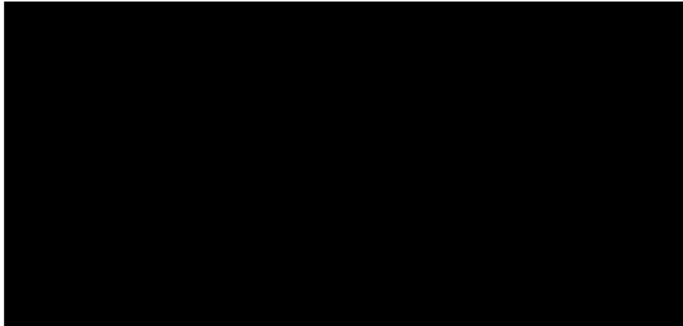


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Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 19 June 2019, for:

1. *“The total number of girls aged 11 or 12 who presented to hospital with temporary blindness in the last five years, categorised by age and year;”*
2. *The total number of girls aged 11 or 12 who were diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in the last five years, categorised by age and year;*
3. *Any report, briefing document, investigation, notes, email or other document held by the DHB related to the above. This includes, but is not limited to, any document that elaborates on their condition or any wider investigation or inquiry looking into their condition.*
4. *Any other information that falls within the spirit of this request, which is not specifically mentioned above.”*

The Ministry holds data regarding hospital admissions, and the reason for the admission. This data is coded using the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD). This coding is dependent on the clinician’s documentation of the condition. The data is coded according to the condition the patient has, rather than the symptoms they present with.

If the clinician documented transient blindness, this would be coded to *subjective visual disturbances* (ICD-10-AM-VIII code H53.1), and chronic fatigue syndrome is coded to *postviral fatigue syndrome* (ICD-10-AM-VIII code G93.3).

During the financial years 2013/14 to 2017/18, there were no publicly funded hospital discharges of girls aged 11 or 12 at admission where *subjective visual disturbances* was recorded as the primary diagnosis.

During the same period, there were five publicly funded hospital discharges of girls aged 11 or 12 at admission where *postviral fatigue syndrome* was recorded as the primary diagnosis. These are shown in the table overleaf.

Hospital discharges of girls aged 11 or 12 at admission where primary diagnosis is recorded as *postviral fatigue syndrome*.

Year	Age 11	Age 12
2013/14	1	0
2014/15	0	2
2015/16	1	0
2016/17	1	0
2017/18	0	0

The Ministry has not identified any documents on the subject of temporary blindness or chronic fatigue syndrome. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act. I understand you have also made this request to several district health boards (DHBs) and as such this request has not been transferred from the Ministry to the DHBs.

Information regarding the specific patients recorded in the above table will be held by the relevant DHBs, however this information would be withheld in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons and as such this part of your request has also not been transferred from the Ministry to the DHBs.

More information regarding chronic fatigue syndrome is available on the Health Navigator website here: <https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/c/chronic-fatigue-syndrome/>.

I trust that this information fulfils your request. Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry of Health website (if applicable).

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Yours sincerely



Shayne Hunter
Deputy Director-General
Data and Digital