

21 December 2018

Thank you for your request dated 10 December 2018 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982, regarding Pagers. You requested:

“We understand that some DHBs still use pager systems – “beepers” – for medical staff. We would like to know how widely these are used in New Zealand’s public health system. We therefore request the following information:

- 1. the number of pagers used and owned by the DHB, and what these are used for (including how regularly they are used); and*
- 2. any advice, analysis or planning documents in the last 12 months about phasing out pagers by upgrading to more modern communications systems; and*
- 3. any advice, or analysis in the last 12 months about the reliability of the DHB’s paging systems.*

The information pertaining to your request is below.

Question 1:

“The number of pagers used and owned by the DHB, and what these are used for (including how regularly they are used).”

The total number of pages currently in use is 339 (see table below). All of the pagers are used every day. On Call Doctors pagers are used 24/7. All of our emergency calls – Cardiac Arrest, MET, Neonatal, Obstetric, Paediatrics, Maternity, Emergency move to Theatre, ED Trauma, Urgent Stroke and other messages are sent via the paging system.

Resident Medical Officers (Doctors)	107
Senior Medical Officers (Doctors)	12
On Call Doctors	10
Ward Coordinators	10
Pharmacists	12
Dietitians	4
Diabetes	10
Social Work	9
Physio/Speech Therapy	37
Orderlies	5
Laboratory	6
Theatre HCA’s	10
Other	107

Question 2:

“Any advice, analysis or planning documents in the last 12 months about phasing out pagers by upgrading to more modern communications systems”

Work is currently underway to understand the requirements and to find a technical solution to either upgrade the in-house paging solution or to replace it with a smartphone based solution. This work has only recently commenced and has yet to produce any documented analysis or plans.

Question 3:

“Any advice, or analysis in the last 12 months about the reliability of the DHB’s paging systems.”

Our ICT Department has not received or developed any advice or analysis about the reliability of the paging system in the last 12 months, and we cannot find any incidents recorded in our systems of outages or disruptions.