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19 January 2021

[REDACTED]
By email: [REDACTED]
Ref: H202008610

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 1 December 2020 for information regarding vaccines.

Information in response to each part of your request is outlined below.

Could you please tell me what vaccine manufacturers has the NZ government invested money in?

The Government doesn't invest in vaccine manufacturers, it buys vaccines (and other pharmaceuticals) from manufacturers. Generally, PHARMAC negotiates with manufacturers to buy vaccines on the National Immunisation Schedule, although the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) is undertaking this role with respect to COVID-19 vaccines in development.

You can find out more about the vaccines on the National Immunisation Schedule at www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/immunisation/new-zealand-immunisation-schedule - manufacturers for the current schedule include GSK, Merck and Seqirus.

Information regarding manufacturers of the COVID-19 vaccine can be found at: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/science-and-innovation/international-opportunities/covid-19-vaccine-strategy/> and www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-response-planning/covid-19-vaccine-planning#purchase.

Are such manufacturers immune to liability in case negative side effects occur later down line?

In case of vaccine related injuries, who will be held accountable please and who will cover the health related cost?

In New Zealand, all injuries, including vaccine-related injuries, are covered by the Accident Compensation Corporation. There is more information about the Corporation's work at: www.acc.co.nz/about-us/who-we-are/what-we-do/#help-when-youre-injured-in-an-accident.

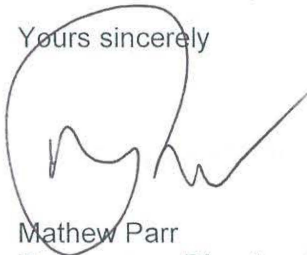
Other rules are in place to ensure that vaccines and other medicines are safe and effective – this includes Medsafe's work as the authority responsible for the regulation of therapeutic products in New Zealand. Medsafe decides whether a product such as a vaccine is safe and effective enough to be approved for use in New Zealand and can prosecute manufacturers if they are in breach of the Medicines Act 1981. To find out more about how they do this, see www.medsafe.govt.nz/Consumers/Safety-of-Medicines/Vaccine-safety.asp.

For further information you may wish to contact PHARMAC or MBIE.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mathew Parr', written over the words 'Yours sincerely'.

Mathew Parr
Programme Director, COVID-19 Immunisation
COVID-19 Health System Response