

20 February 2024

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Tēnā koe JS

Your request for Official information, reference: HN200035423

Thank you for your email on 4 January 2024, asking for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I request a summary of violent incidents at the Middlemore Hospital emergency department for 2023/24 as reported in the hospital risk management platform.

Can you please provide the monthly total number of reported incidents for each month from January 2022 until December 2023.

Response

A full summary of violent incidents in the Middlemore Hospital Emergency Department reported in the incident reporting system between January 2023 to February 2024 can be found in appendix 1. The redactions in this report are warranted under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of individuals, those being patients and staff.

Hospitals can be challenging environments, where patients are sometimes cognitively impaired, impacted by some form of substance or alcohol abuse, or coping with the initial impact of an acute injury. This can often affect their judgment and demeanour, resulting in unpredictable behaviour. We cannot prevent all of these issues from occurring but have robust processes in place to manage them – minimising the risk of harm to staff and preventing further escalation. For this reason, we have focussed our control measures on reducing the consequences by, for example, providing staff with personal alarms and appropriate training. Our security teams are in close proximity to our EDs and trained to help de-escalate incidents of aggression, if required.

Each month, around 94% to 98% of aggression incidents are deemed to be without intent, i.e. the aggressor is unaware of their actions, or the consequence of those actions, at the time of the incident. It is also important to recognise that, of all of the thousands of patients that we assess and treat each month, very few result in any violent interaction.

In addition, there has been a change in the way the hospital reports restraint incidents to align with the new Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standards (NZS 8134:2021) which came into effect in 2022. This change is evident from July 2022 onwards.

The table below provides a summary of the incident type and number of incidents reported monthly from January 2022 to December 2023 as requested.

Provisional, this data has not undergone the validation process that we use for published data. We recommend that caveats are consistently used, underscoring that the data is provisional; not validated through a formal validation process; and could be subject to change.

Please note: A breakdown by figures for such a small group of incidents could identify individuals. To avoid revealing sensitive information about potentially identifiable individuals in our data, all values between 1 and 5 are suppressed and represented as <5.

Specific Incident Type	Jan, 2022	Feb, 2022	Mar, 2022	Apr, 2022	May, 2022	Jun, 2022	Jul, 2022	Aug, 2022	Sep, 2022	Oct, 2022	Nov, 2022	Dec, 2022
assault - physical	0	0	<5	0	0	<5	0	<5	0	0	0	0
assault - verbal/gesture	0	0	0	<5	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
awol	0	0	0	0	<5	<5	<5	<5	0	<5	<5	<5
behaviour - aggressive/threatening	<5	<5	<5	0	0	<5	0	<5	6	0	0	<5
behaviour - inappropriate	<5	0	0	<5	0	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	0
Environmental Restraint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0
Personal Restraint	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	27	22	27	25	20
Physical Restraint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0
Seclusion WITH restraint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0
self harm - actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	<5	0	0
self harm - threatened	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0
suicide attempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0
unauthorised access/trespass	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
unauthorised activity	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0
unauthorised use of alcohol/drugs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0
	5	<5	<5	<5	<5	7	19	36	32	33	28	22

Specific Incident Type	Jan, 2023	Feb, 2023	Mar, 2023	Apr, 2023	May, 2023	Jun, 2023	Jul, 2023	Aug, 2023	Sep, 2023	Oct, 2023	Nov, 2023	Dec, 2023
assault - physical	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	<5	0	<5	0	<5
assault - verbal/gesture	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0
awol	0	<5	<5	0	0	0	<5	<5	0	<5	8	0
behaviour - aggressive/threatening	<5	<5	<5	0	<5	0	<5	0	<5	<5	5	5
behaviour - harassment	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0
behaviour - inappropriate	<5	<5	0	0	<5	<5	0	<5	0	<5	<5	<5
Combination of Physical and Personal Restraint	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personal Restraint	14	19	15	16	7	14	15	10	8	9	14	12
Physical Restraint	0	0	0	<5	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0
self harm - actual	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	0	<5	0
self harm - threatened	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0

unauthorised activity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5	0	<5
unauthorised use of alcohol/drugs	0	0	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	16	27	19	17	11	17	20	16	9	26	32	20

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nz.OIA@health.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Te Whatu Ora may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Nāku iti noa, nā

Dr Vanessa Thornton

Group Director of Operations

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand