

13 August 2020

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Via Email: [REDACTED]

## Response to a request for official information

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for official information received 4 August 2020 by Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH)<sup>1</sup> where you seek the following information:

- 1. Does the Board have a policy to prioritise Maori and/or Pasifika patients on elective surgery waiting lists?**

NMH response: No.

- 2. If so, how long has this policy been in force and when is it scheduled to end?*
- 3. If so, what is the rationale for this policy?*
- 4. If so, is the policy based on the pressures of deferred surgery due to COVID-19?*
- 5. If there is no such policy, why has the Board not followed the lead of the Capital and Coast District Health Board?**

NMH response: NMH is discussing our approach to prioritising some elective procedures for Maori and Pacific patients but has yet to finalise any plans.

- 6. What is the current number of deferred elective surgeries due to the pressures of COVID-19?**

NMH response: In the week prior to Alert Level 4 – Lockdown we had 12 postponed elective surgeries, which increased to 252 during the week of lockdown, and peaked at 293 two weeks later. While our reporting system does not establish a causal relationship, the significant increase in postponed elective surgeries supports the assumption that 293 patients had their elective surgery postponed due to managing and minimising the risk of COVID-19.

This response has been provided under the Official Information Act 1982. You have the right to seek an investigation by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or free phone 0800 802 602.

If you have any questions about this decision please feel free to email our OIA Coordinator [OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz](mailto:OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz). I trust that this information meets your requirements. NMH, like

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson Marlborough District Health Board

other agencies across the state sector, supports the open disclosure of information to assist the public's understanding of how we are delivering publicly-funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released. If you feel that there are good reasons why your response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P Bramley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Peter Bramley  
**Chief Executive**