

1 December 2014

Ruth Goss  
Email: [Fyi-request-2191-264fbf99@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:Fyi-request-2191-264fbf99@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: H201404287

Dear Ms Goss

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request of 20 November 2014 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for “a copy of any standards related to the length of time a woman with an abnormal cervical smear result will wait between acceptance of referral and her first specialist appointment.” You also asked us to “explain how this standard is monitored and any audit process related to this”.

Some of the information you requested is already in the public domain. The ‘National Cervical Screening Programme Policies and Standards Section 6: Providing a Colposcopy Service’ set out the timeframes required for first specialist appointments following an abnormal cervical smear. This information is available at [https://www.nsu.govt.nz/files/NCSP/ncsp\\_policies\\_and\\_standards\\_section\\_6\\_providing\\_a\\_colposcopy\\_service\\_june\\_2014.pdf](https://www.nsu.govt.nz/files/NCSP/ncsp_policies_and_standards_section_6_providing_a_colposcopy_service_june_2014.pdf). Please see Standard 602: Ensuring timeliness of colposcopic assessment on pages 10 and 11 of this document.

With regard to monitoring of this standard, National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP) monitoring reports are also publicly available at <https://www.nsu.govt.nz/health-professionals/1063.aspx>. Please see the links to the NCSP six-monthly monitoring reports on this page, and refer to the discussions for Indicator 7 (Colposcopy).

In addition to this formal monitoring of data:

- the Ministry of Health requires that all colposcopy clinics report all information about colposcopy appointments relating to cervical screening to the NCSP Register
- District Health Board (DHB) colposcopy clinics provide monthly monitoring reports to NCSP staff at the Ministry of Health the number of women waiting outside the standard waiting times for first specialist appointment and why

- the NCSP staff at the Ministry of Health actively work with DHB colposcopy clinics who are outliers in meeting timeliness standards to meet these timeframes
- the Ministry of Health also contracts independent auditors to undertake regular audits of DHB colposcopy clinics. The audits assess DHB compliance with all aspects of the 'National Cervical Screening Programme Policies and Standards Section 6: Providing a colposcopy service'. The next round of audits is due to begin in February 2015. Following the audits, the Ministry of Health works closely with the DHB clinics to ensure that any issues found are remedied.

I trust this information fulfils your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'M' followed by a horizontal line.

Michael Hundleby  
Acting National Director  
National Health Board