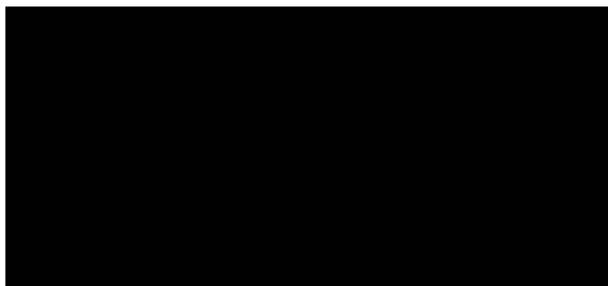


21 AUG 2019

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Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 26 July 2019 for:

“Data which the Ministry of Health holds relating to Sudden Infant Deaths (SIDS) (code R95) which occurred during the calendar year 2015; and

Data which the Ministry of Health holds relating to Sudden Infant Deaths (SIDS) (code R95) which occurred during the calendar year 2016; and

Data which the Ministry of Health holds relating to Sudden Infant Deaths (SIDS) (code R95) which occurred during the calendar year 2017; and

Data which the Ministry of Health holds relating to Sudden Infant Deaths (SIDS) (code R95) which occurred during the calendar year 2018 –

namely:

(i) Numbers of deaths in each year (reported separately for each year); and

(ii) Ethnicity of the babies concerned (reported separately for each year).”

'Cot death' or *Sudden Infant Deaths Syndrome* (SIDS) is defined as a sudden unexpected infant death, usually in a sleeping position, for which no specific cause was found following a detailed post mortem investigation.

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) classifies deaths as SIDS according to World Health Organization mortality coding rules. These are deaths with an underlying cause of death, or contributing cause of death coded to R95 (*Sudden Infant Death Syndrome*).

The table below shows the number of deaths caused by *Sudden Infant Deaths Syndrome* (SIDS) by calendar year and ethnicity.

YEAR	MĀORI	PACIFIC	EUROPEAN/OTHER	TOTAL
2015	15	5	5	25
2016	15	3	5	23
2017	11	7	6	24
2018	7	2	2	11

Data for the years 2017 and 2018 is too incomplete to be used for purposes of comparing trends in SIDS, they are merely a progress count. Finalising mortality data takes several years as there are a variety of data quality processes involved before this information is published. Coronial cases are also included when collating this information. Generally, provisional data becomes available around two years after the end of the year.

The 2017 and 2018 data should not be reported as official statistics of SIDS. If you decide to disseminate the 2017 and 2018 data, I request that any communication include this statement of incompleteness.

I trust that this information fulfils your request. You have the right 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 'SH' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shayne Hunter
Deputy Director-General
Data and Digital