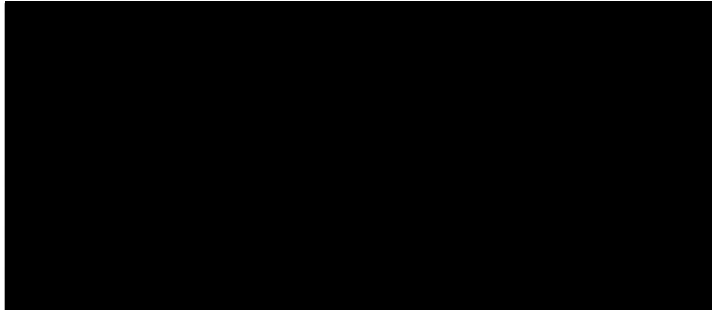


17 February 2021



**Re: Official Information Act request – Diabetes Data**

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 19 January 2021 requesting the following information:

**With respect, I request the following information under the terms of the Official Information Act 1982:**

- 1. For 2020, the number of screens for diabetic retinopathy purchased, the number of screens delivered, and the DNA rate.**
- 2. The estimated number of people living with diabetes within the DHB.**
- 3. How many diabetic retinopathy screening episodes were delivered during lockdown, and how long any disruption lasted (i.e when did screening return to 'normal').**
- 4. On January 1 2021, how many new referrals were on the wait list for their first screening visit, the average time spent on this wait list, and the longest individual time spent waiting.**
- 5. On January 1 2021, how many existing patients were overdue for their follow up screening appointment, the average overdue time, and the longest individual time overdue.**

**Question one: For 2020, the number of screens for diabetic retinopathy purchased, the number of screens delivered, and the DNA rate.**

The number of diabetic retinal screens purchased from our two diabetic retinal screening providers in Auckland DHB catchment for the period 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 was 11,899 screens.

The number of diabetic retinal screens that were delivered in Auckland DHB catchment for the same period was 7,040 screens.

The DNA rate (i.e. the number of people who were booked and did not attend their appointment during this period) was 31%. One provider reports that prior to the March 2020, lockdown patients

were cancelling their appointments due to the concerns regarding COVID-19. It is suspected that this was a factor in the DNA rates prior to and after the COVID-19 lockdowns.

**Question two: The estimated number of people living with diabetes within the DHB**

As per the Metro Auckland Clinical Governance Forum, the number of people with diabetes enrolled with a general practice based in the Auckland DHB catchment was 32,114 as of 31 December 2020. This figure includes people who have been coded with a diagnosis of diabetes and see a general practitioner based within the Auckland DHB catchment, but may be domiciled outside of our catchment area.

As per the Ministry of Health Virtual Diabetes Register (VDR), the estimated number of people living with diabetes who are domiciled within the Auckland DHB catchment is 26,445, as of September 2020. The VDR is an algorithm developed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) that estimates the number of people that have diabetes and are domiciled within a DHB catchment using a number of data sources. More information on the VDR can be found <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/diabetes/about-diabetes/virtual-diabetes-register-vdr>

Auckland DHB uses a combination of the VDR and the Metro Auckland Clinical Governance Forum data set to identify their diabetic population as there is no national diabetes register (complete register of all people diagnosed with diabetes in New Zealand).

**Question three: How many diabetic retinopathy screening episodes were delivered during lockdown, and how long any disruption lasted (i.e when did screening return to 'normal').**

Where services were able to be delivered during Alert Level 2, protocols around social distancing and spaced appointments were observed.

Appointments, typically scheduled 10 minutes apart, were scheduled every 20 minutes. This enabled the provider to limit the number of people in waiting rooms and allow time for equipment to be sanitised between appointments.

Following these disruptions, retinal screening services have been working to safely manage waiting lists with a regional triaging framework in place to ensure those with the highest clinical need are seen first.

	How many diabetic retinopathy screening episodes were delivered during lockdown		
	Level 4 26/03/20 to 27/04/20	Level 3 28/04/20 to 13/05/20	Level 3 12/08/20 to 30/08/20
Auckland DHB	0	29	125

**Question four: On January 1 2021, how many new referrals were on the wait list for their first screening visit, the average time spent on this wait list, and the longest individual time spent waiting.**

**Provider one:** This information is not available due to how new patient appointments are booked. When a new referral is received, the patient is given an appointment within three months, as per the Ministry of Health guidelines.

**Provider two:** This provider runs a waitlist for new referrals and was therefore able to provide this data. As of 1 January 2021:

- there were 391 new referrals on the waitlist,
- the average wait (time between referral acceptance and patient being seen) was 147 days,
- the longest time an individual has waited was 450 days.

*Please note: the above information is a simulation of a snapshot and has the following caveats:*

1. *The 'Average days on waitlist' and 'Longest wait' are based on the patients who went on to have screening only (not those still waiting).*
2. *This 'Snapshot' of the waitlist was achieved by counting the number of patients whose referral received date was prior to 01 January 2021 and either had attended a screening/DNA/cancellation after 01 January 2021 or are still waiting as of 6 February 2021 when this query was run.*

**Question five: On January 1 2021, how many existing patients were overdue for their follow up screening appointment, the average overdue time, and the longest individual time overdue.**

*The information provided for this answer is compiled from two different provider reporting systems. One provider was able to provide data as of 01 January 2021. The data from the other provider was sourced on 15 January from a reporting system which is continuously updated. Retrospective information is not available so we are, therefore, not able to provide the data as of 1 January 2021 for this provider.*

There were 3,017 people with diabetes overdue a diabetic retinal screen in Auckland DHB. As previously mentioned, a regional triaging framework is in place to ensure those with the highest clinical need are seen first.

The average overdue time was 113 days. The Ministry of Health guidelines advise a recall period of anywhere from three months up to three years. Those considered low risk should be seen every two to three years. Pregnant mothers are seen in the first trimester of their pregnancy and then as required as determined by the presence or absence of diabetic retinopathy.

The longest individual time overdue was 14 months. Extended wait times for individuals may be due to a variety of factors, such as an inability to contact the patient, which is done through the provider.

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](http://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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ailsa Claire'.

Ailsa Claire, OBE  
Chief Executive of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)