

18 March 2022

Michael Horne

By email: fyi-request-18595-540c9e90@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202201615

Tēnā koe Michael,

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 18 February 2022. You specifically requested:

“What action(s) has the Ministry of Health undertaken from 31/12/21 to date, over and above New Zealand's regular DHB stock, to ensure there is an adequate supply of oxygen for patients requiring treatment due to COVID-19?”

The Ministry has substantially delivered a \$35 million programme to improve oxygen and air handling systems across twelve district health boards (DHBs) including Bay of Plenty, Canterbury, Capital and Coast, Counties Manukau, Hawke's Bay, Hutt Valley, Lakes, MidCentral, Northland, Tairāwhiti, Taranaki and Waitematā. This programme is nearing completion with the major benefits having been delivered. Please see below for further details.

Oxygen supply

- Oxygen supply and reticulation systems have been improved at 11 DHBs, improvements include various upgrades to oxygen bulk storage and distribution systems.
- A protocol for the emergency supply of bulk oxygen and compressed oxygen cylinders agreed with BOC Healthcare has been implemented.
- Emergency oxygen supply systems have been implemented as follows:
 - a. Portable bulk oxygen system has been constructed and tested. It is available for deployment anywhere in New Zealand, should it be required.
 - b. Storage locations and connection equipment to receive supplemental bulk oxygen supply if required have been installed at 4 DHBs where local storage volumes were potentially insufficient for a large COVID-19 surge.
 - c. A scalable oxygen supply system and storage location has been installed at Bay of Islands hospital to ensure sufficient oxygen for potential COVID-19 treatment demand.

Air handling systems

- Improved air handling systems have been implemented at 9 DHBs making for safer locations for oxygen treatment of COVID-19 patients.
- Finalisation works at 3 DHBs are continuing and nearing completion after accommodating impacts from Level 3 and 4 alerts, active hospital COVID-19 cases and isolation requirements.

I trust this fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases.

Nāku noa, nā



Jo Pugh
Acting Group Manager
COVID-19 Testing & Supply