

19 June 2020

[REDACTED]  
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Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Official Information Act**

I refer to your Official Information Act request received dated 2 June 2020 in which you requested the following information:

Staffing

1. *How many Neurologists do you have on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Five Neurologists on staff with a 3.95 FTE.

2. *How many Neurologists are Multiple Sclerosis Specialists on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Five Neurologists on staff with a 3.95 FTE- One Neurologist who is 0.95 FTE has completed MS sub-speciality training overseas, but all five neurologists treat MS patients.

3. *How many Neurologists on your staff see patients with Multiple Sclerosis?*

As above, there are five neurologists on staff who all see patients with MS.

4. *How many Neurology Nurses do you have on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Two Neurology Clinical Nurse Specialist's (CNS) with a 1.0 FTE and a dominant part of CNS time is with MS.

5. *How many MS Nurse Specialists are on staff? (Numbers and FTE equivalent)*

Neurology CNSs could be regarded as MS nurses given this is the dominant part of their work, therefore answer is as above.

## Waiting Times

We appreciate COVID-19 may impact the data so we request the information to relate to the period from April 2019 — end March 2020.

6. What is the current waiting time for a/an:

a) *First specialist neurology outpatients' appointment?*

Wait time for first specialist appointments depends on the triage category in which they are allocated. Referrals that include clinical information suggesting new MS will be given priority (2) which is seen within 6 weeks - 3 months dependant on resources and capacity.

b) *Follow up specialist neurology outpatient appointment?*

Follow up appointments can be dependent on the outcome of the first specialist appointment and the clinician's conclusion or if they are regular follow ups. I.e. a patient could be seen every 6 months routinely. This can also be varied by the number of people awaiting follow up outpatient appointments.

c) *Outpatient MRI?*

The current wait time is 5 months. A 'B' graded patient (semi-urgent) receives a current waitlist letter which states their wait will be anywhere from 4 – 28 weeks. This is a long wait time and people who are able will have the scans done privately instead which is a shorter timeframe. The referrer will also receive a copy of the wait list letter. This timeframe has been impacted by COVID.

d) *Outpatient infusion clinic appointment?*

Typically the outpatient infusion clinic appointment is not limiting as it will usually be booked in within 2-3 weeks of request being sent from the consultant.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of our decision by the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's Office can be contacted on 0800 802 602 or on-line at <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/>.

Yours sincerely



Chris Fleming  
Chief Executive Officer