22 April 2022

**Subject: Official Information Act request re: Covid admissions**

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act transferred from the Ministry of Health to Lakes DHB on 22 March 2022. You have asked:

*Please indicate what is your exact procedure for determining that hospital admissions in this current time are in fact directly due to covid.*

*Ie: are u testing people who are admitting themselves for something non respiratory related and if they test positive after admission for sars cov 2 are you listing it as a covid admission regardless*

*Ie: people who are admitted for something respiratory related that is later diagnosed as not sars cov 2, are you indicating them as covid hospitalizations if they return a positive test during admission.*

The Lakes DHB response is:

All Coronavirus disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus is captured in individual clinical records as Lakes DHB does not differentiate between 'with COVID' and 'because of COVID' in our reporting of numbers to the Ministry of Health. All admitted patients into the hospital are tested for COVID-19, initially with a rapid antigen test (RAT) and if positive this is confirmed with a PCR test. If the test is positive they are added to the total reported to the Ministry of Health each day as having COVID. This includes patients in ICU for non-COVID reasons then later tested positive for COVID.

For clarity, there may be no contribution of COVID to the reason for the admission. For instance, a 'COVID admission' includes someone with COVID-19 who was hospitalised due to a car accident; or when someone who is very ill with an existing health condition is admitted to hospital for that condition and is also found to be known to have COVID-19. All admitting patients go through a medical assessment that considers all new symptoms and existing medical conditions.

So the answer to the two examples you mentioned above would both be yes.