



2 April 2026

Harwood Wilson
fyi-request-33806-f374cafa@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Harwood

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 23 February 2026 to the Office of Hon Matt Doocey, Minister for Mental Health and Associate Minister of Health. You requested:

*Based on your public statement of "Mental health nurse vacancies have halved since coming into Government, falling from almost 15% in 2023 to just over 7%"
Please provide the following information:*

- 1. What were the total number of mental health nurses immediately before you took office?*
- 2. What were the total number of mental health nurse vacancies immediately before you took office?*
- 3. What are the current total (February 2026) number of mental health nurses now?*
- 4. What are the total (February 2026) number of mental health nurse vacancies now?*

Information relevant to your request was recently released under the Act and made publicly available here: <https://fyi.org.nz/request/32941-mental-health-crisis-services-workforce-and-suicidology-2015-2025#incoming-135903:~:text=View%20as%20HTML-,Appendix%20One,-HNZ00105191%20Psychiatrists%20Psychiatric>.

Appendix One of the linked response contains a breakdown of FTE as at 30 June each year from 2020 to 2025 for psychiatric registrars, consultants, and mental health nurses with the primary areas of work being in Mental Health. This data is collated quarterly and is therefore only available at regular intervals, and not as at specific dates, as is requested.

The most recent data related to mental health nurses is available as at 30 September 2025, and provided in the table below:

Mental Health Nurses as at 30 Sept 25			
District	Contracted FTE	Vacant FTE	Vacancy rate
Auckland	276.9	3.0	1.1%
Bay of Plenty	134.4	14.5	9.7%
Canterbury	441.7	--	0.0%
Capital & Coast	536.1	89.1	14.3%
Counties Manukau	263.3	13.0	4.7%
Hawke's Bay	58.6	16.8	22.3%
Hutt Valley	--	--	--
Lakes	61.3	4.2	6.4%
MidCentral	120.0	--	0.0%
Nelson Marlborough	85.3	4.2	4.7%
Northland	136.8	14.8	9.7%
South Canterbury	36.3	5.7	13.6%
Southern	260.3	42.7	14.1%
Tairāwhiti	27.6	--	0.0%
Taranaki	69.5	10.7	13.3%
Waikato	302.5	13.8	4.4%
Wairarapa	--	--	--
Waitemata	476.9	29.5	5.8%
West Coast	25.8	--	0.0%
Whanganui	67.7	5.8	7.9%
Grand Total	3,381.0	267.9	7.3%

Please note that this data is provisional and used for operational purposes. It has not been through the full quality assurance process that Health New Zealand uses before publishing data and therefore is subject to change.

5. Has the minister received any communication in the past 12 months from organisations regarding funding? if so please provide copies of this.

I have interpreted your request to be for any communications relating to mental health funding from organisations received from 23 February 2025 to the date of your request.

The Minister's Office receives many items of correspondence and meeting requests each day. While some include funding requests, the Office does not keep a record where this is easily identifiable. Each piece of correspondence would therefore need to be individually reviewed to assess it. Accordingly, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James Watson-Black
Ministerial Advisor