safety management system to record incidents, including violence or abuse directed at another person whilst on our premises. The Datix Safety Management System was introduced in 2017. The improved system and subsequent training and education associated with the implementation programme led to increased reporting which we have encouraged. This accounts for the increase in numbers between 2017 and 2018. Additionally, in 2019 we implemented an Occupational Violence (OV) Reader automated system in our Adult Emergency Department making reporting significantly easier for staff which also led to increased reporting. This accounts for the increase in numbers in 2020.

We employ over 11,000 people; more than 12,000 people are seen by our emergency department each year and there are more than 750,000 outpatient attendances (as detailed in our annual plan 2018/19).

Some of the specialised services we provide involve caring for vulnerable patients with sometimes challenging behaviours. Caution is needed when comparing these numbers between different DHBs unless it is clear the clinical caseload is of similar complexity.

I trust this information answers your questions.

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 of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)

INCIDENTS BY TYPE	Total Incidents				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	Dec 2017 to Dec 2020
Verbal & Physical (both)	0	0	0	9	9
Verbal	13	63	94	266	436
Verbal (phone)	1	3	2	0	6
Physical threat (no contact)	7	40	42	32	121
Physical Contact: Being hit with an object	0	24	5	9	38
Physical Contact-Being hit by an object	0	0	14	14	28
Physical Contact - Open hand contact	4	107	91	70	272
Physical Contact - Open hand contact, threatening behaviour	0	1	3	0	4
Physical Contact - Kicked, spitting	0	1	0	0	1
Physical Contact - Kicked	2	40	37	39	118
Physical Contact - Kneel	0	2	1	0	3
Physical Contact - Open hand contact, biting	0	1	4	1	6
Physical Contact - Kicked, Being hit by an object	0	0	1	0	1
Physical Contact - unspecified	0	6	11	9	26
Physical Contact - Closed hand contact	9	73	37	52	171
Physical Contact - Kicked , Closed hand contact	0	0	0	3	3
Physical Contact - Spitting	0	5	2	2	9
Physical Contact - Spitting, verbal threats	0	0	1	0	1
Physical Contact - Bite	0	11	5	4	20
Physical Contact - Inappropriate Behaviour	0	10	15	4	29
Physical Contact - Bitten , Open hand contact	0	1	1	0	2
Physical Contact - Head butted	0	1	0	1	2
Physical Contact - Charged at.	0	2	3	0	5
Physical Contact - Charged at, Open hand contact	0	0	1	0	1
Physical Contact - Kicked, Bitten	0	0	1	0	1
Physical Contact - Kicked , Open hand contact	0	6	0	2	8
Total incidents (all types) for the year	36	397	371	517	0

Total number of incidents December 2017 to December 2020 0

1321

TOTALS BY INCIDENT CATEGORY	Total Incidents: Dec 2017 to Dec 2020				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	Dec 2020
Total: Physical Contact	15	291	233	210	749
Total: Physical Threat	7	40	42	32	121
Total: Verbal	14	66	96	266	442
Total: Verbal & Physical	0	0	0	9	9
	36	397	371	517	1321

BY LOCATION/SERVICE	Total Incidents 2017 to 2020				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Incidents 2017 to 2020
Ward	11	157	146	223	537
Unit	21	189	175	30	415
AED	4	39	37	235	315
Support Services	0	12	13	29	54
	36	397	371	517	1321