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1 July 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H202207348

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 2 June 2022 for information about prescriptions. Specifically, you asked for information:

“...regarding the dispensing of prescriptions during February 2022, and how many were fully subsidised

I’m referring only to prescriptions that were first dispensed during February 2022, where this means that the dispensing was not of repeats of a prescription that were dispensed first on any day before February 2022.

The total quantity dispensed of a prescription should be taken to include all repeats, whether these were dispensed or not. If the dispensing of repeats is still pending, this shall be the total that will be dispensed for the prescription.

For all prescriptions where the prescription was dispensed for the first time in February 2022

1. How many prescriptions were dispensed?

2. How many were prescribed for six months’ supply?

3. Of those prescribed six months’ supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 180 days’ supply?

3a. Of those prescriptions in question 3, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for the entire supply?

4. Of those prescribed six months’ supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 24 weeks or 168 days’ supply?

4a. Of those prescriptions in question 4, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for the entire supply?

5. How many were prescribed for three months’ supply?

6. Of those prescribed three months’ supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 90 days’ supply?

6a. Of those prescriptions in question 6, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for the entire supply?

7. Of those prescribed three months’ supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 89 days’ supply?

7a. Of those prescriptions in question 7, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for

the entire supply?

8. Of those prescribed three months' supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 12 weeks or 84 days' supply?

8a. Of those prescriptions in question 8, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for the entire supply?

9. Of those prescribed three months' supply, how many were (or will be) dispensed with a total of 13 weeks' supply?

9a. of those prescriptions in question 9, how many were (or will be) subsidised fully for the entire supply?

On 13 June 2022, you were contacted by the Ministry informing you that much of the data in your request is not held in the requested format and as such may be refused under section 18(g) of the Act. We suggested that you refer your request as a direct data request to the Ministry's data team, who could work with you to refine your requirements and create new analytical output. This would mean your request would be taken out of the standard OIA process, as new information is not required to be created and provided under the Act. This analytical output also would require a longer turnaround time than a standard OIA. You responded that you would like your request to remain within the OIA process. As such, we have provided the data already available below.

Please find our response to part 1 of your request.

Table 1: A count of publicly-funded initial pharmaceutical dispensings for February 2022.

	1-28 February 2022
Count of initial dispensings	3,825,133

Please note the below when considering this data:

- Administrative, bulk dispensing and supply order data has been excluded.
- This data is extracted from the Pharmaceutical Collection, which is a live dataset, whilst the Pharmaceutical Data Web Tool (www.health.govt.nz/publication/pharmaceutical-data-web-tool) is a static extract. Comparing the two extracts may result in different figures.
- The Pharmaceutical Collection only counts publicly-funded, community-dispensed pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Cancer Treatments (PCT); It does not count non-PCT hospital dispensings, drugs not funded by Pharmac, or prescriptions that were never dispensed.
- Although the Ministry has reviewed the provisional data presented here, this data could have unexpected errors that may be picked up through the rigorous data quality checks publication datasets undergo. As a result, published data may differ from the provisional data presented here. Published data should be considered the most accurate source and used where possible.

Regarding parts 2 to 9a of your request, as noted by the Ministry on 13 June 2022, the data you have requested is not held in this form and would have to be created. While the Act allows New Zealanders to ask for information from Ministers and government agencies, there is no requirement for agencies to create new information or compile information they do not hold. As such these parts of your request are refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds for believing it is connected more closely with the functions with another agency subject to the Act.

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 of Health website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line.

Gaynor Bradfield
**Manager, Office of the Deputy Director-General
Data and Digital**