

26 February 2020

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

Email: s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

YOUR OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT (1982) REQUEST HBDHB REF: OIA2020019

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 29 January 2020 where you requested information from Hawke's Bay District Health Board (HBDHB). Your questions and HBDHB's response is provided below:

1. *Does the HBDHB monitor the temperature in the main hospital block throughout the hottest summer months?*

Yes, HBDHB continuously monitors the temperatures in the main hospital ward block, as it does with the majority of its facilities.

2. *If so what are the readings?*

Please refer to the chart in **Appendix A** showing temperatures recorded for the period 28 to 30 January 2020 in ward A4 (which is located on the top, fourth floor, of Hawke's Bay Hospital's main ward block).

The red line shows the outdoor temperature trend analysis, the other four lines indicate the readings for the indoor sensors. It can be observed that the indoor temperature will be within a couple of degrees of the outside temperature. Over this period outdoor temperatures were peaking at around 30 degrees, with the indoor temperature levels being correspondingly higher than desirable for patient and staff comfort.

3. *What is being done for the health and safety of both patients and staff alike when the temperatures are high?*

The DHB has undertaken a number of measures including:

- a) Trialling the use of UV filter film on the windows; reports from the trial demonstrate this is a helpful intervention; HBDHB are currently taking the process to tender so that all patient areas in the hospital's ward block will get filmed windows.
- b) Included in the trial is the installation of fixed ceiling-mounted fans in patient spaces; ensuring air movement to help make the space more comfortable. This trial has also been successful and the remaining patient spaces will be retro-fitted with fans as part of the UV filter film tender process.
- c) Plug in floor and desk fans have been positioned throughout the ward areas.
- d) Water coolers are located throughout the ward block to help staff keep hydrated and ice is available in all wards.

- e) All wards have drugs rooms which are air-conditioned to maintain stability of some medications. Staff are encouraged to use these spaces as regular respite areas as they are able.
- f) On peak heat days, the DHB supplies ice blocks and cooling collars to staff.

Hawke's Bay DHB's facilities team has looked at solutions, both short and long term, however it is not an easy fix given the age of the hospital ward block, which was built in the 1950s and 1960s.

Consultant engineers have also advised on air conditioning installation. The advice HBDHB has received is the age of the building means there is very limited roof and wall cavity space, which makes installation difficult. The estimated cost of installation is \$7million. Portable air-conditioning units have been considered to help during the interim. However, the building design/age means existing electrical switchboards aren't able to incorporate the additional electrical loads and engineers have advised that there's no practical solution to exhaust the hot air as the unit cools. Also, the limited space of rooms in the ward tower block, means that the standalone units themselves would create issues with patient / equipment access and potentially cause infection control risks.

Installing air-conditioning is included in HBDHB's capital building plan where it will be considered along with other big building projects including; either a new hospital and /or significant refurbishment of the ward areas.

It is also important to note that a number of key acute areas of the hospital are air-conditioned including the theatre block, ED and ICU and all of the new facilities including maternity, gastroenterology and mental health.

I trust this information meets your needs. If you would like any further information or clarification please phone me. If you are not satisfied with this response you may contact the Office of the Ombudsman, phone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Hawke's Bay DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely



Kate Coley
Executive Director People and Quality
TE PUNI WHANAKE PŪKENGĀ

cc: Ministry of Health via email: SectorOIs@moh.govt.nz
oia@hbdhb.govt.nz

Appendix A

