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24 June 2025

s 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2025067350

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) which was transferred from the Office of the Minister of Health, Hon Simeon Brown, to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 28 May 2025 for information regarding conception rates and COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty). You requested:

Has the MoH:

- *Studied the health outcomes of those cohorts in New Zealand?*
- *If so, what were their findings?*
- *If not, why not, and will you be instructing them to do so?*
- *Isn't this a good time to withdraw the use of Comirnaty in those women?*
- *reviewed the pre-print paper?*

The Public Health Agency within the Ministry of Health has not undertaken research into conception rates or undertaken a review of the pre-print paper you reference. The Act does not require agencies to develop new information or answer hypothetical questions as proposed by your third and fourth bullet points. Therefore, these parts of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as this information is not held by the Ministry, and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

Pharmac is the government agency that decides which vaccines are publicly funded and who is eligible for them, supported by expert technical advice. Vaccines are approved for distribution by Medsafe, the New Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority. The pharmaceutical company is responsible for the safety and efficacy of any medicines including vaccines which they market in New Zealand.

The company marketing Comirnaty vaccine states that there is limited experience with the use of Comirnaty in pregnancy and this vaccine should only be used when the potential benefits outweigh the risks for mother and foetus.

The following resources may be of interest to you:

- The Immunisation Advisory Centre has published up to date guidance on the risks and benefits of vaccination against COVID-19 in pregnancy: www.immune.org.nz/factsheets/comirnaty-covid-19-and-covid-19-vaccination-in-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding
- Published statistics on births in New Zealand show very small changes in fertility rates and the number of children born each year, before and after the pandemic and vaccination response: www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/births-and-deaths-year-ended-december-2024-including-abridged-period-life-table/.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

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.

Nāku noa, nā



Clare Possenniskie
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Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui