



12 February 2021

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

**Re: OIA request – Equipment sterilisation**

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 20 January 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the sterilisation of equipment.

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 8,500 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing services to our own population, we are also the metropolitan Auckland provider of forensic psychiatry, child disability services, child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

You requested the following information:

**I would like a detailed breakdown of any and all incidents relating to equipment not being properly sterilised by the District Health Board from March 2020.**

**Please clarify if the lack of sterilisation was picked up before or after patient exposure.**

**And I ask that anything within the spirit of this request that is not mentioned be included in the response.**

Our incident monitoring system has identified the following six events of potential inadequate sterilisation. All of these incidents were identified and addressed **prior** to any patient exposure. The proactive re-sterilising of this equipment ensured the prevention of any harm or risk to our patients.

**Sterilisation/disinfection incidents detected prior to use / patient exposure**

Date	Details	Comment
It should be noted that all sterile items are quality-checked before leaving Central Sterile Services Department (CSSD) and checked again by theatre staff before use on patients.		
29.6.2020	Endoscopic image transducer - hole in sterilization wrap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSSD performs quality checks on all packs before release to end-user.</li> <li>• Theatre staff performs quality checks on packs before use in theatre.</li> </ul>

Date	Details	Comment
1.7.2020	Invasive loan set containing implants – found with 2.5cm long cut in the sterilization wrap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any items found to have holes or tears are removed from the operating theatre and returned to CSSD for reprocessing.</li> <li>The set was processed via immediate use steam sterilization (IUSS).</li> <li>Waitematā DHB has a robust policy regarding the requirements for IUSS process.</li> </ul>
17.7.2020	Laparoscopic bulldog applier and clip set - cut on packaging material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any items found to have holes or tears are removed from the operating theatre and returned to CSSD for reprocessing.</li> <li>Education scheduled for staff handling sterile equipment.</li> <li>Items processed via IUSS have been risk-assessed based on requirements of surgery and surgeon.</li> </ul>
12.8.2020	Nuvasive loan set - cuts along edge of tray.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any items found to have holes or tears are removed from the operating theatre and returned to CSSD for reprocessing.</li> <li>Theatre requested the set be reprocessed urgently via IUSS, following Waitematā DHB policy.</li> </ul>
10.11.2020	BHR Jig set – bone debris found on reamer upon opening (prior to use).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The set was removed from the operating theatre and returned to CSSD for reprocessing.</li> <li>Further education provided for technicians to minimise the risk of re-occurrence.</li> <li>Company representative provided specific education on this particular set.</li> <li>Extra task light/magnifiers have been installed in the inspection and packing area of CSSD.</li> </ul>
25.11.2020	Bougie 32 gauges required for three laparoscopic bypasses only one available (used to perform dilatation of strictures).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As full processing requires four hours, the item was sterilised in theatre using Tristel sporicidal wipes*.</li> <li>Two additional Bougies have since been purchased for the Elective Surgery Centre (ESC) and a further two purchased for North Shore Hospital.</li> </ul>

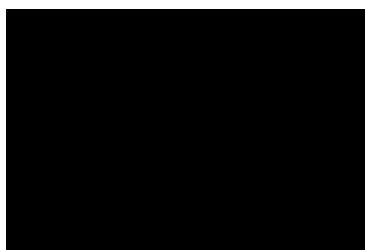
\* The Tristel Trio Wipes System is a classified medical device in-line with Australasian hospital standards.

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community 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 consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely



**Chief Medical Officer  
Waitematā District Health Board**