

02 October 2018

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**Re Official Information Request for Child Youth mental health waiting list**

I refer to your Official Information Act request of 4 September 2018 seeking

***How many referrals were made to the Child and Youth/Adolescent Mental Health Service for the calendar year of 2016, 17 and year-to-date to September 1, 2018.***

***In 2018:***

***How many children/young people were on the waiting list as of September 1 - broken down by age range***

***The longest time a child/young person was on the waiting list as of September 1***

***The average wait time for a child/young from referral to initial appointment as of September 1***

***Questions for the DHB:***

- ***How many mental health professionals (FTE) work for the DHBs child/youth service arm?***
- ***What age range do you see?***
- ***How are children/youth triaged when referred to the service?***
- ***How long are children/youth funded to see a mental health professional under the DHB service?***

**Background information and context or approach to answering these questions**

Auckland DHB has a range of services potentially under the rubric of "child and youth/adolescent mental health service". We have interpreted your OIA request to be asking about the general outpatient/community child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) run for the Auckland DHB population.

While Auckland DHB also runs some specialist, regional or supra-regional services for children and young people from regions wider than the Auckland DHB population, these have not been included. These services are the supra-regional inpatient Child and Family Unit (CFU); the Regional Youth Forensic Service (RYFS), including Taiohi Tu Taiohi Ora (secure residence in-reach service), Consult Liaison MH services to Starship Children's Hospital, Hapai Ora (early psychosis intervention services for ADHB), and Tupu Ora (eating disorder service).

How many referrals were made to the Child and Youth/Adolescent Mental Health Service for the calendar year of 2016, 17 and year-to-date to 1 September , 2018.

2016	2017	2018YTD
1540	1677	1161

Please note that a service reconfiguration (effective from mid-January 2018) has meant that young people (18 years and under) who receive services from an early intervention/psychosis service have moved from under CAMHS services to a specific early intervention service (Hapai Ora). This group is therefore included in the above counts for 2016 and 2017 but is not within CAMHS for the 2018 count from mid-January. The number of referrals to Hapai Ora for these young people is 35 (year to date). They could be added to the 2018 count to be equivalent to the previous years.

**How many children/young people were on the waiting list as of 1 September - broken down by age range**

The Auckland DHB CAMHS service does not run a waiting list, as such. Children and young people referred are triaged in regard to their level of need and are then booked in for appointments.

The table below shows the number of young people who were waiting to be seen for a face to face appointment on 1 September 2018, broken down by age. Some of these referrals will have been received that day (1 September 2018)

Age	Count of referrals On 01/09/2018
<1-5 years	11
6	5
7	8
8	7
9	7
10	10
11	9
12	10
13	14
14	11
15	19
16	10
17 - 18	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>

**The longest time a child/young person was on the waiting list as of September 1**

As above, Auckland DHB CAMHS does not run a waiting list. As at 1 September 2018, the referral that had been waiting the longest to be seen had been waiting for 172 days. This was as a result of patient choice.

**The average wait time for a child/young from referral to initial appointment as of September 1**  
For all of those young people who had an initial appointment in the 2018 calendar year up until 1 September 2018, the average time to wait from referral to initial face to face appointment was 27 days.

Please note that the Ministry of Health targets for national CAMHS services and wait times are that 80% of accepted referrals are seen within 3 weeks of referral, and 95% are seen within 8 weeks.

**How many mental health professionals (FTE) work for the DHBs child/youth service arm?**

As above, this answer is limited to the community CAMHS service. We have taken “mental health professionals” to include all staff who have direct client contact, and have divided these into medical staff; nursing and allied health (occupational therapists, social workers, psychotherapists, and psychologists); and cultural workers. The figures include current employees as at August 2018.

	Medical staff	Nursing and Allied Health	Cultural workers
Employed FTE	5.48	41.43	5.0

**What age range do you see?**

The Auckland DHB CAMHS service sees young people aged from 0-17 years of age, though the age range may be extended up to 19 years in some circumstances (such as those already in treatment, or who are still at school).

**How are children/youth triaged when referred to the service?**

Children and young people referred to the CAMHS service are triaged by a specialist multidisciplinary triage/intake team. Prioritisation is made depending on the level of risk and clinical need, balanced by available resource. Referred children or young people are seen on the same day if this is considered to be clinically required.

**How long are children/youth funded to see a mental health professional under the DHB service?**

CAMHS services are publically funded and therefore free to the service user. There is no predetermined time limitation on access to CAMHS services, and length of engagement is determined by the wishes of the young person and their family, together with clinical need.

I trust this information answers your questions. You are entitled under the Official Information Act section 28(3) to seek a review of my response. 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



Ailsa Claire, OBE  
Chief Executive

