



## **Two gynaecologist/obstetricians and Whanganui DHB breached Code in care of woman's vaginal prolapse and urinary incontinence**

**20HDC00999**

The Deputy Health and Disability Commissioner has recommended two gynaecologist/obstetricians apologise to a woman for breaching her rights to be fully informed, make an informed choice, and have access to services of an appropriate standard.

Rose Wall found, between them, the specialists and Whanganui District Health Board (now Te Whatu Ora Whanganui) breached Rights 6, 7 and 4 of the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights](#).

The breaches centre on the care a woman received for management of urinary stress incontinence and a vaginal prolapse at Whanganui Hospital between 2015 to 2018.

Ms Rose Wall said, in her decision released today, that given Te Whatu Ora Whanganui had already made several changes since the events, and apologised to the woman, no further recommendations are required.

Ms Wall highlighted the broader system changes that have been made since the woman's experience with surgical mesh. She said the attention given to ensuring the appropriate safeguards are in place is extremely important in light of the significant complications some women have experienced following mesh surgery.

She also added that HDC fully supports the recent decision taken by the Director General of Health to instigate a temporary pause on the use of surgical mesh as treatment for urinary incontinence, adding that this decision was made with the intention of preventing further mesh harm while quality measures are being implemented.

Ms Wall will provide a copy of the decision to the Medical Council of New Zealand, Manatū Hauora Ministry of Health, the Chair of the Surgical Mesh Round Table, Te Tāhū Hauora Health Quality & Safety Commission, ACC, and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, to further highlight systemic learnings.

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Health and disability service users can now access an [online animation](#) to help them understand their health and disability service rights under the Code.

***Editor's notes***

The full report of this case will be available on HDC's [website](#). Names have been removed from the report to protect privacy of the individuals involved in this case.

The Commissioner will usually name providers and public hospitals found in breach of the Code, unless it would not be in the public interest, or would unfairly compromise the privacy interests of an individual provider or a consumer.

More information for the media, including HDC's naming policy and why we don't comment on complaints, can be found on our website [here](#).

HDC promotes and protects the rights of people using health and disability services as set out in the [Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights](#) (the Code).

In 2021/22 HDC made 402 recommendations for quality improvement and providers complied with 98% of those recommendation.

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