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9 November 2022

§ 9(2)(a)

By email: § 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2022014698

Tēnā koe § 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 13 October 2022 for information regarding assisted dying services. I will respond to each part of your request below.

- 1. How many West Coast residents have sought assisted dying to end their lives since the service became available last November?*
- 2. How many requests were approved?*
- 3. How many of those approvals were actioned?*

Due to the small number of assisted deaths in this area of New Zealand, the information you have requested above is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased natural persons. I have considered the countervailing public interest in releasing information and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

- 4. How many West Coast medical practitioners provide an assisted dying service?*

Please refer to the Manatū Hauora website for a high-level overview of this information for the Southern region: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/life-stages/assisted-dying-service/assisted-dying-service-data-and-reporting. Due to privacy reasons, we are unable to provide a further breakdown of this information for the West Coast region specifically therefore this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

- 5. If the West Coast has no assisted dying medical practitioners, do patients have to travel for the service or will a practitioner from elsewhere travel to the Coast?*

If a person wishes to access assisted dying services and a practitioner is not available in their area, an approved practitioner will travel to their location.

- 6. If the latter, where have those practitioners come from to date?*

Practitioners may be sourced from anywhere in New Zealand to provide assisted dying services. Practitioners' availability will vary depending on how busy they are with other duties. We try to access practitioners as close in location to the person requesting the service as possible.

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 Manatū Hauora website at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests>.

Nāku noa, nā



Ruihua Gu
Acting Group Manager, Quality Assurance and Safety
Regulatory Services | Te Pou Whakariterite Ratonga