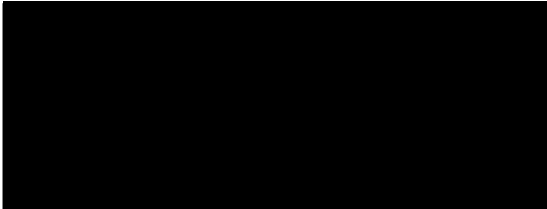


12 June 2019



Re Official Information Request for use of medical leeches at Auckland DHB

I refer to your official information request 08 May 2019 for the following information:

- 1. I was wondering if Auckland District Health Board used leeches, and if so;**
- 2. What it uses them for.**
- 3. How many it used in 2018.**
- 4. How much it spent on leeches in 2018.**
- 5. Where the leeches are sourced from.**

The use of medical leeches is more generally associated with plastic surgery procedures, such as those undertaken at Middlemore Hospital, in situations where a new blood supply has been introduced to a wound or surgical repair.

Auckland DHB has previously used leeches in the area of head and neck surgery but there have been no recent cases.

There is no record of medical leeches being used in 2018.

Suppliers of leeches can be found on the internet <http://leeches-nz.co.nz/> They note that leeches provide an effective means to reduce blood coagulation and relieve venous pressure from pooling blood after surgery in reattachment and reconstruction operations

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