

11 June 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

Official information request W18-205

I refer to your official information request dated 24 May 2018.

Request:

I am writing to request information about the gender-affirming healthcare services provided by the Wairarapa District Health Board. The DHB Gender Reassignment Services Stocktake in October 2015 indicated that the Wairarapa District Health Board previously did not provide gender affirming healthcare services (see the Briefing on GRS attached to this previous request <https://fyi.org.nz/request/7586-grs-wait...>).

Could you please advise whether the following gender-affirming healthcare services are funded by the Wairarapa District Health Board for transgender patients, and whether the services are currently available:

- Hormone therapy
- Mastectomy
- Hysterectomy
- Orchidectomy
- Facial hair removal
- Breast augmentation
- Voice training

Could you please provide information about the process of accessing those services that are available?

- Specifically, is an assessment by a mental health professional required in order to access gender-affirming healthcare services? If so, which services?
- In the case of hormone therapy, can primary health providers prescribe hormones, or does this have to be initially approved by an endocrinologist?
- Is any period of real life experience required to access surgery?

Finally, could you please advise what the process is if transgender patients require one of the above services, but the Wairarapa District Health Board does not offer this service? Does the Wairarapa District Health Board currently fund patients to travel to other areas to access this healthcare?

Response:

The information you have requested is below.

To my knowledge, Wairarapa DHB has not had demand for the services you describe and is not involved in other aspects of transgender care, including surgical procedures and primary care healthcare.

As one of the country's smaller hospitals, Wairarapa DHB accesses specific services and tertiary care from larger centres. Many of the gender-affirming healthcare services you mention would require a multi-disciplinary team approach, led by specialists in neighbouring centres.

I understand that assessments are required, and for the greater Wellington region, including Wairarapa (referred to as 3DHB region), this is currently provided by a psychologist. Transgender hormonal treatment in the 3DHB region is currently initiated by an endocrinologist. Again, this is not provided at Wairarapa DHB. It is possible that hormonal therapy may be provided in the primary care setting in future.

Wairarapa DHB would refer patients to another DHB. Presuming the client's needs meet national criteria, funding would be managed under the usual IDF (Inter District Flow) arrangements.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Wairarapa District Health Board website.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact:

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Yours sincerely



Adri Isbister

Chief Executive