



17 May 2019

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Siobhan Lehnhard  
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Dear Ms Lehnhard

**Official Information Act Request**

I write in response to your request for official information received on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

You have requested the following:

*Please supply the following information under the Official Information Act (OIA) / Local Government Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA):*

- The total number of assaults against nurses by members of the public from 2013-2018.
- *How many assaults against nurses by the members of the public broken down by each year from 2013-2018.*
- *So (x) total for 2013-18*
  - *(x) total for 2013*
  - *(x) total for 2014*
  - *(x) total for 2015*
  - *(x) total for 2016*
  - *(x) total for 2017*
  - *(x) total for 2018*

We sought clarification re interpretation of your term 'members of the public' and as a result our response reflects assaults by anyone other than another staff member.

It is acknowledged that like other hospitals around the country, under reporting of verbal abuse, threatening behaviour and assault incidents does occur.

We are continually looking at ways of preventing incidents including, but not limited to, the regular review of our preventative actions outlined in hazard registers, education of staff, review of near miss and actual incidents and the identification of any trends. Being clear with patients and their visitors that staff need to be able to get on with the job of caring for patients free from abuse, violence and aggression and that staff will call the police, is important.

The information outlined in the table below has been obtained from our paper incident reporting system (prior to 1 December 2015) and our electronic incident reporting system (from 1 December 2015).

Unfortunately I am unable to provide incident numbers specific to nursing staff, as our system does not capture the designation of the staff member at this point in time. However, anecdotally, at least 95% of our assault type incidents reported will be against nursing staff.

Of note, some individual incidents may also have an abuse, threat and assault component to them and the incident may well involve more than one staff member.



The type of assault recorded varies and includes but is not limited to pushing, shoving, spitting, throwing objects and liquids, hitting, slapping, punching, striking, kicking and biting. At times, we see an escalation in the number of incidents often involving specific patients.

Year	Number of Physical Assault Incidents recorded against staff
2013	83
2014	116
2015	75
2016	104
2017	85
2018	69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>532</b>

I trust the information provided answers your questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Kemp".

Anne Kemp  
**General Manager Safety & Environment**  
**TARANAKI DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD**