



17 December 2021



Dear 

**Re: OIA request – Emergency Q services provided in emergency departments**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received as a transfer from the Ministry of health on 1 December seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the services and costs associated with the Emergency Q app.

Before responding to your specific questions, it may be useful to provide some context about our services.

Waitematā is the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,600 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing care to our own resident population, we are the Northern Region provider of forensic mental health services and child rehabilitation services, plus the metro Auckland provider of child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

- 1. How much money has been spent on Emergency Q services over the past five years (DHB and yearly breakdown)**
- 2. What is the average cost of each Emergency Q fee?**

We have provided a combined response to questions 1 and 2. Emergency Q is an app which is used in our emergency departments (EDs) at North Shore and Waitakere hospitals to forecast wait plus treatment times for non-emergency patients and the comparable wait times at local urgent care clinics. Non-emergency patients are those whose injuries or illnesses fall within triage categories four or five. These patients can choose to receive a voucher which allows them to be directed from an ED to local urgent care clinic, thereby freeing up resources for more acute emergency patients. The cost of the voucher system is not included in the Emergency Q contract.

We are withholding the information relating to the Emergency Q contract under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Official Information Act on the grounds that the information is commercially sensitive for Emergency Q's vendors and making it available would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of Emergency Q's vendors.

We have considered whether the public interest in making the information available to you outweighs the need to protect the commercial position of Emergency Q but have concluded that it

does not. Emergency Q is a commercial product and has contracts with a number of parties. It is likely to negotiate further contracts in the future. Disclosing the amount we have contracted to pay Emergency Q is highly likely to impact Emergency Q's commercial position by affecting Emergency Q's ability to negotiate price and terms with other parties.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to seek a review is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

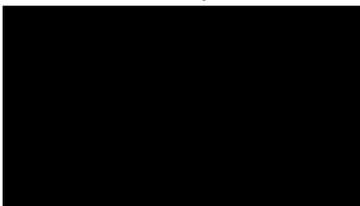
### **3. What impact has Emergency Q had on DHB services?**

While we do not record data on the number of patients who are assessed at the nearby urgent care clinics after viewing the comparable wait times on the Emergency Q system, we can provide the number of patients who received a 'voucher'. Please note that not all vouchers were issued as a result of Emergency Q as some were issued directly by triage staff when they recognised that the patients' issues fell into triage categories four or five and could be more efficiently treated at the local urgent clinics.

Over the last five years, we have had 625,071 presentations to our EDs and 48,372 patients were discharged with a voucher.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely



**Executive Director Hospital Services  
Waitematā District Health Board**