

19 AUG 2019

Ref: H201906333

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 10 July 2019 for:

*"Can you please provide me with the following information for each year from 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018:*

1. *Live birth numbers for all babies in New Zealand in the following age bands (<15, 15 - 19, 20 - 24, 25 - 29, 30 - 34, 35 - 39, 40 - 44, 45+, per year*
2. *Live birth numbers for all babies with Down syndrome in New Zealand, per year*
3. *Number of selective terminations for unborn children with Down syndrome, per year*
4. *Number of pregnancies with screening for Down syndrome, per year*
5. *Number of pregnancies with diagnostic testing for Down syndrome, per year"*

Information held by the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) pertaining to your request is outlined below.

*1. Live birth numbers for all babies in New Zealand in the following age bands (<15, 15 - 19, 20 - 24, 25 - 29, 30 - 34, 35 - 39, 40 - 44, 45+, per year*

The table below outlines the live births data broken down by age of mother between 2015 and 2017. Please note that data for 2018 is not yet available.

Year	<20 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-34 years	35+	Total
2015	2,977	10,795	16,661	18,793	12,896	62,122
2016	2,559	9,934	16,664	18,720	12,559	60,436
2017	2,715	9,907	17,254	18,757	11,822	60,455

*2. Live birth numbers for all babies with Down syndrome in New Zealand, per year.*

The table below outlines the number of publicly funded hospital discharges for live born infants with any diagnosis of Down syndrome between 2015 and 2018.

<b>Year of discharge</b>	<b>Number of discharges</b>
2015	39
2016	43
2017	47
2018	45

This information is coded using the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD).

Please note that live born babies with any diagnosis of Down Syndrome have been identified as a publicly funded hospitalisation with any diagnosis of Z38 (*live born infant according to place of birth*) and any diagnosis of Q90 (*Down Syndrome*) on the same hospital event.

*3. Number of selective terminations for unborn children with Down syndrome, per year.*

*4. Number of pregnancies with screening for Down syndrome, per year.*

*5. Number of selective terminations for unborn children with Down syndrome, per year.*

The Ministry does not hold any information pertaining to these parts of your request. Therefore, your request for these information is refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the information requested is not held by the Ministry.

For your reference, the National Screening Unit (NSU) within the Ministry is responsible for the development, management and monitoring of nationally-organised population-based screening in New Zealand.

Some information on pregnancy screening for Down syndrome and other conditions is publicly available on the Ministry and NSU website, which may be of relevance to your request:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/services-and-support-during-pregnancy/pregnancy-screening-tests/pregnancy-screening-down-syndrome-and-other-conditions>
- <https://www.nsu.govt.nz/health-professionals/antenatal-screening-down-syndrome-and-other-conditions/antenatal-screening-down>

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SHAYNE HUNTER', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shayne Hunter  
**Deputy Director-General**  
**Data and Digital**