



Waitematā

District Health Board

Best Care for Everyone

Provider Healthcare Services

North Shore Hospital Campus

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[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: OIA request – Long-term storage of human tissue

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 29 August 2020 seeking information from Waitematā DHB about the long-term storage of human tissue.

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

Waitematā DHB serves a population of more than 630,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas, the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country. 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.

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

I am requesting a list of documents, guidelines, protocols, best practice documents, etc., which inform your DHB as to the appropriate building facilities for the long-term storage of human tissue which your laboratory must meet in order to maintain IANZ accreditation and be in compliance with NPAAC and ISO standards/guidelines/requirements. This would include who has access to the tissue. The specific building requirements for tissue and temperature/humidity control. Specifications in regards to mitigation of loss do to fire, flood or power outages, etc. The more detailed the better. If you have a check list, which is supplied by one of the accreditation boards, that would be brilliant!

Waitematā DHB's Surgical Pathology department follows the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council (NPAAC) *Requirements for the retention of laboratory records and diagnostic material (7th Edition 2018)* which states, "Specimens must be stored under appropriate conditions that permit reliable retrieval." Both formalin-fixed paraffin-embedded FFPE blocks and mounted slides are stored at ambient temperatures in a secure archival room. There are no specific temperature requirements for the storage of such materials and there are no specifications with regards to mitigating loss of archival tissue.

As IANZ is our accrediting body, you may wish to contact them for more information about temperature requirements.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Mark Shepherd
Director Provider Healthcare Services
Waitematā District Health Board