

Statement from Te Whatu Ora chief executive Margie Apa

17 October 2022

Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand fully acknowledges the grief of this whanau at the loss of their loved one.

Our team at Counties Manukau have been working to support the family, and we recognise the distress they will have experienced.

Although the reports released today indicate that a likely outcome would not have been different with earlier triage in this very sad case, we also recognise the broader issues raised in the emergency department review.

The experience of patients in emergency departments at times of high demand is challenging for both patients and staff – Middlemore is one of many emergency departments which have raised concerns about the impact of constrained resources at peak times. Te Whatu Ora is nationally reviewing the learnings from winter to inform areas of priority ahead of next winter and actions that can better support our staff and prepare services for winter next year.

Pressures across the national system this winter have been well recognised and have had to be carefully managed. One of the ongoing priorities for Te Whatu Ora is identifying how system improvement in the new health structure can help manage these pressures in future.

Any lessons or improvements identified at Middlemore will be shared by the wider system, and our Executive Leadership Team also has a body of work underway to consider ED capacity and pressure points nationally. We will use this work to plan and prepare for future pressures.

Again, Te Whatu Ora acknowledges this family's very sad loss.