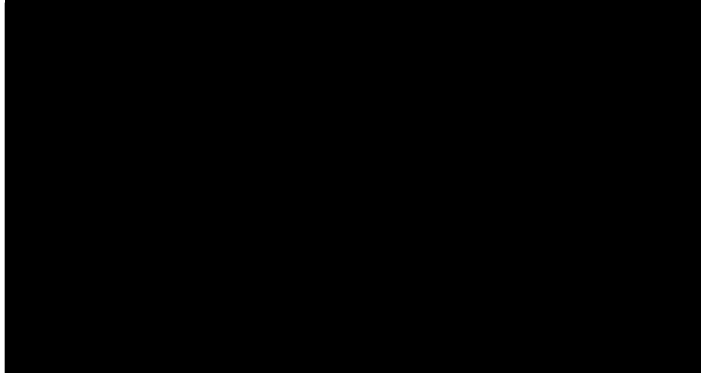


8 October 2020



**Re Official Information Request – Community Covid testing centres including Otara**

I refer to your official information request dated 17 August 2020 requesting the following information:

**Since May 14 2020, copies of any correspondence received and sent regarding the decision to stop operations at some community testing centres (CBACs), including in Otara.**

**Since May 14 2020, copies of any correspondence with GPs or other medical groups and associations regarding Covid-19 testing, including but not limited to associated funding issues and the availability of testing swabs.**

On Wednesday 9 September your request was refined to the following:

Copies of any correspondence received and sent regarding the decision to stop operations at some community testing centres (CBACs), including in Otara. May 14 2020 – present

- Documents relating to the GETS process
- NRHCC decision and information papers relating to changes to CBACs and CTCs
- Correspondence sent and received by the following key people regarding the decision to stop operations at some community testing centres (CBACs), including in Otara. (Note that this includes correspondence that was forwarded on to those key people/they were made aware of by colleagues.)
  - Tim Wood (Chair of procurement process)
  - Ryan Stangroom (operations lead for procurement process)

- Vicki Scott and Matt Hannant (co-leads of Primary Care work stream – note that Matt Hannant managed the correspondence on these matters)

Since May 14 2020, copies of any correspondence with GPs or other medical groups and associations regarding Covid-19 testing, including but not limited to associated funding issues and the availability of testing swabs.

- Correspondence via Medinz between the NRHCC and GPs and other medical groups and associations (includes messages sent via Medinz and email responses)
- Correspondence between Vicki Scott and Matt Hannant (co-leads of Primary Care work stream) and GPs and other medical groups and associations

There are a number of emails from external stakeholders which would come under the scope of this response. We are currently consulting with these stakeholders and will release these emails in due course once this consultation is complete.

Please find enclosed the following documents:

1. Documentation relating to the GETS process: 'GETS'  
Please note, we have redacted commercial information under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act as the information would unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information.
2. NRHCC decision and information papers relating to changes to CBACs and CTCs: 'CE\_PAPERS' & 'REF EXTRACTS'

Please note, we have redacted commercial information under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act.

3. Correspondence from key people regarding the decision to stop operations at some community testing centres (CBACs), including in Otara: 'TIM WOODS DOCUMENT RFQ Response Letter', 'RYAN STANGTROOM' & 'MATT HANNANT'

Please note, we have redacted information under section 9(2)(b)(ii) and 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act to protect the privacy of individuals.

4. Correspondence via Medinz between the NRHCC and GPs and other medical groups and associations (including messages sent via Medinz and email responses): 'MAY\_MEDINZ', 'JUNE\_MEDINZ', 'JULY\_MEDINZ', 'AUGUST\_MEDINZ'
5. Correspondence between Vicki Scott and Matt Hannant (co-leads of Primary Care work stream) and GPs and other medical groups and associations: 'SWAB\_SUPPLIES'

Please note, we have redacted information under section 9(2)(b)(ii) and 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act

The overview below also provides context for these documents.

Since late January, the Northland DHB and metro Auckland DHBs (Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau) have been operating a regional response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC).

In Auckland, testing for COVID-19 in metropolitan Auckland is managed by the NRHCC working in partnership with the primary care sector. This regional team has ensured testing is available in all parts of Auckland throughout the pandemic, with the approach changing to respond to changes in the pandemic.

Community testing is done at permanent and pop-up Community Testing Centres (CTCs), GPs, and Urgent Care Clinics. Testing is also done in managed isolation and quarantine facilities.

The number of Community Testing Centres has changed throughout the pandemic. In metropolitan Auckland, an initial 14 testing centres (then called CBACs) were set up in emergency conditions – most in a matter of days - during March and April. These centres were used almost exclusively for providing communities with safe and convenient access to swabbing.

The number reduced over time to seven and these remained in operation until the end of July, when a new longer-term model for community testing was introduced. This provided the same testing capacity through a different mix; four permanent CTCs supported by four mobile testing units. In the event of a surge in community cases, additional CTCs would be opened as part of the NRHCC resurgence plans.

The new model was established through a Government procurement process (GETS) and once in place testing was available via:

- General Practices and Urgent Care Clinics, ensuring COVID-19 testing could be accessed close to home.
- The four new Community Testing Centres located in the North, West, Central and South.
- Four mobile testing units which could be deployed to specific communities, including Māori and Pacific communities and to those who are more vulnerable, for increased flexibility and speed.

In August the NRHCC activated our resurgence plans in response to the new community outbreak in Auckland. We quickly increased the number of testing locations; working closely with primary care, the regional team opened 12 additional CTCs within 48 hours of the new community case.

At the height of the August Auckland outbreak testing options were:

- General Practices
- 46 designated General Practices – you don't need to be enrolled to get tested at these clinics

- 20 Urgent Care Clinics – some of which are open 24 hours a day
- 20 Community Testing Centres
- Short-term pop-up Testing Centres
- 16 mobile testing units

CTCs and mobile units will continue to be deployed for as long as they're needed throughout the pandemic, providing additional capacity for testing already taking place in primary care. We expect to continue to surge testing capacity as needed and to reduce it at times when demand is lower.

The DHBs will also continue to work closely with primary care providers to ensure there is good access to testing in communities in all parts of Auckland and have developed a number of testing assumptions based on the COVID-19 alert levels. These further enable us to move quickly to change testing capacity in the city.

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



Ailsa Claire, OBE  
**Chief Executive**