TE WAIORA Nelson Marlborough Health

DHB Office
Braemar Campus

Private Bag 18
Nelson, New Zealand

Phone: 03 546 1723

25 July 2019

[redacted]

Response to a request for official information

[redacted]

Thank you for your request for official information received 17 June 2019 by Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH)[1], followed by the necessary extension of time 12 July 2019, where you seek information on the use of CBD and other cannabinoid products (THC):

1. ***Any NMDHB policies or other guidance on prescription and use of CBD products and other cannabinoids including the circumstances when DHB staff will (or will not) support these products for patients.***

NMH does not have a specific policy on prescription and use of CBD or THC products, and is guided by the Ministry of Health (MOH) direction (link below) and also PHARMAC restrictions.

DHB's are required by law to adhere to PHARMAC's rules and the Pharmaceutical Schedules (link below). Currently PHARMAC does not permit the commencement or supply of CBD or THC products for patients receiving hospital care, except where self-funding patients are using their own legally acquired product and where this is considered clinically relevant and safe to use.

- MOH website: https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/regulation-health-and-disability-system/medicines-control/medicinal-cannabis/cbd-products
- PHARMAC website: https://www.pharmac.govt.nz/tools-resources/pharmaceutical-schedule/

2. ***Who in the hospital system is authorised to do this.***

The DHB undertakes to ensure safe prescribing and good professional practice by all staff entitled to write prescriptions, and fulfilment of all legal requirements concerning prescriptions. Medicines are not ordinary items of commerce and DHB prescribers must not be required nor coerced to prescribe any medicine against their better judgement. Prescribing medicine is a professional responsibility.

Like any other prescribers, DHB prescribers, should they see fit, may prescribe (unfunded) cannabinoids to outpatients or at discharge in accordance with the relevant legislation and MOH requirements.

[1] Nelson Marlborough District Health Board

3. ***Please also advise what training has been made available to NMDHB staff about the use of cannabinoids for helping to manage different autoimmune, nervous system, pain and or other acute or chronic disorders.***

No specific training is currently available to staff apart from what they may access themselves, or via the relevant professional association.

This response has been provided under the Official Information Act 1982. You have the right to seek an investigation by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or free phone 0800 802 602.

If you have any questions about this decision please feel free to email our OIA Coordinator OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz.

I trust that this information meets your requirements. NMH, like other agencies across the state sector, supports the open disclosure of information to assist the public's understanding of how we are delivering publicly-funded healthcare.

This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

If you feel that there are good reasons why your response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely

PP (Dave Kinsey)

Dr Peter Bramley
Chief Executive

cc: Ministry of Health via email: SectorOIAs@moh.govt.nz