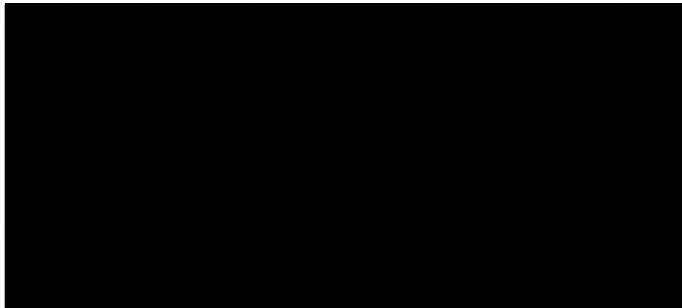


7 April 2021



Re: Official Information Act request – Auckland DHB Code Alerts

This is a request under the Official Information Act 1982.

This week Dunedin Hospital was put into a Code Black alert following an exceptionally busy 24-hour period where the number of patients outstripped available beds in the emergency department.

Dunedin Hospital has five levels of escalation:

Green (normal pressure)

Yellow (early overload)

Orange (overload)

Red (extreme overload)

Black (critical situation)

I would like to request reports on all instances where the Auckland DHB equivalent of a Code Black or Code Red alert was issued at Auckland City and Starship Hospitals for the period 1 January 2011 to 24 March 2021.

Please include definitions for the Auckland DHB's levels of escalation and a brief explanation of the plan to manage each.

Te Toka Tumai (Auckland DHB) does not use colour-coded, or similar, escalation levels and therefore we do not hold the information that you are seeking. Capacity and demand of our hospitals, including patient presentations, occupancy and workforce availability, is monitored throughout each day and appropriate actions agreed as required.

During the past month, we have seen hospital occupancy higher than previous years. This has required us to open some beds reserved for winter flex capacity earlier than planned. We have also reduced some planned care (mainly elective surgical procedures) to reduce pressure on the hospital

system and create bed capacity. Our emergency departments remain open and we continue to be able to provide safe care to people in our community that need us.

It should be noted that Te Toka Tumai uses 'code black' to refer to an emergency situation requiring police presence and involving a threat to the safety of one or more persons including firearm, abduction, chemical, biological, radioactive or explosive device or substance (CBRE), offensive weapon (non-firearm), and the policy that supports this.

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 sincerely,



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