



Waitematā

District Health Board

Best Care for Everyone

**SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH AND
ADDICTION SERVICES**

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8 November 2021

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request - Model used to assess suicide risk: mental health statistics and funding

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received as a partial transfer from the Ministry of Health on 12 October 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the model used to assess suicide risk.

The Ministry transferred questions 10 and 19 to us, as follows:

- **How long does a 'vulnerable' person remain in the system post-discharge, so that access to support can be expedited quickly should the need arise?**
- **What risk/benefit model is utilised to assess a person's vulnerability who has been discharged from 'active' support when changing national events could potentially trigger a relapse in their mental ability?**

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

1. How long does a 'vulnerable' person remain in the system post-discharge, so that access to support can be expedited quickly should the need arise?

As for anyone engaged with a specialist health service, someone who has been treated by a specialist mental health service will be discharged when they have been clinically assessed by a mental health professional as no longer needing the care of that service.

It is important to recognise that specialist mental health services are only one part of a broad system of mental health care. Other components include support in the community, such as primary care services including General Practitioners (GPs); non-government organisations (NGOs); and various helplines and telephone support agencies.

At any point, not determined by a particular period of time since being last seen by the specialist service, a person may make contact with any of the helplines, their GP or with the DHB psychiatric crisis service and may, depending on the nature of the help required, re-engage with the specialist service.

2. What risk / benefit model is utilised to assess a person's vulnerability who has been discharged from 'active' support when changing national events could potentially trigger a relapse in their mental ability.

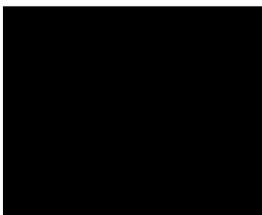
There is no single specific model used to assess vulnerability. Clinical assessment takes account of a number of aspects of a person's mental health status, including their strengths and coping mechanisms as well as vulnerabilities across a range of domains.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community 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 consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely



**Director, Specialist Mental Health and Addictions Services
Waitematā District Health Board**