

22 September 2021

s 9(2)(a)

Ref: H202110912

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Clarification of response to your recent request for official information

On 10 September 2021 the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) responded to your information request regarding Pfizer Vaccine studies of COVID-19 transmission. It has since come to my attention that this response lacked clarity.

You specifically asked for:

“copies of all Pfizer Vaccine studies and Pfizer Vaccine trials that relate to the demonstration of the efficacy of the vaccine in reducing the transmission of Covid-19 in the community.”

The Ministry refused your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Official Information Act, as initial trials of the Pfizer vaccine did not measure efficacy against transmission.

However, it is important to note that subsequent studies carried out by other researchers (independent of Pfizer) have evaluated the effect of vaccination on transmission of the virus. Preliminary results from these studies have shown that two doses of the Pfizer vaccine can substantially reduce transmission of the virus. Details of these studies were not included in the Ministry's response of 10 September 2021 as your information request was interpreted as asking specifically for studies conducted by Pfizer on this topic.

Further information, with links to the relevant studies, can be found on the Ministry's website: https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/science_updates_7_may_2021.pdf.

More data are required to understand the extent of the effect that vaccination has on transmission of the Delta variant. A summary of currently available data can be found on the US CDC science brief page:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/fully-vaccinated-people.html>.

I have chosen to proactively clarify the Ministry's response of 10 September 2021 as it has been brought to the Ministry's attention that the original response has been shared online and is now being used to spread misinformation about COVID-19 vaccination. As part of the Ministry's commitment to providing clear and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccination, I feel it is important to clarify any potential misunderstanding of the initial response by providing you with this additional information. I hope that you will consider sharing this clarification letter with any person or website with whom you may have shared the initial response.

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.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'N' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Nick Allan
Manager OIA Services
Office of the Director-General