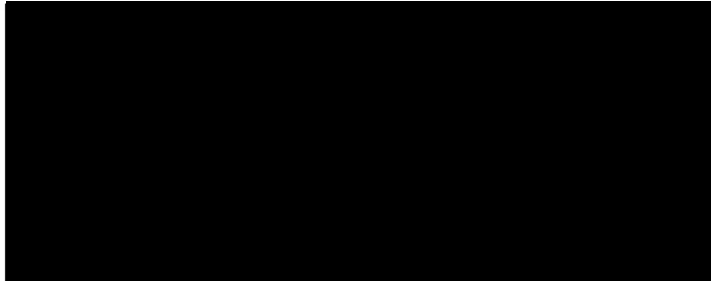


12 September 2018



Re Official Information Act Request for information about disposal of stillborn babies

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act dated 14 August 2018 for the following information:

- 1. Record of the number of stillborn babies born at National Women's Hospital between 1955 and 1975, year on year.**
- 2. Record of the number of stillborn babies born under 28 weeks of pregnancy at National Women's between 1955 and 1975, year on year.**
- 3. All National Women's Hospital Medical Management Board Minutes mentioning stillborn babies from 1955 to 1975.**
- 4. National Women Hospital's policy and any changes to that policy on disposing stillborn babies from 1955 to 1975.**
- 5. Record of any undertakers employed or contracted with National Women's Hospital between 1955 and 1975.**

In an amendment to your original request, sent on 16 August, 2018, you sought an expansion of Question 3 to include: 'All National Women's Hospital Medical Committee minutes from 1955 to 1957 referencing disposal of stillborn babies.'

We have researched our records in an endeavour to respond to your questions, however the ADHB does not hold the information requested in questions 1, 2, 3 and 5 above. We would suggest you contact Archives New Zealand as it is possible that they may hold some of the historic information you are seeking. They have an on-line catalogue of records held by them, called Archway, which you might find useful in the first instance.

In the terms of the Act, these four requests are refused under section 18(e) of the Act in that the document(s) do not exist within the ADHB or cannot be found.

In regard to question 4, ADHB does not hold any National Women's Hospital policy documents regarding disposing of stillborn babies from 1955 to 1975. However, ADHB does hold the following information concerning procedures for burial or cremation of babies born at National Women's Hospital:

- (a) Prior to 1981, all stillborn babies over 28 weeks and neo-natal deaths of babies over 28 weeks were legally buried or cremated.
- (b) Purewa Cemetery commenced cremation in November 1957. Prior to this, stillborn babies were buried in the stillborn plot at Purewa.

We hope this information is helpful.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive