

14/12/2020

By email: [REDACTED]
Ref: H202007921

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 23 October 2020 for information on medicinal cannabis prescriptions.

In your request you stated that you are interested in “publicly available information during the calendar year 2020, preferably broken down into monthly periods, pertaining to medicinal cannabis prescriptions nationwide”.

Under the Act please find a response to each part of request below.

‘Number of medicinal cannabis prescriptions issued each month in New Zealand since 1 January 2020’.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the information requested is not supplied to or held by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) and we have no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department, interdepartmental venture, Minister of the Crown, organisation, or by a local authority.

‘The number of packs of cannabidiol (CBD) and THC containing products notified to Medsafe as having been supplied under the exemption provisions in section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981 since 1 April 2020’.

We have interpreted your request as the number of packs of cannabidiol (CBD) and/or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) supplied by month between 1 April 2020 and 23 October 2020, the date of your request. Please note as this information is supplied retrospectively in the month following supply, the information supplied is accurate as at the time of your request.

Total Number of packs of CBD and/or THC products reported to Medsafe as having been supplied under the provisions of s29 of the Medicines Act 1981

Month 2020	April	May	June	July	August	September
Number of packs supplied	1276	1409	2049	2008	1812	2387

'Number of different 'medicinal cannabis' products prescribed each month since 1 January 2020'.

Information on the number of different 'medicinal cannabis' products prescribed each month is not held by the Ministry. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act. However, we can provide the number of different CBD and/or THC containing products reported to Medsafe as having been supplied under the exemption provisions in section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981. This information is supplied in the table below.

Total Number of different products containing CBD and/or THC reported to Medsafe as having been supplied under the provisions of s29 of the Medicines Act 1981

Month 2020	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
Number of different products supplied	11	9	15	13	20	21	20	17	16

'Location where medicinal cannabis prescriptions were issued – eg town, city, district, region'.

This request is refused under section 18(g)(i) as this information is not supplied to and held by the Ministry of Health.

'Medicinal cannabis product brand prescribed and product format – eg Sativex Oral Spray'.

This part of your request withheld under section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the Act to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

'Patient's named health condition medicinal cannabis was prescribed for – eg chronic pain'.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) as this information is not supplied to and held by the Ministry of Health.

'Monetary cost to patients for each medicinal cannabis prescription'.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) as this information is not supplied to and held by the Ministry of Health.

'Names of medical prescriber, medical practice, and/or dispensing pharmacy and practice/business addresses'.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) as this information is not supplied to and held by the Ministry. The information is also withheld under section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons and section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act as the withholding of the information

is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

'Copies of all other Ministry of Health responses to OIA requests about medicinal cannabis prescriptions since 1 April 2020'.

This part of your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Act as they information requested is or will soon be publicly available on both the Medsafe and the Ministry of Health websites. This information can be found at the following links:

www.medsafe.govt.nz/publications/OIAContents.asp.

www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

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.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely



Chris James
Licensing Authority
Medicinal Cannabis Agency