



10 February 2022

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your request dated 19 January 2022 pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982. You have requested the following information:

The Ministry of Health has informed me that in some areas, external and internal pressure has reduced the number of beds available for age residential care, and I am looking to discover what areas have been affected by this. With that in mind, I request the following information under the terms of the Official Information Act 1982.

Although we cannot comment on the information provided by the Ministry of Health, we can provide data that Waikato District Health Board holds.

- 1. Since March 2020 have you had to reduce the number of beds you can offer for aged residential care?**

There has been no reduction in aged residential care beds in the Waikato since March 2020.

- 2. How many beds did you offer in March 2020, and how many do you offer now?**

Please see answer to question 1. There is currently 3,223 aged residential care beds that include rest home, hospital, dementia and psychogeriatric.

- 3. If so, what has caused the DHB to reduce the number of age residential care beds available?**

Although there has not been a reduction, the difficulty for some families is having an available bed in a facility at the right time, close to where they live to visit and spend time with their loved one, and not travel long distances and be so separated from them. With a nationwide shortage of registered nurses, staffing can also be a challenge for a facility. There may be situations when they do not have the correct staffing skill mix at the time to be able to admit a new patient into their care, and so this can impact on the number of operational beds that are open and available.

4. Have you had to reduce the number of general hospital beds available since March 2020?

There has been no reduction in general hospital beds in the Waikato since March 2020.

5. If so, what has caused the DHB to reduce the number of general beds available?

Please see answer to question 4.

6. How many general hospital beds were available in your catchment area in March 2020, and how many general hospital beds are available now?

There are 1006 beds and this includes the entire DHB (Waikato Hospital, Henry Rongomau Bennett Centre, Te Kuiti Hospital, Taumarunui Hospital, Thames Hospital, Tokoroa Hospital and 2 convalescent care facilities). The number of available beds may fluctuate due to staffing resource availability.

Waikato DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publically-funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

Yours sincerely



Christine Lowry
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Waikato District Health board