

11 October 2021

OIA Reference: OIA2021092004

Michael Vaughan

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Tēnā koe Mr Vaughan

Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) – Response – OIA2021092004

Thank you for your official information request regarding *management of Covid-19 patients* transferred by Ministry of Health and received by Capital & Coast (CCDHB) and Hutt Valley (HVDHB) District Health Boards on the 20 September 2021. You specifically asked the following questions:

1. *What is the Covid-19 treatment protocol for hospitalised cases?*
2. *Are some DHB's following different treatment protocols from others?*
3. *Are DHB's free to make decisions about treatments for individuals with Covid-19?*
4. *To what extent are patients able to participate in decision-making about their treatment programmes?*
5. *If a patient requests a blood test for Vitamin D and/or the administration of high dosage Vitamin C, are hospital staff able to provide these?*
6. *Do hospital staff have the right to refuse a patient's request and, if so, is there a process for a patient to appeal the decision?*

Responses to your specific questions are outlined below:

Response

1. *What is the Covid-19 treatment protocol for hospitalised cases?*

There are no treatment protocols specifically for managing patients in our care. Patient care is individualised depending on condition. Best practice continues to evolve as clinical studies are published. Many binational professional bodies, including Australia and New Zealand Intensive Care Specialists (ANZICS) have endorsed the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce, (<https://covid19evidence.net.au/>), which provides high-priority, evidence-based clinical guidelines that are frequently updated when evidence changes.

The MoH has recently realised guidelines for the management of hospitalised adults which are available at https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/interim_guidance_-

[clinical management of covid-19 in hospitalised adults.pdf](#). These guidelines are based on the Counties Manakau DHB (CMDHB) guidelines and are consistent with previous guidance at CCDHB and HVDHB.

2. *Are some DHB's following different treatment protocols than others?*

We are not aware of what treatment protocols are used in other DHB's.

3. *Are DHB's free to make decisions about treatments for individuals with Covid-19*

Clinical management is always at the discretion of the responsible consultant.

4. *To what extent are patient's able to participate in decision-making about their treatment programmes?*

Patients are routinely involved in treatment decisions made about them whilst they in our care and capable of making decisions, as per Health and Disability Code of Rights which include, Right 5 – The right to effective communication, Right 6 – The right to be fully informed & Right 7 – The right to make an informed choice and give informed consent.

5. *If the patient requests a blood test for Vitamin D and/or the administration of high dosage of Vitamin C, are hospital staff able to provide these?*

Tests are only ordered when they are clinically indicated. We only administer treatments that are evidence based and will benefit the patient's condition. We would fully discuss patients' requests for specific tests with the patient/whānau.

6. *Do the hospital staff have the right to refuse a patients request and if so is there a process for a patient to appeal a decision.*

Medical staff are not compelled to provide treatment they believe is not medically indicated or where the risk of doing so is likely to exceed any benefit. Patients (or their family, whanau or Enduring Power of Attorney) are always entitled to seek a second opinion. Our medical teams will work with any appointed health professional to provide any information required to assist this process.

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the OIA, to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or you can free phone 0800 802 602.

Nāku ite noa, nā



Fionnagh Dougan

Āpiha Whakahaere Mātāmua | Chief Executive

Ūpoko ki te uru Hauora | Capital & Coast and Hutt Valley District Health Boards