

25 March 2026

Kai Ding

fyi-request-33927-xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx.org.nz

Tēnā koe Kai

Your request for official information, reference: HNZ00201361

Thank you for your email on 4 March 2026, asking Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA):

Historical ESPI data (ESPI 1, 2, 3, 5, 8) from January 2019 to present, broken down by District and Specialty — in the same CSV format as the current ESPI web tool (tewhatauora.shinyapps.io/ESPI_app/) but covering the full period rather than just the latest 12 months.

Response

For the sake of clarity, I will set out and address each ESPI in turn.

ESPI 1 – Acknowledgement and Processing of Referrals

This data measures the timeliness with which district services acknowledge and process referrals for a first specialist assessment (FSA). Under this measure, patients and their primary care practitioners should be advised within 15 calendar days whether an FSA is indicated and can be provided within four months. Where an FSA is not offered, information on alternative care options should be provided where relevant. ESPI 1 sets an expectation that more than 90 percent of all referrals are appropriately acknowledged and processed within this 15 day timeframe. Please see **Appendix One** for this information.

Please note the data provided within Appendix One covers the period up to the latest reporting month (December 2025).

Please also note that the data provided within this response is provisional and may be updated, as it has not yet undergone the full quality assurance process.

ESPI 2 – Patients Waiting Longer Than Four Months for a First Specialist Assessment

This data monitors the number of patients who wait longer than four months for their first specialist assessment (FSA). Under this measure, all patients who have been accepted for an FSA should be seen within four months of the date of referral. The intent of ESPI 2 is to ensure timely access to specialist care, with the goal of having no patients waiting more than four months for an FSA. Please see **Appendix Two** for this information.

Please note the data provided within Appendix Two covers the period up to the latest reporting month (December 2025). Counts between 1 and 4 have been withheld to protect the privacy of

natural persons under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA. This is represented in the appendix as '<5' in the relevant column.

It is important to note the data provided within this response is provisional and may be updated, as it has not yet undergone the full quality assurance process.

ESPI 3 – Patients Above the Actual Treatment Threshold Without a Commitment to Treatment

This data measures the number of patients who have a priority score higher than the actual treatment threshold (aTT) but who have not yet received a commitment to treatment. Services use historical treatment patterns to estimate the volume of patients they can treat within four months, assuming resources and patient mix remain consistent. Patients with the highest clinical priority, determined by a numerical scoring system, should be committed to treatment first. The actual treatment threshold is calculated as the 10th centile priority score of all patients treated in the previous 12 months, acknowledging that services may occasionally treat patients with lower priority scores. In principle, services should be able to treat all patients whose priority score is above this threshold. ESPI 3 therefore monitors any patients above the aTT who are still waiting without a treatment commitment, with the goal of having no patients in this category. Please see **Appendix Three** for this information.

Please note the data provided within Appendix Three covers the period up to the latest reporting month (December 2025). Counts between 1 and 4 have been withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA. This is represented in the appendix as '<5' in the relevant column.

Please also note that the data provided within this response is provisional and may be updated, as it has not yet undergone the full quality assurance process.

ESPI 5 – Patients Given a Commitment to Treatment but Not Treated Within Four Months

This data measures the number of patients who have received a commitment to treatment but have not been treated within four months of that commitment being made. Under this measure, once a service has confirmed that treatment will be provided, the patient should receive that treatment within the four month timeframe. The goal of ESPI 5 is to ensure that no patients with a confirmed commitment to treatment remain untreated beyond four months. Please see **Appendix Four** for this information.

Please note the data provided within Appendix Four covers the period up to the latest signed off reporting month (December 2025). Counts between 1 and 4 have been withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA. This is represented in the appendix as '<5' in the relevant column.

In addition, please note that the data provided within this response is provisional and may be updated, as it has not yet undergone the full quality assurance process.

ESPI 8 – Proportion of Patients Prioritised Using Nationally Recognised Tools

This data measures the proportion of patients who were prioritised for treatment using nationally recognised processes or tools. A range of prioritisation tools is available to support clinicians in assigning priority scores to patients. Tools that meet specified criteria are registered within the national information system as national or nationally recognised tools. This indicator reports the percentage of patients whose prioritisation was completed using one of these approved tools. The goal for ESPI 8 is for all patients to be prioritised using nationally recognised processes or tools. Please see **Appendix Five** for this information.

Please note the data provided within Appendix Five covers the period up to the latest signed off reporting month (December 2025). Counts between 1 and 4 have been withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA. This is represented in the appendix as '<5' in the relevant column. In addition, the data provided within this response is provisional and may be updated, as it has not yet undergone the full quality assurance process.

Collectively, these indicators provide an overview of how specialist services acknowledge referrals, assess patients, allocate treatment priority, and deliver care within expected timeframes. The attached appendices present the relevant data for each ESPI, noting the applicable definitions, expectations, and measurement approaches. The associated datasets are provisional, subject to change, and includes suppression (withheld under section 9(2)(a)) where required to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Where we have withheld information under section 9 of the OIA, we have also considered any countervailing public interests in the release of this information. We do not believe that the public interests outweigh the need to withhold in this instance.

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nzOIA@tewhatuora.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.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Danielle Coe

Manager (OIAs), Government Services